

## Re-conceptualizing Resistance Organizations and Outcomes:

### Introducing the Revolutionary and Militant Organizations Dataset (REVMOD)

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#### Abstract

In recent years, scholars of various forms of conflict involving revolutionary and militant organizations (such as terrorism, civil war, and nonviolent contestation) recognized that arbitrary organizational categories and typologies often leave large- $n$  studies incomplete and biased. In moving away from nominal categorical boundaries that produce such selection biases and looking to a more generalized conception of *resistance organizations*, I constructed an original dataset that aims to bridge the gap between conflict literatures. Transcending traditional classifications, the Revolutionary and Militant Organizations dataset (REVMOD) consists of over 500 resistance organizations operative sometime between the years 1940 and 2014 and includes a diverse array of types of resistance organizations—many of which utilize a multitude of tactics, operate in various conflict contexts, and/or confront numerous target types. The dataset documents organizational attributes, allies, and adversaries at annual intervals (organization-years), making reliable time-series analyses possible. Tracking variables like organizational outcome-goal type and degree of achievement, political capacity, leader/s, constituent identity group, violence and demonstration levels, size, organization aliases, and several others, REVMOD breaks new ground in the collection of information on resistance organizations and can spur countless studies. A preliminary data analysis demonstrates that differences in organizational political capacity explain variation in resistance outcomes generally and in particular contexts like civil war, terrorism, and nonviolent revolutions. REVMOD provides a unique opportunity to develop a new research paradigm for resistance studies that employs large- $n$  empirical analyses to uncover generalities between different forms of political contention in the contemporary era, as well as to better understand why and how distinct resistance processes may produce specific outcomes.

Research on civil war, terrorism, nonviolent contestation, and revolution commonly focus on the endeavors of non-state actors to resist and change the political status quo or resist and counter attempts to undo an existing system. In recent years, conflict scholars recognized that arbitrary organizational categories often leave large-*n* studies incomplete and biased. Looking to a more generalized conception of *resistance organizations*, I constructed an original dataset that aims to bridge the gap between conflict literatures. Transcending traditional classifications, the Revolutionary and Militant Organizations Dataset (REVMOD) consists of over 500 resistance organizations operative sometime between the years 1940 and 2014 and includes a diverse array of types of resistance organizations—many of which use a multitude of tactics, operate in various conflict contexts, and/or confront numerous target types.<sup>1</sup> The dataset documents organizational attributes, allies, and adversaries at annual intervals (organization-years), making reliable time-series analyses possible. Tracking variables like organizational outcome-goal type and degree of achievement, political capacity, leader/s, constituent identity group, violence and demonstration levels, size, organization aliases, and several others, REVMOD breaks new ground in the collection of information on resistance organizations and can spur countless studies.

This overview showcases three sets of novel organizational measures: outcome-goal achievement, strategic approach, and political capacity. Outcomes necessarily remain at the center of contemporary resistance studies. And, many revolutionary thinkers point to political capacity as the key to winning conflicts. Specifically, a strong political command structure equips organizations with the ability to exert control over its cadres and supporters, enable strategic flexibility that exploits violent and nonviolent means, and institute political responsiveness that avoids costly actions that

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<sup>1</sup> On publication, all REVMOD files will be accessible at [www.revolutionarymilitant.org](http://www.revolutionarymilitant.org).

may be tactically successful yet strategically damaging (Clausewitz [1832]1984; Lenin [1902]1969; Michels [1911]1966; Mao [1938]1965).

I proceed with four sections. First, I present the unit of analysis, making the case for bridging various conceptual frameworks in order to better understand resistance organizations and outcomes. Second, I review the dataset's advantages over existing datasets and detail the data collection methodology. Third, I conduct time-series analyses on the data, showing that differences in organizational political capacity explain variation in resistance outcomes generally and in particular contexts such as civil war, terrorism, and nonviolent revolutions. I conclude by discussing how REVMOD can uniquely help fuse disparate but inherently related literatures and advance resistance studies.

### **The Unit of Analysis: Resistance Organizations**

As resistance organizations may employ a range of tactics against multiple adversary types, it makes treating organizations as the unit of analysis optimal for cross-comparison of different forms of contentious political action. Scholars have increasingly worked to link analyses of organizations traditionally classified under different categories. Though well embedded in the security and conflict studies lexicon, traditional typologies like terrorist, guerrilla, rebel, and revolutionary or domestic and international do not promote generalizable knowledge on contentious non-state actors (Abrahms 2007; Cunningham 2011; Bueno de Mesquita 2013). McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly emphasize that “different forms of contention...result from similar mechanisms and processes. It wagers that we can learn more about all of them by comparing their dynamics than by looking at each on its own (2001, 4).” Accordingly, to overcome selection biases that derive from arbitrary categories and incomplete datasets (Hug 2003), I re-conceptualize resistance organizations along the lines suggested by the scholars noted above. This allows for collecting a broader universe of cases and sample and shifting relational typologies (e.g. insurgent or nonviolent revolutionary) to secondary groupings,

which researchers can then test empirically against one another. REVMOD thus represents an effort to continue recent scholarship that seeks to advance the empirical analyses of theories that generalize across resistance typologies, as well as to better understand why and how distinct resistance processes may produce specific outcomes.

I operationalize the unit of analysis broadly as *non-state organizations that employ noninstitutionalized (i.e. illegal or extralegal) means to pursue political outcome goals*.<sup>2</sup> The operationalization deconstructs into four constitutive parts. *Non-state* refers to an entity not officially representative of a recognized state. *Organization* indicates a group of persons who “cooperate to a common end” (Barnard [1938]1968, 104).<sup>3</sup> *Illegal/ extralegal* connotes that the organization uses means not sanctioned or approved by law within its area of operation.<sup>4</sup> Notably, the illegal/extralegal or “noninstitutionalized” criterion is essential otherwise political opposition parties would fit the definition. *Political outcome goals* refer to organizational aims to alter a political system’s status quo or preserve or enhance existing political advantages.

### **Constructing REVMOD**

REVMOD consists of 536 resistance organizations operative sometime between the years 1940 and 2014. The dataset’s uniqueness and comparative advantage stems not only from new measures but also its amount of variables and the inclusion of more traditional organization types than other conflict datasets.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, REVMOD tracks annual data points for each organization

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<sup>2</sup> I employ Goldstone’s term of “noninstitutionalized action” in referring to organizations that use violence, mass demonstration, protests, strikes, and other forms of resistance that might fall outside the bounds of a given legal system (2001, 142). Importantly, “resistance” does not necessarily equate the use of violence. Indeed, even in democracies, nonviolent organizations may fall within this definition of resistance organizations by committing acts of civil disobedience (McAdam 1999).

<sup>3</sup> A *movement* signifies a collection of smaller organizations, some formal and others informal (Cunningham 2011; Cunningham, Dahl & Frugé 2017).

<sup>4</sup> This does not mean the organization solely uses illegal/extralegal tactics.

<sup>5</sup> See Table A in the Online Appendix for a comparison of REVMOD to other datasets in terms of *n*, number of variables, unit of analysis, data type, scope, and timeframe.

over its lifespan. This dynamic data accounts for developments like changes in organizational outcome goals, degrees of achievement, size, leaders, command structure, strategic approach, allies, and adversaries.<sup>6</sup>

### *REVMOD's Comparative Advantage*

In constructing REVMOD, I evaluated existing datasets—adopting their paramount characteristics and attempting to improve on their collective limitations. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)/Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO)-based Armed Conflict<sup>7</sup> and Non-State Actors in Armed Conflict (NSA)<sup>8</sup> datasets remain premier examples of violent conflict datasets. UCDP/PRIO datasets offer several attractive qualities—chiefly the documentation of extensive, high-quality, dynamic data on particular conflicts.<sup>9</sup> A focus on violent conflicts marks the main constraint of UCDP/PRIO datasets, preventing comparative analyses across the spectrum of resistance typologies. The Minority at Risk Organizational Behavior (MAROB) dataset likewise does an excellent job at documenting variables at yearly intervals and was the first dataset to include both violent and nonviolent resistance organizations.<sup>10</sup> It is important to test violent and nonviolent organizations together as they regularly pursue similar outcome goals and compete for support among a shared identity group. MAROB's greatest limitations consist of confinement to the Middle East region and a brief timeframe—resulting in a small and ungeneralizable sample. The Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset similarly contains violent and nonviolent

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<sup>6</sup> I also built an aggregated-static version of REVMOD that contains even more variables.

<sup>7</sup> See Gleditsch et al. (2002); Themnér & Wallensteen (2014); Melander, Petersson & Themnér (2016).

<sup>8</sup> See Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan (2013).

<sup>9</sup> For numerous updates to this dataset, see Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP) at [ucdp.uu.se/downloads/](http://ucdp.uu.se/downloads/) and the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo (PRIO) at [www.prio.org/Data/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/](http://www.prio.org/Data/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-PRIO/).

<sup>10</sup> See Wilkenfeld, Asal & Pate (2008).

actors and improves on the concept with a global scope and longer timeframe than MAROB.<sup>11</sup> Yet, a mixture of units of analysis, neglect of randomization, wildly inaccurate conflict timeframes due to unclear operationalizations, and questionable coding on various other fronts limit the dataset's applicability and validity.<sup>12</sup> Avoiding NAVCO's selection and coding issues, REVMOD adopts the important practice of including nonviolent resistance organizations. Additionally, unlike the UCDP/PRIO datasets and NAVCO that track conflicts/campaigns, REVMOD's organizational unit of analysis facilitates tests of non-state actors that operate in multiple conflicts simultaneously in pursuit of a core outcome goal. For example, one can evaluate every conflict in which Palestinian Fatah participated—including those against Jordan, and Kata'eb and Amal in Lebanon—and not just its most prominent conflict with Israel. REVMOD aims to encompass the key conceptual qualities of the dynamic datasets noted above and exceptional static/aggregated datasets listed in Table A in the Online Appendix, while offering novel variables and strengthening generalizability, operationalization, validity, and reliability.

#### *Sourcing, Coding Protocols, and Addressing Potential Biases*

To construct REVMOD, I first established a list of the near universe/universe of known resistance organizations operative between 1940 and 2014.<sup>13</sup> I built the list by mining numerous scholarly and historical sources,<sup>14</sup> as well as by referring to existing lists in the Big, Allied and Dangerous (BAAD) database,<sup>15</sup> Global Terrorism Database (GTD),<sup>16</sup> Global Nonviolent Action

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<sup>11</sup> See Chenoweth & Stephan (2011); Chenoweth & Lewis (2013).

<sup>12</sup> For discussions on problematic coding found in NAVCO, see Bayer, Bethke & Lambach (2016); Acosta & Ramos (2017).

<sup>13</sup> The focus on organizations and exclusion of incidental—unorganized—and often individual forms of resistance (Scott 1985) represents a limitation of the dataset.

<sup>14</sup> The Codebook in the Online Appendix details the coding of each variable and documents the sources employed systematically to code each variable. Sources used on an individual-data entry basis are cited in the actual dataset files.

<sup>15</sup> Accessible at [www.start.umd.edu/baad/database](http://www.start.umd.edu/baad/database).

<sup>16</sup> Accessible at [www.start.umd.edu/gtd](http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd).

Database (GNAD),<sup>17</sup> UCDP/PRIO datasets, Mapping Militant Organizations (MMO) database,<sup>18</sup> Suicide-Attack Network Database (SAND),<sup>19</sup> Invisible Armies Database,<sup>20</sup> and Schmid and Jongman (2008). Because resistance organizations frequently use numerous names or claim attacks or organize demonstrations under aliases, I took special care to avoid including duplicate organizations by recording organizational names and aliases.<sup>21</sup> Subsequently, I selected organizations for inclusion in the dataset randomly from the extensive list of cases.<sup>22</sup>

I then conducted exhaustive research on each organization using a multitude of materials and cross-referenced data entries with diverse sources. Attempting to prevent potential biases in source material (Salehyan 2015), I crosschecked data points from an array of sources and denote degrees of certainty in the coding. Data entries colored in **black** indicate I used a *high*-quality source, typically involving a specialist's publication in a scholarly outlet. For example, Ron's (2001) article on Sendero Luminoso serves as a high-quality source for data related to the organization's attributes. Examples of variable-specific high-quality annual sources are established databases such as GTD and SAND for organization attack levels, BAAD and MMO (among many others) for organization size estimates, Polity for regime typology of adversarial states,<sup>23</sup> and the World Bank for the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of adversarial states.<sup>24</sup> Data entries in **blue** depict *moderate* degrees of certainty, where sourcing entails more journalistic or institutional accounts. These include sources like O'Ballance's (1998) book on Lebanon's civil war or reports in wire services or major

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<sup>17</sup> Accessible at [nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu](http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu).

<sup>18</sup> Accessible at [web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin](http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin).

<sup>19</sup> Accessible at [www.sandatabase.org](http://www.sandatabase.org).

<sup>20</sup> Accessible at [www.cfr.org/wars-and-warfare/invisible-armies-insurgency-tracker/p29917](http://www.cfr.org/wars-and-warfare/invisible-armies-insurgency-tracker/p29917).

<sup>21</sup> REVMOD lists every name organizations use annually and records native language names, English translations, and popular alternative names or acronyms.

<sup>22</sup> See the Online Appendix for the list from which I drew the sample (Table B), the selection and randomization procedure, and the list of organizations included in the dataset (Table C).

<sup>23</sup> Accessible at [www.systemicpeace.org](http://www.systemicpeace.org).

<sup>24</sup> Accessible at [data.worldbank.org](http://data.worldbank.org).

papers. Government documents and reports from think tanks and consulting firms detailing information on certain conflicts or organizations also fall within this category. Data entries in **orange** signify data with *lower* assurance that derive from a source not involving peer review or journalistic oversight, such as chronologies compiled in security blogs like the *LongWarJournal*.<sup>25</sup> This color-coding schema affords researchers greater flexibility in utilizing the data. (On publication, **Black-blue-orange**, **black-blue**, and **black** versions of both the dynamic and static versions of REVMOD will be accessible at *www.revolutionarymilitant.org*.)

#### *REVMOD's Variables*

REVMOD incorporates variables that various schools of thought expect to impact resistance processes and outcomes. Table 1 presents summary statistics of REVMOD's dynamic variables.<sup>26</sup> I now turn to a coding overview of three sets of novel organizational measures that frame the empirical analysis: outcome-goal achievement, strategic approach, and political capacity.

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<sup>25</sup> Accessible at *www.longwarjournal.org*.

<sup>26</sup> Table D in the Online Appendix reports summary statistics of REVMOD's static variables.

Table 1: Summary Statistics (Dynamic—Annual Intervals)

Variable	<i>n</i> : 9953	Measure	Mean
ORGANIZATION	9953		
IDENTITY GROUP/CONSTITUENCY	9805		
AREA OF OPERATION	9950		
OUTCOME GOAL	8879		
SEPARATE	8879	Binary	
OVERTHROW/TAKEOVER	8879	Binary	
EXPEL/ELIMINATE	8879	Binary	
EMPIRE	8879	Binary	
REFORM	8879	Binary	
COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY	8879	Binary	
ANTI-SYSTEM	8997	Binary	
ACHIEVEMENT	8649	21-point	5.35
COMPLETE SUCCESS	8914	Binary	
PARTIAL SUCCESS	8914	Binary	
POLITICAL COMMAND	8873	21-point	5.99
POLITICAL COMMAND	8894	Binary	
STRICTLY VIOLENT	6693	Binary	
STRICTLY NONVIOLENT	6693	Binary	
MIXED APPROACH	6693	Binary	
ATTACKS	5214	Continuous	15.23
KILLS	5204	Continuous	50.61
LETHALITY	5204	Continuous	3.32
SUICIDE ATTACKS	9945	Continuous	0.46
DEMONSTRATIONS/PROTESTS (Liberal Estimate)	8124	Continuous	0.13
DEMONSTRATIONS/PROTESTS (Conservative Estimate)	8124	Continuous	0.09
NUMBER OF DEMONSTRATIONS TURNED VIOLENT	8114	Continuous	0.02
CIVIL WAR	9018	Binary	
TERRORISM	8246	Binary	
SIZE	8400	Logged	6.92
EXCLUDED CONSTITUENCY	8921	Binary	
STATE SPONSORS	6328	Continuous	0.24
NETWORK TIES	7516	Continuous	2.14
ADVERSARIES	8260		
PRIMARY ADVERSARY POLITY	8086	21-point	10.46
STATE ADVERSARY	8227	Binary	
DEMOCRATIC ADVERSARY	8174	Binary	
ADVERSARY GDP PER CAPITA	7213	Continuous	5348.66
LEADER/S	8028		
LEADERSHIP DECAPITATION (General)	8028	Binary	
LEADER KILLED	7742	Binary	
LEADER ARRESTED	7742	Binary	
LEADER ARRESTED AND EXECUTED	7742	Binary	
ORGANIZATION AGE	9953	Continuous	17.44
CONFLICT DURATION	9953	Continuous	14.45

## *Resistance Outcomes*

Following previous research, I treat outcome-goal achievement as “success.”<sup>27</sup> “Outcome goals” signify the purpose of an organization’s genesis and its *raison d’être*. I code organizations at annual intervals as pursuing one of six outcome goals: SEPARATE from an adversary (e.g. Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha’s objective to separate from Nepal and establish a Terai state), OVERTHROW an adversary (e.g. the Filipino People Power Revolution’s effort to topple the Marcos regime), EXPEL/ELIMINATE an adversary (e.g. Corelli Street 6’s aim to expel Nazi forces from the Netherlands), erect an EMPIRE (e.g. ad-Dawlah al-Islamiyyah’s objective to reestablish the Caliphate), REFORM an adversarial system (e.g. the Andijan Rights Movement’s aim to liberalize Uzbekistan’s legal system), and COUNTER-REVOLUTION or an aim to block one of the previous five goals (e.g. the efforts of Protestant-Loyalist organizations to stymie Catholic-Republican separatists in Northern Ireland).<sup>28</sup> Thus, an organization achieves *success* when its opponent makes concessions that fulfill the outcome goal or when an organization eliminates, topples, conquers, or outlasts its opponent resulting in the outcome goal’s accomplishment. Other potential objective measures of effectiveness, such as quantity of attacks, attack lethality, or quantity of protests, might gauge tactical efficacy yet they reveal little about the ability of organizations effectively utilizing capacity to achieve the goals that justify and make their existence possible.

REVMOD includes two measures for resistance outcomes annually. The first measure scores achievement using three dichotomous variables, with organizations scoring COMPLETE SUCCESS, PARTIAL SUCCESS, or NO SUCCESS. “Complete success” refers to an organization achieving

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<sup>27</sup> See Steedly & Foley (1979); Gelpi & Griesdorf (2001); Chenoweth & Stephan (2011); Cunningham (2011); Abrahms (2012); Sullivan (2012); Acosta (2014); Chenoweth & Schock (2015).

<sup>28</sup> Additionally, building from previous work (McAdam 1999; Aksoy & Carter 2014), I code whether organizations pursuing an ANTI-SYSTEM (i.e. separate, overthrow, expel/eliminate, or empire) or WITHIN-SYSTEM (i.e. reform or counter-revolution) outcome goal.

the entirety or near entirety of its stated outcome goal. “Partial success” occurs when an organization reaches its outcome goal in a limited way. Examples of the difference between complete and partial success include: governmental power-sharing with other organizations/parties rather than enjoying total control, gaining autonomy instead of full self-determination, seizing a portion but not the entirety of a coveted territory, or succeeding in changing a regime’s leader but not the regime. The line between partial success and failure is the absence of any gained autonomy, governmental power-sharing, territorial control, or shift in regime makeup.

REVMOD’s main outcome measure captures organizational success at a high grade of granularity.<sup>29</sup> For this graduated measure, I code organizational ACHIEVEMENT on a scale of 0 to 20 at yearly intervals.<sup>30</sup> Table 2 reports the coding questions for each marker. A score of 20 refers to “complete victory,” wherein an organization achieves the entirety of its stated outcome goal and defeats the primary adversary. An 18 indicates an organization achieves its outcome goal and the adversary does not currently seek to reverse the organization’s gains. With a 16, an organization achieves its outcome goal yet the adversary still poses an active threat to reverse gains. The nuances of the *victory* scores of 20-16 signify degrees of irreversibility and are essential for assessing the likelihood of conflict recurrence. Scores between 14-10 signify degrees of *partial* success, depicting levels of autonomy, regime reform, territorial control, or power-sharing—depending on the outcome goal. A 14 denotes the organization nears achieving its outcome goal but the adversary controls some remaining components. A 12 means the organization achieves around half of its outcome goal and the adversary controls the remaining components. A ten conveys that an organization achieves some of its outcome goal and the adversary controls most remaining

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<sup>29</sup> A major benefit of this second measure is that it delineates more accurate variation for conflicts still in process, as opposed to simply coding “conflict ongoing.”

<sup>30</sup> Odd-numbered scores represent an organization’s fluctuation between two even-numbered scores in a given year.

components. An eight marks an organization’s marginal advancement toward its outcome goal, often characterized by a challenge in a public space (e.g. a long-standing mass demonstration, occupation of a capital square, the control of a small portion of territory, or the adversary begins to make overtures). A six means that an organization actively resists by initiating attacks or nonviolent confrontational operations. A four reflects that an organization conducts operations/actions solely in a defensive posture (e.g. it trains/organizes but only actively resists or fights when attacked or repressed). A two signifies that an organization claims to exist yet shows no signs of activity. A zero indicates the organization is dead as it does not function on any level. For detailed examples of the achievement scoring broken down by organizational outcome-goal type, see Table G in the Codebook.

Table 2: Achievement Scores

<i>SCORE</i>	<i>CODING QUESTIONS</i>
0	Organization is defunct?
2	Organization does not initiate violent operations or illegal nonviolent actions?
4	Organization initiates operations/actions solely in a defensive posture?
6	Organization initiates operations/actions offensively?
8	Organization makes/maintains marginal advancements?
10	Organization partially achieves outcome goal but the adversary controls most remaining components?
12	Organization partially achieves outcome goal but the adversary controls around half the remaining components?
14	Organization partially achieves outcome goal but the adversary controls some remaining components?
16	Outcome goal achieved but the adversary still poses an active threat to reverse gains?
18	Outcome goal achieved and the adversary does not currently pose an active threat to reverse gains?
20	Outcome goal achieved completely and the adversary is outright defeated?

### *Strategic Approach*

The binary variable ONLY VIOLENT refers to organizations that strictly employ violence in pursuing their outcome goals. ONLY NONVIOLENT denotes organizations that strictly adhere to using nonviolent techniques. To code “nonviolent resistance” techniques, I use Chenoweth and Stephan’s definition as a starting point: the employment of “boycotts, strikes, protests, sit-ins, stay-aways, and other acts of civil disobedience (2011, 12).” I add to the category other facets of sociopolitical life and governance that impact an entity’s capability to win: community and political organizing operations, distributing social services, and constructing/operating public works. Many such actions

aid organizations in building a “shadow government” and undermining the adversary’s credibility. Recent scholarship shows the importance of analyzing organizations’ diversification of resistance strategies and tactics (Cunningham, Dahl & Frugé 2017). Learning from the mistakes of previous datasets that rely on a problematic dichotomy that categorizes organizations as either “violent” or “nonviolent” (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011; Chenoweth & Lewis 2013), I account for organizations that apply both violent and nonviolent means by devising the category of MIXED-APPROACH organizations.

### *Political Command*

The graduated measure of POLITICAL COMMAND aims to identify the degree of political command and control over the entirety of organizational operations. Table 3 displays the coding questions for each marker.<sup>31</sup> A score of 20 signifies complete political command over organizational operations both military and nonviolent, with political leaders comprising all of an organization’s top echelon. An 18 conveys that political leadership commands the organization in a unified political-military/nonviolent action hierarchy. A 16 corresponds to a strong political command overseeing compartmentalized military/nonviolent action wing/s. A 14 signifies an organization’s political wing maintains equal sway within the overall organization along with the military/nonviolent action wing/s *and* the organization’s primary leader comes from the political wing. A 12 depicts an equitable amount of command between military/nonviolent action and political elements. A ten indicates an organization incorporates its political entity into the command structure. An eight means that an organization has a political wing or party, but it remains subordinate to the military/nonviolent action hierarchy. A six denotes an organization’s limited formalized role for political operatives. A four refers to an organization’s informal political operatives, who lack an

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<sup>31</sup> As with the achievement measure, odd-numbered markers refer to an organization’s wavering between even-numbered markers in a given year.

official role within the organizational structure. A two marks an organization’s involvement in low-level forms of political mobilization, such as distributing political propaganda or writing political graffiti. A zero corresponds to an organization’s absence of political infrastructure, political operatives, and political messaging and outreach.<sup>32</sup>

Table 3: Political Command Scores

SCORE	CODING QUESTIONS
0	Organization has no political component?
2	Organization engages in low-levels of political mobilization?
4	Organization fields political operatives informally?
6	Organization has formalized a role for political operatives?
8	Organization has distinct political wing or party that remains subordinate to the military/nonviolent action command?
10	Organization incorporates its political entity into the command structure?
12	Organization’s political entity has equal sway within the overall organization along with the military/nonviolent action wing/s?
14	Organization’s political entity has equal sway within the overall organization along with the military/nonviolent action wing/s and organization’s leader comes from the political entity?
16	Organization’s political leadership commands the organization though the military/nonviolent action wing/s remains compartmentalized?
18	Organization’s political leadership commands the organization in a unified hierarchy?
20	Organization’s political command represents the entire top echelon of leadership?

### *Survival and Success*

Of all 536 organizations in REVMOD, the mean age is 17.4 years.<sup>33</sup> The mean conflict duration is 14.5 years.<sup>34</sup> The mean for years during a conflict that an organization *actively* conducts operations or demonstrations as opposed to merely maneuvering defensively is 11.1 years. Figure 1 exhibits the success of resistance organizations. 128 organizations (or 23.9%) partially or completely succeeded in achieving an outcome goal and 70 (or 13.1%) completely achieved an outcome goal.

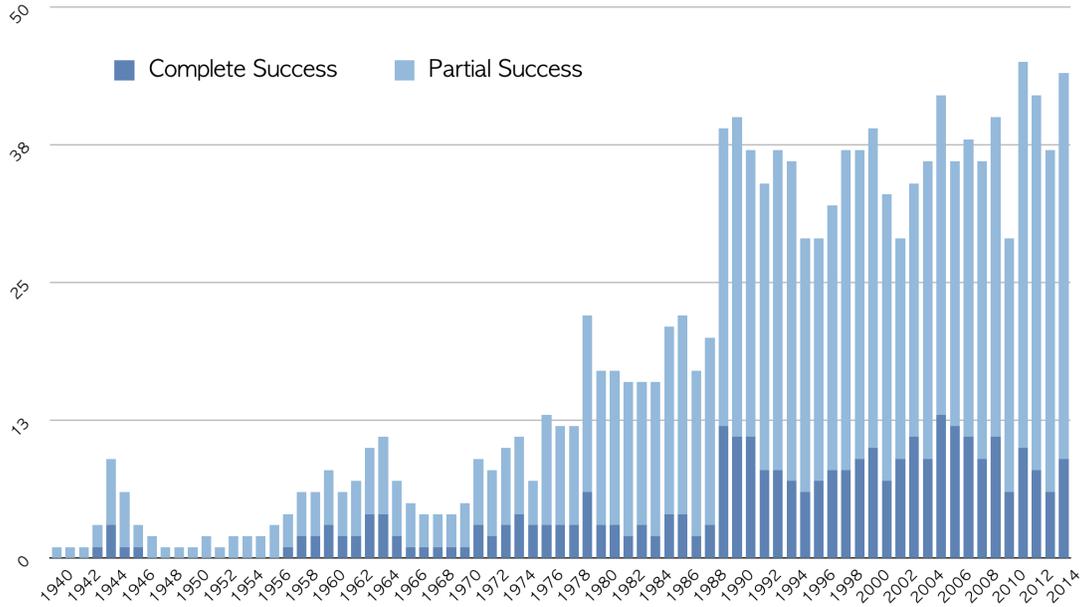
<sup>32</sup> See the Codebook for coding examples and a further explanation of the measure.

<sup>33</sup> I code age as either the date of an official declaration of an organization’s establishment or the date of its first confirmed act of political violence or nonviolent action. Conflict duration begins with the first of such acts of resistance. I code the end of duration for defunct organizations as the date of elimination by force or the date of an organization’s official declaration of dissolution or conflict cessation. I also code a conflict’s conclusion if an organization achieves its outcome goal and the outcome goes uncontested (e.g. the 1994 victory of the African National Congress). See the Codebook for elaboration.

<sup>34</sup> REVMOD’s averages for age and duration align with other empirical assessments that note lengthy lifespan averages for resistance organizations (e.g. Price’s 2012 finding of an average of 16.2 years).

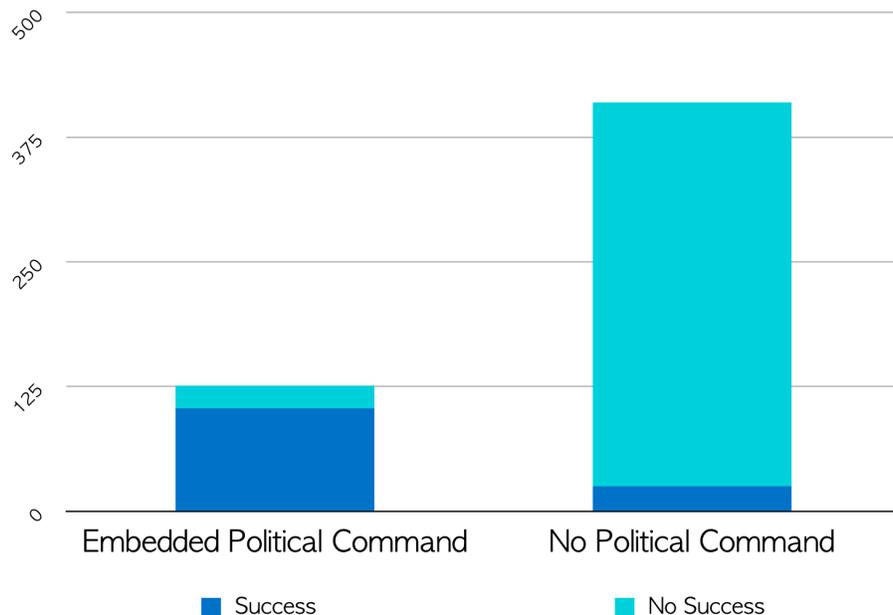
Notably, organizations with an embedded political command succeeded in 103 (or 81.8%) of 126 efforts, whereas organizations without an embedded political command succeeded in just 25 (or 6.1%) of 410 endeavors (see Figure 2).<sup>35</sup>

Figure 1: The Success of Resistance Organizations (1940-2014)



<sup>35</sup> A score of ten in the graduated measure marks the coding cutoff for the embedded political command binary variable.

Figure 2: Organizational Command and Resistance Success



### Testing Political Command’s Effect on Organizational Success

To demonstrate the dataset’s utility, I conduct preliminary empirical analyses of the relationship between political command and conflict outcomes. Table 4 displays the results of Prais-Winsten estimations that analyze REVMOD’s annual time-series data. Accounting for potential autocorrelation, Model 1 provides strong support—at a general level—for the Leninist/Maoist hypothesis that political command over organizational resistance operations propels organizations to success. Models 2 through 5 support the hypothesis vis-à-vis traditional organizational categories, restricting analyses to violent organizations, nonviolent organizations, terrorist organizations, and organizations engaged in a civil war. Model 6 again tests the full dataset, including a one-year lag of achievement as an independent variable and showing that success begets success but not to the degree that political capacity precipitates (and maintains) success.<sup>36</sup> In nearly every context, as

<sup>36</sup> This is important considering Acosta (2014) highlights that achieving partial success helps organizations entrench political command.

expected from previous research (DeNardo 1985), organizational size boosts prospects for success. Except in civil war, conflict duration has an inverse relationship with success.<sup>37</sup>

Concerning strategic approach, strictly nonviolent organizations operate from the greatest disadvantage—likely stemming from an initial difficulty to establish a credible threat. As a result of REVMOD’s more comprehensive sample, the finding that nonviolence negatively affects achievement contrasts studies that “omit...armed campaigns” (Chenoweth & Schock 2015, 432) or work from a significantly smaller and nonrandomized sample (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011). Moreover, the misidentification of nonviolence as a predictor of success in previous studies likely derives from the testing of a false dichotomy that categorizes organizations as either “violent” or “nonviolent” (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011).<sup>38</sup> Once correcting for this with the inclusion of mixed-approach organizations and the addition of a political command measure,<sup>39</sup> it becomes clear that an organization’s command structure shapes resistance performance rather than its use of violence or lack thereof. As such, due to embedded political command, some nonviolent organizations succeed *despite* their nonviolence—*not because of it*. Taking Models 3 and 6 together, the nonviolent disadvantage could reflect Michels’ ([1911]1966) notion of the “incompetence of the masses” absent their subordination to a political vanguard (Lenin [1902]1969). The analyses illustrate that revolutionaries like Lenin and Mao correctly understood that political command infrastructure

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<sup>37</sup> In the Online Appendix robustness checks test specific outcome goals and levels of resistance (Table E) and pooled logistic regression models test alternative measures of outcome-goal success and a binary measure of political command (Table F). The robustness tests do not alter the core results.

<sup>38</sup> Chenoweth and Stephan even admit: “Characterizing a campaign as violent or nonviolent simplifies a complex constellation of resistance methods (2011, 12).” Further, “often some groups use both nonviolent and violent methods of resistance over the course of their existence... (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011, 12).”

<sup>39</sup> Chenoweth and Stephan repeatedly allude to the necessity of political leadership in achieving success (2011, 132, 141, 182, and 195), but instead focus theoretically on the relationship between nonviolent strategies and mobilization size (2011, 30-61).

regularly equips organizations with the necessary political responsiveness and strategic flexibility to optimally pursue their outcome goals.

Table 4: Prais-Winsten Regression Results

<b>y=Achievement</b>	Model 1	Model 2 <i>Violent Organizations</i>	Model 3 <i>Nonviolent Organizations</i>	Model 4 <i>Terrorist Organizations</i>	Model 5 <i>Organizations in a Civil War</i>	Model 6
Political Command	0.424*** (0.027)	0.346*** (0.026)	0.544*** (0.062)	0.273*** (0.036)	0.322*** (0.032)	0.415*** (0.030)
Achievement <i>t</i> -1						0.046* (0.022)
Mixed Approach	-0.085 (0.144)					-0.034 (0.145)
Only Nonviolent	-1.803*** (0.180)					-1.732*** (0.173)
Conflict Duration	-0.019*** (0.004)	-0.014** (0.004)	-0.022* (0.011)	-0.010* (0.004)	0.023 (0.012)	-0.016*** (0.004)
Size (logged)	0.285*** (0.039)	0.286*** (0.040)	0.241** (0.091)	0.153*** (0.039)	0.327*** (0.068)	0.240*** (0.037)
Anti-System	0.049 (0.251)	-0.327 (0.256)	1.638*** (0.417)	-0.507* (0.240)	-0.436 (0.395)	-0.037 (0.267)
Adversary Polity	-0.004 (0.006)	-0.005 (0.006)	-0.021 (0.021)	-0.006 (0.006)	-0.023 (0.013)	-0.008 (0.006)
Constant	1.996*** (0.288)	2.540*** (0.279)	-1.375 (0.948)	4.246*** (0.300)	1.836** (0.571)	2.069*** (0.325)
Observations	5612	4729	883	2389	1923	5188
R <sup>2</sup>	0.35	0.36	0.39	0.44	0.24	0.37
F-Statistic	93.70***	106.00***	22.87***	45.99***	48.16***	74.94***
Root MSE	1.63	1.53	1.84	1.22	1.54	1.48
$\rho$	0.83	0.81	0.88	0.86	0.88	0.85

Coefficients with semi-robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\*p<0.001, \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05

## Advancing Resistance Studies

REVMOD uniquely facilitates testing the central questions of resistance studies, examining extant competing theories, and breaking and forging empirical ground for new theoretical frameworks. *Resistance studies*—as broadly conceptualized in this article—tend to emphasize five core dependent variables: (1) conflict onset, (2) conflict intensity, (3) conflict duration, (4) conflict outcome, and (5) post-conflict transition and development. For potential onset and duration studies, REVMOD’s careful attention to organizational names, aliases, and operational continuation offers superior assurance regarding organizational inception and the onset and conclusion of conflicts. REVMOD’s integration of yearly political violence data from the GTD, SAND, historical sources

on insurgencies, Acosta and Ramos' (2017) fix for GTD's missing 1993 attack events, protest/demonstration data from GNAD, and many others make possible novel and reliable dynamic analyses on conflict intensity. The analysis of the relationship between embedded political command and organizational achievement highlights that REVMOD's detailed documentation of degrees of organizational success enables comparative analyses of resistance outcomes from countless dimensions. REVMOD's conflict outcome measures and intensity variables can not only aid in assessments of who wins conflicts and how but also how specific processes and outcomes may predict post-conflict environments like democratization or conflict recurrence.

Moving forward, resistance studies should focus on harnessing the vast knowledge already accumulated from fields as diverse as civil wars studies to social movement and terrorism studies. REVMOD's construction represents an effort to further unify such disparate but related literatures. Scholars have long studied the onset, intensity, duration, outcomes, and transitions of various types of revolutionary and militant organizations independently of one another. REVMOD provides a unique opportunity to develop a new research paradigm that employs large-*n* empirical analyses to uncover generalities across different forms of contemporary contentious politics. Researchers can use the dataset to continue answering general questions like why conflicts emerge, why conflicts involve particular types of resistance and not others, how conflicts end, who wins, and whether the nature of conflicts explains variation in post-conflict development. REVMOD can also facilitate answering questions of cross-typology variation (in addition to similarity). For example, are the forces that spawn non-violent revolutions unrelated to those that spark terrorism campaigns? Do special factors drive rebels? After reaching some level of intensity, does political violence cease assisting organizations in achieving their outcome goals? REVMOD can help researchers advance new research agendas, as well as test resistance organizations operating in different contexts against one another or together in search of generalizability.

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