

NONVIOLENT CONFLICT RESOLUTION WORLDWIDE²

1181-1226 Jerusalem

St. Francis of Assisi lived an entirely nonviolent life. The most striking example is the meeting with the Sultan Saladin in the Holy Land, during the fifth crusade.

1850 Hungary

Hungarian nationalists with the leader Francis Deak carried out a nonviolent resistance against Austria, obtaining back the self-government of Hungary inside an Austro-Hungarian federation.

1871 France

Paris women stop the cannons by putting themselves between Prussian and Parisian soldiers.

1905-6 Russia

Peasants, workers, students together with the Russian intelligentsia go on protest, general strikes and other nonviolent actions forcing the Czar to accept an elected lawmaking assembly.

²This list is taken from a longer and more detailed one in “*Engaging the Powers. Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination*”, Fortress Press, Minneapolis 1992. The author makes an historical, anthropological, sociological, theological and eschatological analysis of violence in human History. Then he stresses the novelty brought by Jesus Christ in a world dominated by sin structures (violence). The author searches for the Church attempts of getting rid of those structures in different ages and societies.

1944 El Salvador and Guatemala

Nonviolent popular revolts and general strikes force dictators Maximiliano Hernandez Martinez and Jorge Ubico to leave their power. Between 1931 and 1961 other eleven Presidents loose their power cause of general strikes.

1957 Ghana

Ghana people obtain independence after ten years of nonviolent fight.

1968 Czechoslovakia

'*Praga Spring*' has been an eithg months nonviolent resistance movement to Soviet Union, it was finally put down by the Varsavia Pact army.

'80s Nicaragua

Witness for Peace sent thousands of USA citizens in Nicaragua to be '*love shield*' getting in the way between the locals and *Contras* troops supplied by USA administration.

1989 Romania

Rev. Laszlo Tokes dared proclaim truth opposing Ceausescu. When the *secret police* (Ceausescu personal police) tried to arrest him, two hundred people got down into the street handling a candle and refusing to move. Almost all of them were parishioners. One hour later the crowd grew up, up to 50.000 people downtown. The cruel government reaction turns on the revolution that will lead to Ceausescu turn over. During the upraise people behaved nonviolently with demonstrations, whereas the army fought and fired against the *secret police* .

'40s Bulgaria

Nonviolence worked every time it was acted against Nazis. Kiril Bishop announced that if Nazi authorities tried to deport Bulgarian Jews to the concentration camps, he would lead a civil disobedience campaign and himself would lie down on the rails to stop the trains. Thousands of Bulgarians either Jews or not disobeyed to Nazi laws. Thanks to this civil mass mobilization none of Bulgarian Jews was deported.

'50s and '60s USA

M. L. King was a politician and human right leader of the Afro-American black community. In 1964 he won the Nobel Prize for Peace, the youngest of the history at 35 years of age. M. L. King was recognized as the apostle of the nonviolent resistance, hero and paladin of the emarginated people; M. L. King was always on the front line to put down ethnic prejudices inside the American society (in the 50's and 60's). M.L. King experience determined huge steps to the process of black people freedom in North America.

'70s and '80s Latin America

Peres Esquivel, nonviolent struggles coordinator (*Servicio Paz y Justicia*) for the liberation of the people crushed by the dictatorship and injustices, received the important Nobel Prize for Peace. Many Bishops and Cardinals supported actively these Latin American struggles.



1986 Philippine

On February 1986, Marcos was forced to anticipate the political elections. The dictator was opposed by Aquino's widow: Corazon Cory. She made a moderate coalition and mobilized popular organizations to watch over the election. When the dictator self declared as the winner, in spite of the defeat, thousands of people came on the road to defend Cory Aquino's victory. The Cardinal Sin, from Veritas Radio, called the roll for the people "to defend the truth and the freedom": thousands of people coming from all State districts, met in front of the EDSA sanctuary and after that they went on Capital roads, singing and praying the Rosary. People offered to soldiers food and drinks. Just five days of pacifist revolution stopped almost 20 years of regime (13 years of dictatorship), it was a memorable event called "miracle", "Rosary revolution", "victory of the popular power".

1989 East Europe

Pope John Paul II recognised the efficacy of the non-violent way for the Berlin wall falling in 1989 and the Oriental Europe freedom:

"Also worthy of emphasis is the fact that the fall of this kind of "bloc" or empire was accomplished almost everywhere by means of

peaceful protest, using only the weapons of truth and justice. [...] It seemed that the European order resulting from the Second World War and sanctioned by the Yalta Agreements could only be overturned by another war. Instead, it has been overcome by the non-violent commitment of people who, while always refusing to yield to the force of power, succeeded time after time in finding effective ways of bearing witness to the truth. [...] May people learn to fight for justice without violence, renouncing class struggle in their internal disputes, and war in international ones”
(encyclical Centesimus Annus, n. 23, 1991)



‘30s and ‘40s India

Ghandi was one of the independent modern India State’s founder and he was a supporter of the Satyagraha (“firmness inside the truth”, better known as “non-violent protest”) as a revolution way. Ghandi repeated that the values, coming from the tradition of Hinduism, were very simple: truth (satya) and non-violence (ahisma).