

Pacifism, Nonviolence, Security, and Rebellion

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Nonviolence and pacifism are gaining increasing scholarly attention in our smaller and more interconnected world. Nonviolent methods of both resistance and governance have been increasingly adopted and have proved effective (Howes 2013). Even brutal regimes have collapsed in the face of nonviolent resistance (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Having a stronger army no longer guarantees military success (Biddle 2004). Whether in managing protests (Anisin 2016), criminality (Lanier et al 2018) or prisons (Liebling 2004), in counter-terrorism (Jackson 2017), or in peacebuilding (Julian 2020), violent and repressive approaches tend to be counter-productive and less effective than well-designed nonviolent alternatives. Violence also entrenches patriarchy and other hierarchies of domination (Confortini 2006). In short, the mounting interdisciplinary evidence against violence is increasingly compelling. Yet much violence continues to erupt in the contemporary world arena, both in explicit conflicts and in the structures of the existing order. How is pacifist analysis adapting to the evolving international order? How are violent regimes responding to nonviolent dissent? Are institutions set up to protect citizens from violence succeeding, or making things worse? This panel is one of two panels that will consider such questions and thus reflect on the potential for nonviolence and pacifism in an already violent world.

Track Classification: Ethics and World Politics Working Group