

Reconceptualizing resistance organizations and outcomes: Introducing the Revolutionary and Militant Organizations dataset (REVMOD)

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Benjamin Acosta 

DataHalfLife.Com

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 such as 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.

Keywords

conflict outcomes, dataset, resistance organizations, resistance studies

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

Corresponding author:
binyaminacosta@gmail.com

confront numerous target types.¹ 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.

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 their cadres and supporters, enable strategic flexibility that exploits violent and nonviolent means, and institute political responsiveness that avoids costly actions that may be tactically successful yet strategically damaging (von 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 a preliminary data analysis, showing that differences in organizational political capacity explain variation in resistance outcomes generally and in particular conflict 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 such as terrorist, guerrilla, rebel, and revolutionary or domestic

and international do not promote generalizable knowledge on contentious non-state actors (Abrahms, 2007; Cunningham, 2011). McAdam, Tarrow & Tilly (2001: 4) 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.' Accordingly, to overcome selection biases that derive from arbitrary categories and incomplete datasets (Hug, 2003), I reconceptualize 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 non-institutionalized (i.e. illegal or extralegal) means to pursue political outcome goals.² 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).³ Illegal/extralegal connotes that the organization uses means not sanctioned or approved by law within its area of operation.⁴ Notably, the illegal/extralegal or 'non-institutionalized' 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.

² I employ Goldstone's (2001: 142) term of 'non-institutionalized 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. Importantly, 'resistance' does not necessarily equate to 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).

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

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

¹ REVMOD is accessible at www.revolutionarymilitant.org.

Constructing REVMOD

REVMOD consists of 536 resistance organizations operative sometime between the years 1940 and 2014. The dataset's uniqueness and comparative advantage stem not only from new measures but also its number of variables and the inclusion of more traditional organization types than other conflict datasets.⁵ Moreover, REVMOD tracks annual data for each organization over its lifespan. These dynamic data account for developments like changes in organizational outcome goals, degrees of achievement, size, leaders, command structure, strategic approach, allies, and adversaries.⁶

REVMOD's comparative advantage

In designing 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 Conflict⁷ and Non-State Actors in Armed Conflict (NSA)⁸ 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. A focus on violent conflicts marks the main constraint of UCDP/PRIO datasets, preventing comparative analyses across the spectrum of resistance typologies. The Minorities 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.⁹ 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 time frame – resulting in a small and ungeneralizable sample. The Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) dataset similarly contains violent and nonviolent actors and improves on the concept with a global scope and longer timeframe

than MAROB.¹⁰ Yet, a mixture of units of analysis, neglect of randomization, wildly inaccurate conflict time frames due to unclear operationalizations, and questionable coding on various other fronts limit the dataset's applicability and validity.¹¹ 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. I built the list by mining numerous scholarly and historical sources, as well as by referring to existing lists in the Big, Allied and Dangerous database,¹² Global Terrorism Database (GTD),¹³ Global Nonviolent Action Database (GNAD),¹⁴ UCDP/PRIO datasets, Mapping Militant Organizations database,¹⁵ Suicide-Attack Network Database (SAND),¹⁶ Invisible Armies Database,¹⁷ and Schmid & Jongman (2008). Because resistance organizations frequently use various names or claim attacks or organize demonstrations under aliases, I took special care to avoid including duplicate organizations by recording organizational names and aliases.¹⁸ Subsequently, I

⁵ See Table A in the Online appendix for a comparison of REVMOD to other datasets in terms of N, variables, unit of analysis, data type, scope, and time frame.

⁶ I have also built an aggregated-static version of REVMOD that contains even more variables.

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

⁸ See Cunningham, Gleditsch & Salehyan (2013).

⁹ See Wilkenfeld, Asal & Pate (2008).

¹⁰ See Chenoweth & Stephan (2011); Chenoweth & Lewis (2013).

¹¹ For discussions on problematic coding found in NAVCO, see Bayer, Bethke & Lambach (2016); Acosta & Ramos (2017).

¹² www.start.umd.edu/baad/database.

¹³ www.start.umd.edu/gtd.

¹⁴ nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu.

¹⁵ web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin.

¹⁶ www.sandatabase.org.

¹⁷ www.cfr.org/wars-and-warfare/invisible-armies-insurgency-tracker/p29917.

¹⁸ REVMOD lists every name organizations use annually and records native language names, English translations, and popular alternative names or acronyms.

selected organizations for inclusion in the dataset randomly from the extensive list. 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). I then conducted exhaustive research on each organization using a multitude of materials and cross-referenced data entries with diverse sources. Next, I employed leading techniques (Gwet, 2014) to oversee an extensive inter-coder reliability (ICR) exercise, which revealed a high degree of systematic reliability in the dataset.¹⁹ The codebook in the Online appendix details the coding of each variable and documents the sources employed systematically to code each variable. I cite sources used on an individual-data entry basis in the actual dataset files.

Attempting to prevent potential biases in source material (Salehyan, 2015), I cross-checked data entries from an array of sources and denote degrees of certainty in the coding. Data entries colored in black indicate *high*-quality sourcing, 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, Polity for regime typology of adversarial states,²⁰ and the World Bank for the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of adversarial states.²¹ Data entries in blue depict *moderate* degrees of certainty, where sourcing entails more journalistic or institutional accounts. These include sources like O'Balance's (1998) book on Lebanon's civil war or reports in wire services or major 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 Long-War Journal.²² This color-coding schema affords researchers greater flexibility in utilizing the data. Black-blue-orange, black-blue, and black versions of both the dynamic and static versions of REVMOD are accessible at www.revolutionarymilitant.org.

¹⁹ See the Online appendix for the results of the ICR and data validity exercises.

²⁰ www.systemicpeace.org.

²¹ data.worldbank.org.

²² www.longwarjournal.org.

Central limitation

A pioneer of resistance studies, James C. Scott underscores the historical importance of 'everyday forms' of resistance. Scott holds 'that most subordinate classes throughout most of history have rarely been afforded the luxury of open, organized, political activity' (1985: xv). Thus, the focus on organizations and exclusion of incidental – unorganized – and often individual forms of resistance represent the dataset's central limitation.

REVMOD's variables

REVMOD incorporates variables that various schools of thought expect to impact resistance processes and outcomes. Table I lists REVMOD's dynamic variables.²³ I now turn to a coding overview of three sets of novel organizational measures that frame the preliminary empirical analysis: outcome-goal achievement, strategic approach, and political capacity.

Resistance outcomes

Following previous research, I treat outcome-goal achievement as 'success'.²⁴ '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 re-establish 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).²⁵ Therefore, an organization achieves *success* when its opponent makes concessions that fulfill the outcome goal or when an organization

²³ Table D in the Online appendix reports summary statistics of REVMOD's static variables.

²⁴ See Steedly & Foley (1979); Gelpi & Griesdorf (2001); Chenoweth & Stephan (2011); Cunningham (2011); Abrahms (2012); Sullivan (2012); Acosta (2014); Chenoweth & Schock (2015).

²⁵ Additionally, building from previous work (McAdam, 1999; Aksoy & Carter, 2014), I code whether organizations are pursuing an *Anti-system* (i.e. separate, overthrow, expel/eliminate, or empire) or *Within-system* (i.e. reform or counter-revolution) outcome goal.

Table I. Summary statistics (dynamic–annual intervals)

Variable	N = 9,953	Measure	Mean
Organization	9,953		
Identity group/constituency	9,805		
Area of operation	9,950		
Outcome goal	8,879		
Separate	8,879	Binary	
Overthrow/takeover	8,879	Binary	
Expel/eliminate	8,879	Binary	
Empire	8,879	Binary	
Reform	8,879	Binary	
Counter-revolutionary	8,879	Binary	
Anti-system	8,997	Binary	
Achievement	8,649	21-point	5.35
Complete success	8,914	Binary	
Partial success	8,914	Binary	
Political command	8,873	21-point	5.99
Political command	8,894	Binary	
Strictly violent	6,693	Binary	
Strictly nonviolent	6,693	Binary	
Mixed approach	6,693	Binary	
Attacks	5,214	Continuous	15.23
Kills	5,204	Continuous	50.61
Lethality	5,204	Continuous	3.32
Suicide attacks	9,945	Continuous	0.46
Demonstrations/protests (liberal estimate)	8,124	Continuous	0.13
Demonstrations/protests (conservative estimate)	8,124	Continuous	0.09
Number of demonstrations turned violent	8,114	Continuous	0.02
Civil war	9,018	Binary	
Terrorism	8,246	Binary	
Size	8,400	Logged	6.92
Excluded constituency	8,921	Binary	
State sponsors	6,328	Continuous	0.24
Network ties	7,516	Continuous	2.14
Adversaries	8,260		
Primary adversary polity	8,086	21-point	10.46
State adversary	8,227	Binary	
Democratic adversary	8,174	Binary	
Adversary GDP per capita	7,213	Continuous	5,348.66
Leader/s	8,028		
Leadership decapitation (general)	8,028	Binary	
Leader killed	7,742	Binary	
Leader arrested	7,742	Binary	
Leader arrested and executed	7,742	Binary	
Organization age	9,953	Continuous	17.44
Conflict duration	9,953	Continuous	14.45

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 size 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 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.²⁶

REVMOD's main outcome measure captures organizational success at a high grade of granularity.²⁷ For this graduated measure, I code organizational *Achievement* on a scale of 0 to 20 at yearly intervals.²⁸ Table II 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. A 16 means 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 and 10 signify

²⁶ Whereas some studies emphasize organizational success in the context of confederated national movements (Cunningham, 2011), I code organizations individually on achievement. For example, I treat HaHaganah as achieving complete success at the end of Israel's War of Independence. In contrast, I treat HaIrgun, which entered into the opposition in Israel's newfound political system, as achieving partial success. The outcome goal of each organization was not just to establish a Jewish state but also to lead the state under its unique ideological vision.

²⁷ 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'.

²⁸ Odd-numbered scores represent an organization's fluctuation between two even-numbered scores in a given year.

Table II. Achievement scores

Score	Coding questions
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?

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 10 conveys that an organization achieves some of its outcome goal and the adversary controls most remaining components. An 8 marks an organization's marginal advancement toward its outcome goal, often characterized by a challenge in a public space (e.g. a longstanding mass demonstration, occupying a capital square, controlling a small portion of territory, or the adversary begins to make overtures). A 6 means that an organization actively resists by initiating attacks or nonviolent confrontational operations. A 4 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 2 signifies that an organization claims to exist yet shows no signs of activity. And 0 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 J in the Online codebook.

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 nonviolent techniques. To code 'nonviolent-resistance' techniques, I use Chenoweth & Stephan's (2011: 12) definition as a starting point: the employment of 'boycotts, strikes, protests, sit-ins, stay-aways, and other acts of civil disobedience'. I add other facets of sociopolitical life and governance that impact an entity's capability of winning: 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 III displays the coding questions for each marker.²⁹ 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 10 indicates an organization incorporates its political entity into the command structure. An 8 means that an organization has a political wing or party, but it remains subordinate to the military/

²⁹ Odd-numbered scores refer to an organization's wavering between even-numbered scores in a given year.

Table III. 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?

nonviolent action hierarchy. A 6 denotes an organization's limited formalized role for political operatives. A 4 refers to an organization's informal political operatives, who lack an official role within the organizational structure. A 2 marks an organization's involvement in low-level forms of political mobilization, such as distributing political propaganda or writing political graffiti. And 0 corresponds to an organization's absence of political infrastructure, political operatives, and political messaging and outreach.³⁰

Survival and success

Of all 536 organizations in REVMOD, the mean age is 17.4 years.³¹ The mean conflict duration is 14.5 years.³²

³⁰ See the Online codebook for coding examples.

³¹ 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 Online codebook for elaboration.

³² REVMOD's averages for age and duration align with other empirical assessments that note lengthy lifespan averages for

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. The number of organizations that partially or completely succeeded in achieving an outcome goal is 128 (23.9%), and 70 (13.1%) completely achieved an outcome goal. Notably, organizations with embedded political command succeeded in 103 (81.8%) of 126 efforts, whereas organizations without embedded political command succeeded in just 25 (6.1%) of 410 endeavors (see Figure 2).³³

Testing the effect of political command on organizational success

To demonstrate the dataset's utility, I conduct preliminary empirical analyses of the relationship between political command and conflict outcomes. Table IV 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.³⁴ In nearly every context, as expected from previous research (DeNardo, 1985), organizational size boosts prospects for success. Except in civil war, conflict duration has an inverse relationship with success.³⁵

Concerning strategic approach, strictly nonviolent organizations operate from the greatest disadvantage –

resistance organizations (e.g. Price's [2012] finding of an average of 16.2 years).

³³ A score of 10 in the graduated measure marks the coding cutoff for the political command binary variable.

³⁴ This is important considering Acosta (2014) highlights that achieving partial success helps organizations entrench political command.

³⁵ 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.

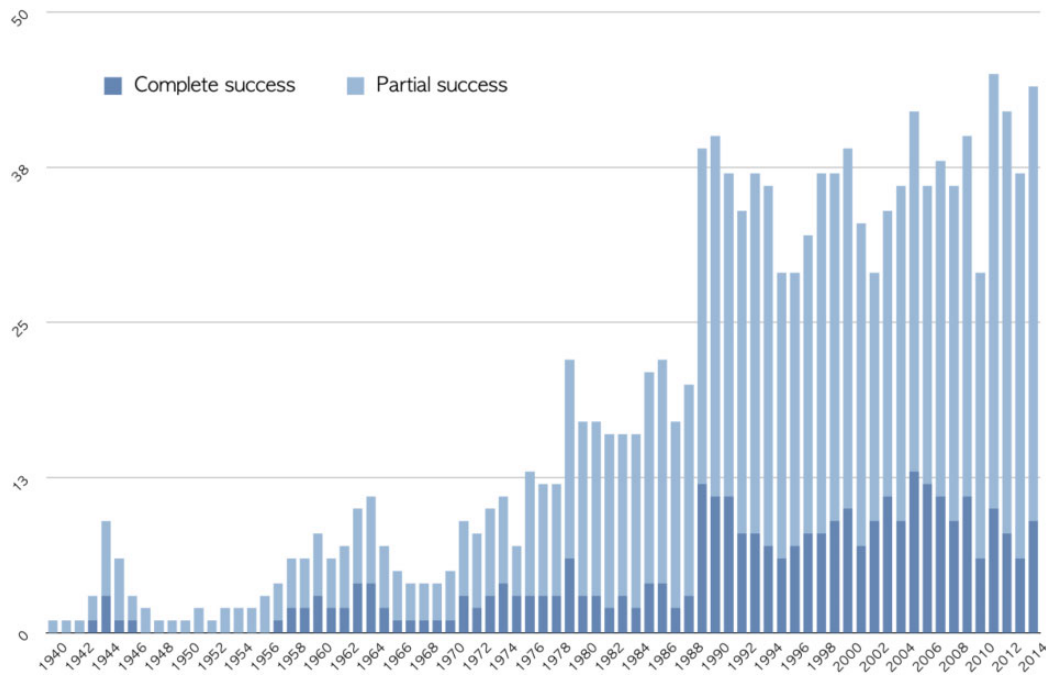


Figure 1. The success of resistance organizations (1940–2014)

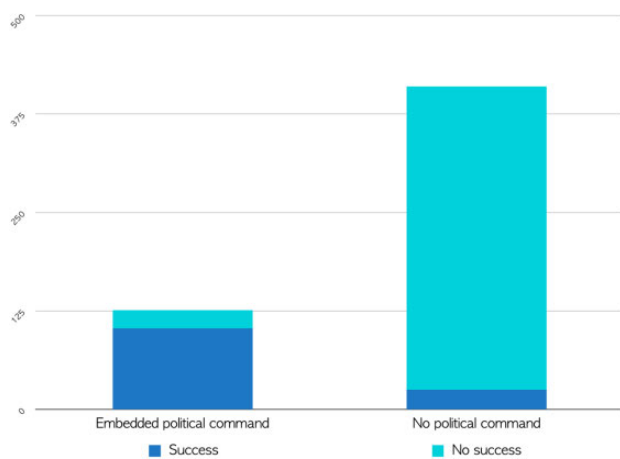


Figure 2. Organizational command and resistance success

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 test a significantly smaller and non-randomized 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).³⁶ After correcting for this with the inclusion of mixed-approach organizations and the addition of a political command measure,³⁷ 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’s ([1911]1966) notion of the ‘incompetence of the masses’ absent their subordination to a political vanguard (Lenin, [1902]1969).³⁸ The preliminary analyses illustrate that revolutionaries like Lenin and Mao correctly understood that political command infrastructure

³⁶ Chenoweth & Stephan (2011: 12) even admit: ‘Characterizing a campaign as violent or nonviolent simplifies a complex constellation of resistance methods.’ Further, ‘often some groups use both nonviolent and violent methods of resistance over the course of their existence’ (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011: 12).

³⁷ Chenoweth & Stephan repeatedly allude to the necessity of political leadership in achieving success (2011: 132, 141, 182, 195), but instead focus theoretically on the relationship between nonviolent strategies and mobilization size (2011: 30–61).

³⁸ Future large-N studies should compare nonviolent resistance organizations to interest groups and legal opposition political parties in order to gauge how illegality may affect the likelihood of nonviolent organizations achieving their political outcomes. For a preliminary analysis, see Table G in the Online appendix.

Table IV. Prais-Winsten regression results

	<i>Model 1</i>	<i>Model 2 Violent organizations</i>	<i>Model 3 Nonviolent organizations</i>	<i>Model 4 Terrorist organizations</i>	<i>Model 5 Organizations in a civil war</i>	<i>Model 6</i>
<i>y=Achievement</i>						
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 ²	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
ρ	0.83	0.81	0.88	0.86	0.88	0.85

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

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

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 & Ramos's (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 multiple 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. For example, are the forces that spawn nonviolent 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 scholars advance new research agendas and test resistance organizations operating in different contexts against one another or together in search of generalizability.


Replication data

The dataset, codebook, and do-file for the empirical analysis in this article, along with the Online appendix, are available at www.prio.org/jpr/datasets and www.benjaminacosta.com.

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ORCID iD

Benjamin Acosta  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2904-8983>

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- BENJAMIN ACOSTA, b. 1980, PhD in Political Science (Claremont, 2014); Director and Curator, DataHalfLife.Com; primary interest: resistance studies; recent article in *Terrorism and Political Violence*.