A Turn to Violence: The Escalation of Nonviolent Movements

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Abstract

Nonviolent resistance can be a powerful tool for ordinary civilians to transform their governments; however, not all nonviolent movements end in success and many ultimately escalate into violent conflicts. To understand this escalatory process, I begin with the premise that social movements are not unitary actors, but a collection of groups with varied preferences on goals and tactics. I argue that escalation is likely when movements have violence-wielding groups among their varied factions, as these groups deal in violence, believe in its utility, and can make the strategic decision to engage in violence as needed. I argue this is particularly likely when the campaign fails to make progress using nonviolent channels, suggesting that nonviolent tactics will not be successful to achieve the group's goals. Expectations are tested using the NAVCO data and the case of Algeria's escalation from a nonviolent movement to brutal civil war, and results are generally supportive.

Introduction

Nonviolent resistance can be a powerful tool for ordinary civilians to achieve political change, and indeed, nonviolent campaigns are more likely to achieve maximalist goals than their violent counterparts (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Despite the greater chances of success, some movements fail to achieve progress, while many ultimately escalate into violent conflicts. According to the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) project, nearly 20% of nonviolent movements escalate to using violence as their primary tactic at some point during the campaign. While there is a large literature in sociology to explain movement emergence (e.g., Tarrow 2011), as well as a growing literature in political science to explain nonviolent success (e.g.,Chenoweth and Stephan 2011), relatively less work has focused on movement dynamics or campaign outcomes other than success. I draw on existing work on protest cycles and the breakdown of nonviolent discipline to explore why political campaigns may fail and transform from nonviolence to violence.

To understand the escalatory process, I examine the interaction between the organizational capacity for violence and the lack of movement progress. Nonviolence succeeds because of lower barriers to participation that encourage high turnout as well as diversity among participants, pulling together different ethnic groups, classes, ages, political parties, and ideological groups. There are no requirements that individuals are able or willing to carry out violence, which contributes to generating the high quantity and quality of protesters that is needed for a movement to be successful. As a result, however, an average protester is not well equipped to become a rebel combatant. Escalating to violence as the movement's primary tactic requires that the movement can engage the government militarily, and campaigns that lack the organizational capacity to engage in violence will be disadvantaged when attempting to escalate.

Movements are not unitary actors, but are made up of varied factions and groups that may have different preferences over strategies and tactics, some of which are organized to engage in violence (Cunningham 2011; Pearlman 2011). I argue that the presence of violence-wielding groups within a nonviolent movement, including radical flanks and parallel movement armies, increases the chance that a movement will escalate to violence, as these groups are better equipped to withstand repression and even engage in military exchanges with the state's army. Beyond having the capacity to engage in violence, leaders of these groups are distinct from other factions in the larger campaign. They deal in violence, believe in its utility, and can unilaterally decide to escalate if they perceive the need to do so.

I also argue that slow or no progress can increase the likelihood of escalation. The lack of progress can encourage the use of violence by convincing demonstrators that nonviolence will fail to achieve meaningful concessions, thus losing its appeal as a strategy. Similarly, the literature on cycles of protest generally finds that violence becomes more likely in a cycle's downturn, when enthusiasm, participation, and the likelihood of making progress declines (Tarrow 2011). Put together, violence-wielding groups have the option to pursue change through organized violence, which I expect to happen when they begin to perceive that nonviolence is unlikely to achieve the campaign's goals due to lack of progress. This interaction between the organized capacity for violence and a lack of progress combine to encourage movement escalation.

This line of inquiry has the potential to add to our understanding of the dynamics of social movements and nonviolent campaigns, specifically as it relates to their escalation to violence. This is an important area that has received less attention than questions of onset or efficacy. Studies on radical flanks, for example, have primarily focused on their relationship to movement success, whereas here I focus on a different outcome – movement escalation. Understanding how these movements unfold over time is an important part of the larger story of social movements. More specially, understanding the transformation of a primarily nonviolent movement to a violent movement is worthwhile from both a scholarly and policy perspective. Civil wars and extra-state wars can be highly destructive events with long-lasting implications. Appreciating the potential factors that lead to movement escalation can ultimately help domestic actors as well as the international community prevent widespread violence.

In the following, I first consider what it means for a movement to escalate, as there are many potential ways to conceptualize this phenomenon. Second, I explore why movements escalate to violence, arguing that the capacity for organized violence and a lack of progress generate the conditions for movements to adopt violence. Expectations are tested using data from the NAVCO project, as well as a case study of the Algerian movement that escalated to civil war. Results are generally supportive of expectations. I conclude with a discussion of policy relevance and directions for future research.

On Escalation

It is important to first clarify what is meant by escalation, as there are many different ways that one could conceptualize this term. The first is to view escalation as a growth in the size or magnitude of the movement, which can refer to the number of participants, diversity of participants, geographic coverage, frequency and length of events, or innovation of nonviolent tactics (McAdam 1983; Sørensen

and Johansen 2016). This form of escalation is an important part of social movement cycles, especially during the mobilization phase, with heightened conflict and the rapid diffusion of collective action indicating a form of escalatory processes (Tarrow 2011).

While important, I am not focused on magnitude or mobilization, but on the escalation to violence. In examining violence, some have explored individual campaign events to understand why nonviolent events, such as a mass protest, escalate to violent events, such as a riot (Alpaugh 2009; Gustafson 2016). This is not about the campaign as a whole, but the dynamics within an individual instance of collective action. Within studies of nonviolence, others have examined the breakdown of nonviolent discipline (Pinckney 2016). Nonviolent movements can be a powerful harbinger of change, but maintaining nonviolent discipline is seen as critical to movement success (Sharp 1973; Ackerman and DuVall 2000; Chenoweth and Schock 2015). While nonviolent discipline is often left undefined, it is understood to mean that movement activists refrain from using physical violence. By this definition, "nonviolent discipline is something that is rarely (if ever) fully present or fully absent. Instead, campaigns have higher or lower levels of nonviolent discipline depending on a large number of individual campaign participant decisions" (Pinckney 2016, 16-17). Nonviolent discipline is then understood to be about the actions of individual dissenters, and the more individuals who use physical violence, whether throwing rocks or using handguns, the less nonviolent discipline a movement has.

Understanding the escalation of individual events and the use of physical violence by individual dissenters is a critical part to understanding the use of violence, but here I focus on the overall tactics of the campaign. Campaign escalation refers to the adoption of violence as the movement's primary tactic. This is closer to the concept of radicalization, which is discussed by social movement scholars. Bosi, Demetriou, and Malthaner (2014, 2) define radicalization as "a process forming through strategy, structure, and conjuncture, and involving the adoption and sustained use of violent means to achieve articulated political goals." Movement escalation or radicalization goes beyond the use of violence in an individual event or the use of violence by individuals associated with a movement, although the escalation process can include each of these elements. Rather, it is about a strategic choice to adopt violence to achieve the campaign's political goals. This can be contrasted with the idea of the "breakdown" of nonviolent discipline, which is implied to be less about strategy and more about the inability of a centralized movement to control individual actors.

Understanding Escalation from Nonviolence

For a nonviolent movement to escalate to violence, I begin with the premise that social movements are made up of a variety of actors, some of which have the organized capacity to use violence. I argue that movements with preexisting violence-wielding groups – including radical flanks and movement armies – are more likely to escalate, especially when these groups lose faith in the utility of nonviolence. This paves the way for the adoption of violence as the campaign's primary tactic.

The Capacity for Violence

I argue that movement escalation will almost always require the organized capacity for violence. Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) argue that nonviolent movements enjoy a participation advantage due to lower barriers of participation, including physical, moral, informational, and commitment barriers. Nonviolence requires less physicality – individuals do not need to be fit, young, agile, or battle-ready. Nonviolence also has lower moral barriers, as there is no need to fire weapons or engage in violence. There are lower information barriers, as nonviolent movements are not typically secretive and certainly not to the same degree as insurgencies that need to train, strategize, and recover away from the government's eye. Quite to the contrary, many nonviolent tactics use mass participation that can readily be gauged by viewing the event. Finally, there are lower commitment barriers. Generally speaking, nonviolent participants can join and leave the movement at will. They do not need to leave home, join a military organization, or be cut off from their social networks to maintain secrecy. Overall, nonviolence is expected to draw a greater diversity and quantity of participants; however, most of these demonstrators are unlikely to make good rebel soldiers.

Demonstrators do not natively have the ability to wage war, but violent-wielding groups do possess that ability, or in the least, are better equipped to scale up their activities in order to do so. Indeed, rebel groups develop recruitment strategies allowing them to screen rebel candidates for skilled, educated, and motivated individuals (Weinstein 2007; Bueno de Mesquita 2005). The state has a clear advantage when it comes to using violence, as even relatively weak states will have a security apparatus with dedicated personnel, equipment, training, and mandate for the use of violence. Thus it is critical that there is some capacity for movement participants to use violence in an organized fashion in order to stand against government forces, withstand repression, and engage government forces militarily. The ability to engage in armed conflict is critical, and without some kind of capacity, nonviolent dissenters or even occasional rioters are unlikely to be able to withstand a violent government response.

I focus on two potential sources of violence-wielding actors that are also part of social movements.[1] The first are radical flanks. In the social movement literature, a radical flank can refer to a group that has more extreme demands, more exclusive ideology, or uses violent tactics, while the literature on civil resistance tends to view radical flanks as groups that use violence (Chenoweth and Schock 2015). I adopt the latter conceptualization, which is a group that is a part of the broader movement and pursuing the same goals as the movement, but uses violent tactics to achieve those goals. Beyond radical flanks, many nonviolent campaigns have what Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) refer to as parallel army institutions, which are established to provide an alternative to official state institutions. Movement armies are either armies or militias that were established by the movement (rather than coopted state institutions) and run parallel to official state institutions.

By focusing on violence-wielding actors, the process of adopting violence can be understood in strategic terms. Della Porta (2013, 76) notes that different groups are "often divided on which tactics to pursue" but also "exercise agency: they discuss strategies, experiment with them, and divide over them." This points to two important realities of violent groups. First, each of these groups can have independent hubs of leadership, where the leaders of violent groups deal in violence, believe in its utility, and will advocate for its use if needed. Leaders of radical flanks or parallel armies can make decisions independent of overall movement leadership, such that the decision to escalate does not need to be unanimous or uniform throughout the movement. Second, the decision to escalate to violence points to a purposeful and strategic decision to escalate. As argued by Bosi, Demetriou, and Malthaner (2014, 2), "Far from being inevitable, the process of radicalization involves in our view the adoption of long-term strategy as well as short-term tactics, each chosen from among alternative violent and nonviolent options and in the service of goals which potentially evolve in the course of the process." It is, in other words, a strategic choice to escalate. This can be contrasted with the breakdown of nonviolent discipline, which is pitched as the inability of leaders to control individual dissenters.

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[1] I examine radical flanks and parallel army institutions, but there are other actors that nonviolent movements can draw upon to engage in violence, notably state military defections. Military defections were essential to the escalation of the Syrian nonviolent movement to a long and bloody civil war, where the Free Syrian Army was founded by officers of the Syrian Armed Forces to fight against Bashar al-Assad's government. While this example is not to be overlooked, in general military defections are seen as an important source of leverage against the regime and thus a key to nonviolent *success* (Nepstad 2011; Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Tests of this relationship (results are available in the Online Appendix Table A2) suggest that defections have no overall impact on escalation (but do increase the likelihood of movement success). This suggests an interesting duality and path for future research, as defection generally seem to increase the chances of success but individual movement suggest that it can also promote escalation.

Thus, all else equal, I expect that movements with violence-wielding groups, including radical flanks and parallel army institutions, will be more likely to escalate to violence given their capacity to confront the state militarily as well as their separate hub of leadership that can unilaterally decide to escalate:

> *Hypothesis 1. Nonviolent movements with radical flanks or parallel army institutions are more likely to escalate to violence.*

The Lack of Movement Progress

Given the power of nonviolence to succeed, if a campaign is achieving political concessions using nonviolent tactics there is little incentive to resort to violence. There are several types of concessions that can be won by nonviolent campaigns, ranging from verbal commitments up to significant accommodations. A verbal commitment is a promise made, but not yet fulfilled. Minor concessions can include shuffling the executive's cabinet, installing new regional political leaders, or giving concessions unrelated to the campaign's ultimate political goals, while significant concessions might include ending emergency rule or engaging in constitutional reform. The more significant the concessions that a movement wins, the more confidence participants will have in the power of nonviolence. Indeed, winning concessions from the government can *increase* the level of protest as participants commit to nonviolent tactics (Muller and Opp 1986). Rasler (1996), for example, finds that when the Iranian government gave concessions to protesters during the Iranian Revolution, it led to increased mobilization and protest activity. Anti-government dissenters saw nonviolent activity as a path to win greater accommodations, as they gained confidence in their ability to do so after their initial successes.

Conversely, when the government refuses to grant meaningful concessions, individuals can lose faith in nonviolence altering the balance of the overall movement. When there is limited, slow, or no progress made towards achieving the campaign's political goals, continuing to engage in nonviolent activities may lose its appeal. This can impact moderate dissenters in particular. Tarrow (2011, 206) argues that the more moderate elements of social movements drop out first when the campaign fails to make gains, leaving the core, who tend to be more committed and often more radical activists. This can shift the balance away from nonviolent actors towards the more radical elements. Koopmans (1993) likewise finds that movements become more radical over time if they fail to meet their initial goals, as moderate and radical wings increasingly split over strategy, and militancy begins to stand in for the novelty that movements enjoy in earlier stages. This type of pattern can be found in a number of different protest movements. Della Porta and Tarrow (1986), for example, find that violence was

present throughout the left-wing Italian protests of the 1960s-70s; however, during the decline of the protest wave, violence became more prevalent as a percentage of collective action events. In Northern Ireland, de Fazio (2014, 128) similarly argues that the movement escalated as a result of "[t]he frustration caused by the stalled political situation and the incapacity of moderate civil rights leaders to obtain tangible results." A movement's radical flank may start as one of many active factions in the movement, but become the primary actor after the moderates fall away. The can allow the radical flank to take over and transform the movement into a violent campaign, as reduced competition or discussion with other factions regarding the direction of the movement allows leaders of violent groups to change paths.

The lack of progress can also encourage the leaders of violent groups to adopt a campaign of violence as the tenor of the movement shifts away from nonviolent tactics. An interesting question is to consider is why leaders would adopt violence if it is comparatively less likely to achieve success. In the aggregate, nonviolence may be about twice as likely as violence to succeed (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011); however, after failing to make progress the information environment has updated. If nonviolence has essentially failed such that leaders perceive the chances of success near zero, violence offers a second path to achieve success. Even if the tactic is less successful overall, given the failures of nonviolence it represents a potential way forward. It is thus expected that as nonviolent campaigns gain greater concessions from the government, they will be less likely to resort to violence:

> *Hypothesis 2. The greater the concessions gained by a nonviolent campaign, the less likely that campaign will be to escalate to violence.*

While the lack of progress can encourage violence, I argue that the lack of progress combined with pre-existing violent groups is particularly likely to produce escalation. A lack of progress can discourage individuals, and especially moderates, from continuing their nonviolent activities, while preexisting violence-wielding groups have the capacity to withstand state repression and engage the government militarily. In the case of Northern Ireland, for example, the lack of progress was a significant source of frustration, and it was the IRA and Nationalist movement in the aftermath of the Battle of the Bogside that was there to escalate the movement to violence. The IRA had a long history with the use of violence and militarism, so much so that Sanders (2011, 19) notes that "Many republicans saw little merit in the political struggle other than to serve as a companion to the armed struggle." The IRA was always something of a "back pocket" option in the case of Northern Ireland, and the discussion about the movement's next steps would have likely been considerably different absent this group and its

demonstrated ability to wage war. Put together, I expect that the lack of progress combined with a violent group will increase the chances of movement escalation.

>*Hypothesis 3. The impact of violence-wielding groups on movement escalation is conditional on concessions gained by movements.*

Research Design

Quantitative Analysis

To test the expectations developed above, I use the NAVCO 2.0 data, which are coded at the campaign-year (Chenoweth and Lewis 2013). These data cover the period from 1945-2006. Campaigns are defined as "a series of observable, continuous, purposive mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective" (416). To be included in the NAVCO data, each campaign must have "maximalist" goals as some point during the movement, which includes expelling foreign occupiers, overthrowing the existing regime, or gaining territorial independence. Campaigns must also have at least 1,000 observed participants and evidence of coordination across events.

To distinguish between violent and nonviolent movements, the NAVCO project codes the primary tactic used in a given year. This is about the overall balance of tactics used. If, on the balance, nonviolence is primarily used, it is defined as a nonviolent movement. Nonviolence defined as actions carried out by unarmed civilians that do not directly threaten the physical well-being of their opponent. If a campaign is carried out by armed individuals or involves the regular and purposeful use of violence, it is considered violent. Only nonviolent movements are included in the analysis. A movement exits the data if it ends or escalates to violence.[2]

The dependent variable is binary, and it is constructed based on changes in in the primary tactic used by the movement. *Escalation* is coded as 0 if a nonviolent movement does note escalate to violence in the following year, and 1 if it does escalate. The dependent variable then compares the primary tactic at time *t* with the primary tactic at time *t+1*. If a movement remains nonviolent or is no longer active in the next time period (*t+1*), the dependent variable is coded as 0 denoting the movement did not escalate. If it adopts violence, then the dependent variable is coded as 1. All independent

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[2] If a movement that has escalated to violence subsequently deescalates to nonviolence, it reenters the dataset. This occurred in two cases, the Ethniki Organosis Kyprios Agoniston's campaign against British occupation in Cyprus and the IRA's conflict against the UK in Northern Ireland.

variables are measured at time *t*, which has the effect of lagging all independent variables one year in relation to the dependent variable. There are 26 cases of movement escalation in the data.[3]

As the dependent variable is binary, logistic regression is used with robust standard errors clustered at the campaign level, as there is likely to be some panel dependencies within campaigns. The unit of analysis is the campaign-year. Finally, as binary time series cross section data is equivalent to duration data (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004), the movement's duration along with its squared and cubed terms are also included to account for potential time dependencies as I do not have a strong theoretical expectation for the shape of the underlying hazard (Carter and Signorino 2010). Including a cubic polynomial is a very flexible way to model the underlying hazard, as the terms will capture the shape of common parametric models (e.g., Weibull, log-logistic) or a semi-parametric model like the Cox model (282).

Independent Variables

To test the hypotheses, a series of independent variables are included in the model that are taken from the NAVCO 2.0 data. First, *progress* denotes the level of concessions the campaign wins from the government, which is coded based on the most significant achievement in a given year. It is an ordinal variable, coded 0 for the status quo, where the government makes no concessions; 1 for visible gains short of concessions, such as allowing greater protest or political openness, indicating that the state has changed its behavior to accommodate the opposition; 2 for limited concessions, such as verbal statements of conciliation or statements that the policy would change (but without additional action); 3 for significant concessions, which include real actions short of ultimate capitulation; and 4 for total success, where the movement achieves its stated political goals. *Violent group* is coded 1 if there is a violent radical flank within the movement or a parallel movement army, and 0 otherwise.[4] I also include an interaction term between progress and violent groups to test Hypothesis 3.

In addition to the primary independent variables, a series of variables that are linked to movement success are included that are also taken from the NAVCO 2.0 data. *Repression* indicates the level of repression conducted by the government against the nonviolent movement, coded 0 for no, 1

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[3] The Anti-Burnham/Hoyte movement in Guyana ends up excluded from the empirical study due to missing data, making the effective number of escalation cases 25. A summary of the movements that escalated to violence is available in the Online Appendix Table A1.

[4] I also test the impact of parallel armies and radical effects separately. Results are available in Online Appendix, Table A5. The results for the separate groups are similar; the primary difference is that the effect of radical flanks is weaker than that of parallel army institutions.

for mild, 2 for moderate, and 3 for extreme repression. There is compelling evidence, especially from qualitative work, that repression matters for the escalation of nonviolent movements to violence. White (1989), for example, argues that the use of repression led to the delegitimation of the state, the legitimation of violence, and the perception that nonviolence would fail in Northern Ireland. Yet on the whole, the role of repression on political protest is highly contested. Davenport (2007) refers to this as the "punishment puzzle," as repression has been found to increase, decrease, or have an inverted-U shaped effect on protests activity, as well as be variable over time, be dependent on past tactics, or have no impact at all (Hibbs 1973; Lichbach and Gurr 1981; Muller 1985; Rasler 1996; Moore 1998; Gurr and Moore 1997). The reality is that about 90% of nonviolent movements are repressed at some point according to the NAVCO data, so nearly all demonstrators will have some kind of experience with state repression. Interestingly, movements that escalate to violence actually have less repression on average in the year before escalation (1.75) than movements that do not escalate (1.92), although the difference is not statistically significant. There is also no clear pattern to suggest that campaigns require a certain level of repression to escalate (Table 1); severe repression and no repression are the most common levels preceding escalation.[5] As a result, there is no clear expectation about the role repression will play in the likelihood that a movement escalates to violence.

[Table 1 about here]

Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) argue that nonviolent movements are more likely to succeed based on the quantity and quality of participants.[6] The quality of participants refers to their diversity, which includes social cleavages along ethnic, gender, class, age, urban/rural, region, ideological, and party divides. The higher the quality of participants, the higher the likelihood that the movement will encourage defection among different groups within the government or important societal sectors. *Diversity* is constructed using a series of binary indicators for each of the above-mentioned cleavages, and is a sum of each of the factors where diversity is present.[7] The indicator ranges from 0 to 9; the

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[5] I test a number of variations of repression in the Online Appendix, available in Table A3. On the balance, repression does not appear to have a statistically significant effect on escalation.

[6] The larger the movement is, the greater the chance it has to increase costs of maintaining the status quo and encourage defections from within the regime and different sectors of society (Nepstad 2011). Movement size is included in robustness checks to test the effect of participation on escalation, available in Table A4 in the Online Appendix. This variable is not included in the main results due to missing data for this particular indicator.

[7] This composite measure of diversity is used to gauge the overall level of diversity within the movement. There is also some missing data in the different indicators; for example, there are 40 country-years missing for ethnic diversity. To address that, this summary indicator treats missing data as 0, or that that specific form of diversity is absent. This was done under the assumption that, if information could not be found about a specific form of diversity, it is absent. This generates a more conservative measure, and a harder test for the expectation that more

mean and median score is 7. It is expected that higher diversity movements will be more likely to achieve progress or full success, lessening the likelihood of escalation. Finally, s*ecession* is also included, which is coded 1 if the movement's primary goal is to win territorial control. One of the key findings of nonviolent efficacy is that only campaigns that are focused on overturning the central government or expelling an occupier are likely to achieve success. Nonviolent campaigns that are focused on territory are no more likely to succeed than violent campaigns. It is thus expected that territorial movements will be less likely to make progress and more likely to escalate to violence.

A series of additional control variables are also included. In most campaigns, the location of the movement and the target of the movement are the same. The nonviolent movement in Madagascar, for example, targeted Malagasy President Didier Ratsiraka. However, for movements against occupiers, such as Algeria's fight against France, the target and location are different. These control variables measure characteristics of the target country. This is particularly relevant for movements against foreign occupations, as the occupied territories were typically not independent countries at the time of the movement (and thus there is limited data about the location of the movement). *Population (log)* is the logged population of the target country, and *military personnel (log)* indicates the number of military personnel in the target government's military. In the civil war literature, countries with larger populations as well as countries with smaller military establishments are consistently found to be more likely to experience civil war (Hegre and Sambanis 2006). Nonviolent escalation is expected to operate similarly to civil war onset, such that larger populations and smaller militaries will increase the chances of movement escalation. Both of these measures are taken from the National Material Capabilities data (v5.0) (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972). *Regime type* is taken from the Polity IV data, and is coded from -10 to 10 (Marshall and Jaggers 2006). Regime type measures the level of democracy in the target country, and per the civil war literature, democracies are expected to be less likely to escalate to violence. Democracies are also expected to be better equipped to engage in dialogue, debate, and compromise, leading to greater concessions rather than escalation. Finally, I include a control variable for whether a movement has previously escalated to violence, as there are some movements with a history of using violent tactics. It is expected that previous escalation to violence will increase the chances of subsequent periods of escalation. Descriptive statistics can be found in Table 2. [8]

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diverse movements are likely to be successful. Measures of diversity are also tested separately, and results are available in Table A4 of the Online Appendix.

[8] For each of the indicators, additional research was done to address missing data where possible. Original research using a variety of sources was used to address supplement the NAVCO data regarding the presence of

[Table 2 about here]

Results

Results are presented in Table 3. Model 1 tests the effect of violent groups and progress on movement escalation, and Model 2 includes an interaction term between violent groups and movement progress.

[Table 3 about here]

Hypothesis 1 receives support from Model 1, which states that the presence of violence-wielding groups increases the likelihood of escalation. The coefficient for violent groups is statistically significant and positive. Figure 1 also presents a first differences plot, displaying the change in the probability of escalation if a variable moves from its minimum to maximum value.[9] holding all other variables at their mean or median, with 90% confidence intervals. Moving from not having a violence-wielding group to having one increases the probability of escalation by 5%. The results also lend support to Hypothesis 2, which states that progress will decrease the likelihood of escalation. The coefficient for progress is negative and statistically significant in Model 1, indicating that the more substantial the concessions received by a nonviolent movement, the less likely it is to escalate to violence. The first differences plot also supports Hypothesis 3, showing that a move from no progress to success decreases the probability of escalation by about 4%.

[Figure 1 about here]

To assess Hypothesis 3, which states that there is a conditional relationship between movement progress and the presence of a violence-wielding group, I first consider the models without the interaction term. As a non-linear model, the effect of an independent variable will be influenced by the other variables in the model. Berry, DeMeritt, and Esarey (2010) note that this compression is inherent within a non-linear model like logit, but that substantive compression can result from theoretically relevant effects while meaningful compression will not be mistakenly produced. My expectations suggest that when progress approaches an extreme value, such that the movement is making considerable gains, there should be very little chance of escalation regardless of other movement

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violent groups, progress, and repression. To supplement the population data, World Bank indicators were used when possible, and data from *The Military Balance* was used to supplement military personnel figures. Table A7 in the Online Appendix present analyses with the original, missing data, and results are very similar.

[9] The first differences plot holds all other variables at their mean or median, with 90% confidence intervals.

characteristics, including if there is a radical flank or parallel army. This suggests that there should be theoretically meaningful compression among the independent variable of interest.

Figure 2 shows the influence of violent groups conditional on movement progress.[10] This figure suggests that the influence of violence-wielding groups decreases as the level of progress increases. If a movement makes no progress, the presence of a violence-wielding group increases the probability of escalation by about 14%. This decreases to about 8% for verbal, 4% for minor, and 3% for major concessions. Each of these findings is statistically significant. The results become statistically insignificant movement success.[11]

[Figure 2 about here]

Moving beyond compression, I also hypothesize that the level of progress achieved by nonviolent campaigns conditions the impact of violence-wielding groups. To test Hypothesis 3, an explicit interaction term is included in Model 2 with marginal effects plots available in Figure 3.[12] The results are supportive of expectations. The effect of violence-wielding groups on the probability of escalation decreases as the level of progress achieved by the movement increases, moving from 12% for no success, to 10%, 6%, and 4% for the increasing levels of progress. The results are statically significant for each level, with the exception of success. The results from the interaction term are then similar from those obtained by the previous test, and support the expectation that campaigns that fail to make progress and have a group already organized to carry out violence are more likely to escalate.

[Figure 3 about here]

As a final means to interpret the substantive impact of the interaction term, I also provide a plot of predicted probabilities, available in Figure 4.[13] The predicted probabilities were calculated using Model 2, taking the interaction term into account. The effect of violent groups is apparent, as movements with these groups are consistently more likely to escalate. The probability of escalation also

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[10] This figure was produced using results from Model 1. Marginal effects are plotted with 90% confidence intervals. All other independent variables are held at their mean or median.

[11] It is relatively rare that a movement is considered successful but does not end in that year. Out of 70 movements that achieved success, only 5 continued the next year. In four of these cases, the campaign is coded as reaching "full success" two years in a row. This result should thus be treated cautiously.

[12] These figures were plotted using Model 2 with 90% confidence intervals. All remaining independent variables are at their mean or median.

[13] Predicted probabilities were calculated using Model 2, keeping all other variables at their means or medians, with 90% confidence intervals.

diminishes as the level of progress increases, as expected. In comparison, a movement that achieves full progress and does not have a violent group has only a 0.06% chance of escalating, while the probability of escalation for a movement with a violent group that has achieved no progress is 18.4%. This difference is statistically significant (with a 95% confidence interval of 0.074 to 0.293). In comparing movements with and without violent groups, there are also statistically significant differences in the probability of escalation at verbal, minor, and major levels of progress, which can be seen in Figure 4.

[Figure 4 about here]

In terms of the control variables, the indicator for repression is negative but statistically insignificant. This likely reflects the seemingly dual nature of repression seen in the descriptive statistics (Table 1). Nonviolent movements escalated most frequently with either no or severe levels of repression. This speaks to the complexity of the relationship more generally, where the perception and experience of repression may be different within varied political environments. For the remaining controls, secession performs as expected. Self-determination movements are significantly more likely to escalate to violence, which is expected as these movements are not any more likely than civil wars to achieve their political goals. Campaign diversity is negatively related to escalation as expected, indicating that more diverse movements are less likely to escalate, but outside of conventional levels of significance. Neither regime type nor the size of the government's military had any real bearing on the escalation to violence, while population is statistically significant, but in the opposite-than-expected direction. This suggests that large states are less likely to see movement escalation than smaller states. These are interesting findings in comparison to those in the civil war literature, and suggest that this is a rather different sample of cases that perhaps have different underlying motivations. The extra-state or colonial wars may be driving the finding, where having a small colonizer may make it easier for colonies to pursue independence. The presence of a nonviolent movement in a small country may also indicate that these movements are more likely to mobilize large portions of the country changing the overall balance of power. It is also interesting to note that movements that were previously violent are less likely to escalate again, although the finding is not statistically significant. Finally, the effect of time is not statistically significant, although the duration terms suggest that time initially decreases the chances of escalation, with its greatest negative effect around year 4. The effect becomes zero around year 9, after which time has a positive impact through until the end of the effect range of movement length, which is 13 years.

Alternative Explanations

Moving beyond the results presented here, I also consider whether the presence of violence-wielding groups may be a symptom of the escalatory process rather than a cause of it. A nonviolent campaign might essentially be forced to escalate because of government violence. In other words, escalation may not be due to the combination of a lack of progress and a violence-wielding group, but may result from needing to adapt to handle severe government repression (Young 2013). The results test for repression, and find that if anything, severe repression decreases the chances of escalation. This fits with my overall expectations, which are that without infrastructure to withstand government violence, movements are more likely to collapse than be able to develop under the pressure.

I also consider cases where a radical flank or parallel army were activated after the nonviolent movement began. Using the creation of a violent group as a dependent variable, I test a number of indicators in the attempt to explain why these groups are created. Progress has no real effect on their creation, and repression appears to decrease the likelihood that these groups become active. As diversity increases, it decreases the chances of a violent group becoming active. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain the activation of these violence wielding groups, although it does not appear that either repression or progress are driving forces of creating parallel armies or radical flanks. Results of these tests are available in the Online Appendix, Table A6.

The Escalation of Nonviolence in Algeria

To further explore these dynamics, the escalation of Algeria's nonviolent movement to civil war is considered. The NAVCO data code Algeria as engaging in a nonviolent movement in 1992, which escalated to violence in 1993. The origins of mass dissent, however, can be traced back to the 1980s. Following independence, Algeria was run by a single party. The National Liberation Front (FLN) was a socialist party that relied heavily on strong oil prices to maintain their rule and buy the support of their citizens; however, the price of oil plunged in 1986, wiping out nearly half of Algeria's budget. The collapse of the budget was coupled with a bulging population, creating the need for increases in the food supply, housing market, urban infrastructure, and employment market, none of which the Algerian government could provide. The situation in Algeria was precarious. The youth were particularly hard hit, and many young men were without jobs and mocked as *hittistes*, from the Arab word *hit* for wall. So the joke went, their job was to stand around and prop up walls in a socialist country where supposedly all could get work.

In 1988, large-scale riots led by impoverished and disgruntled youth broke out. They were met with a harsh government response. The military fired on the crowds, killing anywhere from the government's official estimate of 176 to unofficial estimates of around 500. At this point, the youth and hittistes alone could not parley their frustrations into a political movement, while the language of socialism was tarnished in Algeria as a result of the FLN. This was a key moment for the Islamist movement to step in and transform this revolt into a structured political campaign.

There were divides in Algeria's Islamist movement from the beginning: "Right away, two major factions became apparent: an extremist group that opted for armed struggle and soon went underground, and a reformist group that sought to influence the regime's decision without upsetting the status quo of society" (Kepel 2002, 163). The radical faction was led by Mustafa Bouyali, who was a veteran of the war of independence and advocated for violence from the start, viewing the state as impious and calling for the establishment an Islamist state via jihad. Bouyali founded the Mouvement Islamique Armé (MIA) in 1982, which carried out an underground campaign as the "first serious challenger to the power of the FLN" (163). At the same time, there was a nonviolent Islamist movement that emerged among the students and professors of Algeria's universities along with select few preachers, who called for actions including greater respect for sharia in state law.

Once the riots broke out in 1988, the nonviolent Islamist faction was able to situate itself as the intermediary between the rioting youth and the Algerian government. In response, President Chadli Bendjedid promised reform, establishing a new constitution that disestablished the FLN as the sole party and allowing freedom of expression. A number of opposition parties formed following the reform, the most notable of which was the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). The FIS itself was quite diverse. Its 15 founders included Ali Benhadj, a follower of Bouyali and proponent of armed violence, as well as FLN veteran Abassi Madani (Kepel 2002, 167). Benhadj and Madani would become the two heads of the FIS, where Benhadj catered to the more radical Algerian youth, and Madani catered to the urban middle class to include shopkeepers and traders.

The FIS became a powerful political machine in short order. Its preexisting network of preachers and party apparatus allowed it to quickly gain popularity and maintain a state of constant mobilization. They released a weekly publication, organized marches and strikes, and forced the government to agree to local elections in 1990, in which the FIS won a considerable number of local positions. In 1991, the FIS continued to mobilize large collective actions, including protests in favor of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War and against gerrymandering of districts, which forced the government to schedule open and

parliamentary elections in 1991. During this time, the violent Islamist MIA sat largely dormant, as nonviolent tactics and the use of legal political channels were proving effective.

In the summer of 1991, the Algerian military hit back in attempt to stall the progress of the FIS, declaring a state of emergency and jailing Benhadj and Madani on June 30. Setbacks delivered by the government, coupled with weakening support of the severe Islamist ideology, began to push out radical Islamists who were frustrated with the slow pace of progress (Zoubir 1998, 81). Violence increased as the FIS leadership was unable to rein in these more militant members. In November 1991, a group of "Afghans" (Islamist veterans of the Afghan War) decapitated army conscripts at a checkpoint in Guemmar, which is described as the "first indication of a jihadi-salafist contingent at the fringes of the Islamist party in Algeria" (Kepel 2002, 257). This can be considered a breakdown in nonviolent discipline. The violence was not sanctioned by the FIS leadership, who were instead awaiting the parliamentary elections and were not willing to promote the use of violence as they feared it could provide a pretext for the Algerian government to use military force (Martínez 2000, 70). These early adopters of violence were largely repressed by the government, and indeed supporters of the militants blamed the FIS leadership for their demise. As noted by one Algerian, "Hachani[14] is a nitwit… it was because of him that the 'Afghans' were arrested… When they arrested Madani and Benhadj, the 'Afghans' said, 'We must wage a *jihad*.' But he told them to wait" (70).

While some groups felt the progress was dragging after the summer of 1991, the nonviolent core remained in control. This changed after progress was definitively halted in December of 1991, following the first round of parliamentary elections. The FIS won around 48% of the vote, and forecasts of the second round indicated that the FIS would win the majority and be able to form the new government. The state, fearing an FIS victory, cancelled the next round of elections, arrested tens of thousands of party members, put mosques under surveillance, and formally banned the party on April 4. At the same time, the military took over, deposed Bendjedid, and declared a state of emergency, suspending various constitutionally-granted rights while using torture and imprisonment to quell the popular opposition group.

While the repressive actions taken by the state effectively broke the FIS party machinery, it did not end the movement. However, it was not the civilian FIS voters and sympathizers who took up the mantle to use violence. As argued by Martínez (2000), the costs were too high:

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[14] Hachani took over as leader of the FIS after the arrest of Madani and Benhadj.

[M]obilisation in support of the FIS during the electoral process had required no effort – voting and going to meetings at the Stade du 5 Juillet involved no risk – and the advantages gained were significant: priority in housing allocation, regularsation of title to land used for illegal building, a symbolic victory over the people responsible for the repression of October 1988… From the moment when the party was banned it was their lives that former FIS voters staked if the joined the *jihad* to set up an Islamic state. Many were not sure of seeing its achievement, even less of getting any benefit from investment in the *jihad*, so vast was the gap between the regime's resources and the guerrillas' destitute state." (57-8)

Rather, it was the radical elements of the FIS that were formally on the fringes that emerged to continue the struggle. Smaller groups were largely "neutralized" by the security forces and their campaign of repression (Martínez 2000, 48); however, the MIA remained as a rallying point and a beacon of the violent resistance. Formed by veterans of the Algerian War for Independence, the MIA was joined with veterans from the Afghan War. It was "well-organized and structured and favored a long-term jihad" (Kepel 2002, 260), and ordinary Algerians seemed to have placed their faith in the MIA. Abdellah, a newsagent from the suburbs of Algiers, declared that, "This is not going to last, Chébouti will come down from the mountains with his Moudjahidin, and I swear to you he will kill them all" (quoted in Martínez 2000, 69). In January 1993, Benhadj issued a fatwa giving the MIA his blessing.

The case of Algeria illustrates the larger causal story presented here. The Islamic movement in Algeria was divided from the beginning, with more radical factions advocating violence and a mainstream faction who wanted to work within the existing state institutions. Both factions were active early on but at low levels, until the riots of 1988 when the Islamic movement was able to situate itself as the key intermediary between the disgruntled youth and Islamic middle class on the one hand and the government on the other. The emergence and success of the FIS made the use of violence seem unnecessary, and between 1989 and 1991 the movement made considerable political gains. This began to change following the summer of 1991 and the arrest of the FIS leaders, when state intervention and declining popular support made success seem less likely, but especially after the "interruption" of the electoral process that definitively ended the peaceful transformation of Algerian politics. The government carried out a massive campaign of repression, and smaller groups were neutralized; however, there were existing armed groups within Algeria and a deep knowledge of how to use violence in an organized manner that were able to escape government repression and launch their own campaign against the state. The MIA, made up of veterans of the Algerian War for Independence and

the Afghan War, was organized, structured, and able to take up the mantle. This increasing level of violence, as indicated by the number of terror attacks by month, can be seen in Figure 3.[15] Nonviolent discipline began to breakdown as progress waned, but there was a definitive switch to violence in light of the brutal crackdown of the regime. The end of progress combined with a preexisting violent group combined to mark the start of the Algerian Civil War.

[Figure 5 about here]

Conclusion

While nonviolence can be a powerful tool to achieve change, nonviolent campaigns can also escalate to violence. To understand this process, I argue that movements with violence-wielding groups that also fail to make progress are likely to escalate. Organized violent groups will be better able to engage the government militarily, allowing them to continue on the campaign's fight using armed violence, and when progress is slow using nonviolent means, these groups can make the decision to escalate. The quantitative results are supportive. Violence-wielding groups, including radical flanks and parallel armies, increase the likelihood of escalation, while increasing levels of movement progress decrease the chances of escalation. There is also an interactive effect between progress and violent groups, such that the impact of violent groups on escalation is greatest at low levels of progress, and declines as more substantial accommodations are won. The case of Algeria also lent qualitative support to the hypotheses. The waning success of nonviolence encouraged a breakdown of nonviolent discipline, but when the democratic process was harshly halted and all progress stopped, it was the preexisting MIA that was able to survive the government repression to wage war against the state.

A number of findings are interesting from the perspective of research on violent conflict. Government repression is a strong predictor of civil war onset (e.g., Young 2013), but if anything appears to decrease the chances of nonviolent movement escalation. This indicates that repression may work to stunt the adoption of violence by nonviolent campaigns, such that movements that are not heavily repressed have more space and greater opportunity to escalate (e.g., Fearon and Laitin 2003).

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[15] Data on terror attacks are taken from the Global Terrorism Database (START 2016), and list the aggregated number of all terror attacks taking place in Algeria by month. The groups partaking in attacks, with the number of attacks in parentheses, were the Abu Nidal Organization (1), Algerian Mujahideen for Muslims (1), Armed Islamic Movement (1), Islam Liberation Front (1), Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) (120), Islamist extremists (21), Kach (1), Muslim Fundamentalists (29), Muslim Militants (22), Tayeb Al-Afghani's Islamist Group (1), Tuareg extremists (1), and Unknown (48). Data on attacks carried out by the AIS and Takfi wa'l Hijra are taken from the UCDP-GED data (Sundberg and Melander 2013), and indicate the number of attacks carried out by each respective group on government targets.

Beyond repression, another set of variables that are typically quite robust indicators of civil war onset were statistically insignificant, in the case of regime type and military size, and in the opposite direction in the case of population. This brings up important questions about this group of conflict onsets, which includes civil war and extra-state war, and whether countries that select into nonviolence first have different characteristics than countries whose conflicts originate from other sectors in society (e.g. Braithwaite and Cunningham 2018).

Taken together, this suggests there are potentially interesting questions about the onset of violent conflict that can be addressed by better understanding the origins of mass mobilization. In other words, much can be gained by considering the overlap between violent and nonviolent forms of contention. This is particularly important given the focus on escalatory processes and patterns of onset, which are potentially more useful to detect, predict, and mitigate conflict, both from a research and policy perspective. Given that some very costly civil and extra-state conflicts have emerged from nonviolent movements, including Algeria's civil war but also conflicts like the Syrian Civil War, understanding the drivers of this escalatory process can help both domestic and international actors develop policy in the attempt to mitigate the effects of radicalization.

Extensions to this line of research include further parsing out the escalation process, which is a useful exercise to understand both the dynamics of nonviolent campaigns and onset of civil conflict. In the case of Algeria, "non-organized" factions increased their use of violence before the campaign fully switched tactics. The pattern of increased terrorism appeared to be a breakdown in nonviolent discipline. A better understanding of the period between the use of primarily nonviolent and primarily violent tactics would clarify the escalatory process and be of greater use to policymakers. Is there typically an increase in individual uses of violence before violent groups decide to attack? Is there a pattern of escalation from rioters, defensive uses of violence, and opportunistic looters; to occasional militia attacks; to fully violent campaigns carried out by trained insurgents? Further, once nonviolent discipline breaks, can the presence of violence-wielding groups explain the escalation to violence, or are there other factors at play? The role of security defections is also quite interesting, as qualitatively there are cases where defections were central to the story of escalation. However, quantitatively defections are linked only to success and have no real impact on escalation.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Level of Repression by Movement-Years that Do and Do Not Escalate

	Remained Nonviolent	Escalated	Total
None	75 (24.3%)	9 (36.0%)	63 (25.2%)
Mild	23 (7.4)	1 (4.0)	18 (7.2)
Moderate	62 (20.1)	2 (8.0)	40 (19.2)
Severe	149 (48.2)	13 (52.0)	139 (48.5)
Total	309	25	334

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Escalate	340	0.08	0.27	0	1
Violent Groups	332	0.49	0.50	0	1
Progress	337	1.76	1.60	0	4
Repression	334	1.91	1.25	0	3
Diversity	340	7.02	2.19	0	9
Secession	340	0.09	0.29	0	1
Population (log)	340	10.36	1.44	5.66	13.95
Military Personnel (log)	340	5.18	1.60	1.61	8.54
Regime Type	340	-0.29	6.81	-10	10
Previously Violent	340	0.05	0.22	0	1
Duration	340	2.84	2.35	1	14
Duration^2	340	13.53	24.59	1	196
Duration^3	340	92.45	271.93	1	2744

Table 3. Determinants of Nonviolent Movement Escalation, 1945-2006

	Model 1	Model 2
Violent Group	1.655**	1.246*
	(0.005)	(0.035)
Progress	-0.736***	-1.559**
	(0.000)	(0.006)
Violent Group * Progress	–	0.950†
		(0.099)
Repression	-0.309	-0.301
	(0.137)	(0.142)
Diversity	-0.158	-0.152
	(0.156)	(0.167)
Secession	1.091†	1.169†
	(0.075)	(0.064)
Population (log)	-0.365*	-0.391*
	(0.038)	(0.022)
Military Personnel (log)	0.157	0.150
	(0.390)	(0.399)
Regime Type	0.047	0.048
	(0.176)	(0.156)
Previously Violent	-0.322	-0.362
	(0.713)	(0.671)
Duration	-0.569	-0.446
	(0.514)	(0.633)
Duration^2	0.085	0.052
	(0.648)	(0.800)
Duration^3	-0.003	-0.000
	(0.779)	(0.979)
Constant	2.377	2.814
	(0.196)	(0.141)
N	331	331
χ^2	63.285***	63.404***
Log likelihood	-65.414	-64.455

Logistic regression coefficients with p-values in parentheses
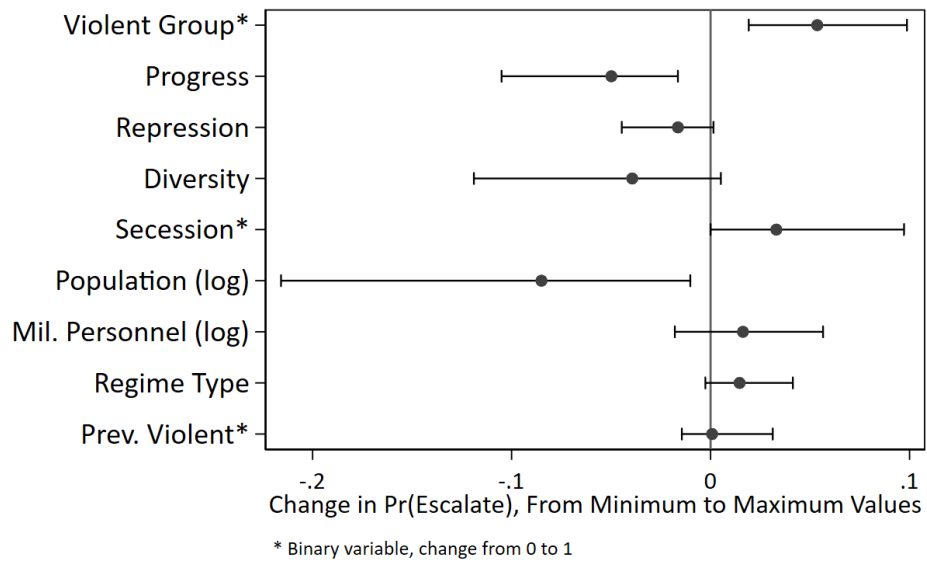
***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05, †p<0.1

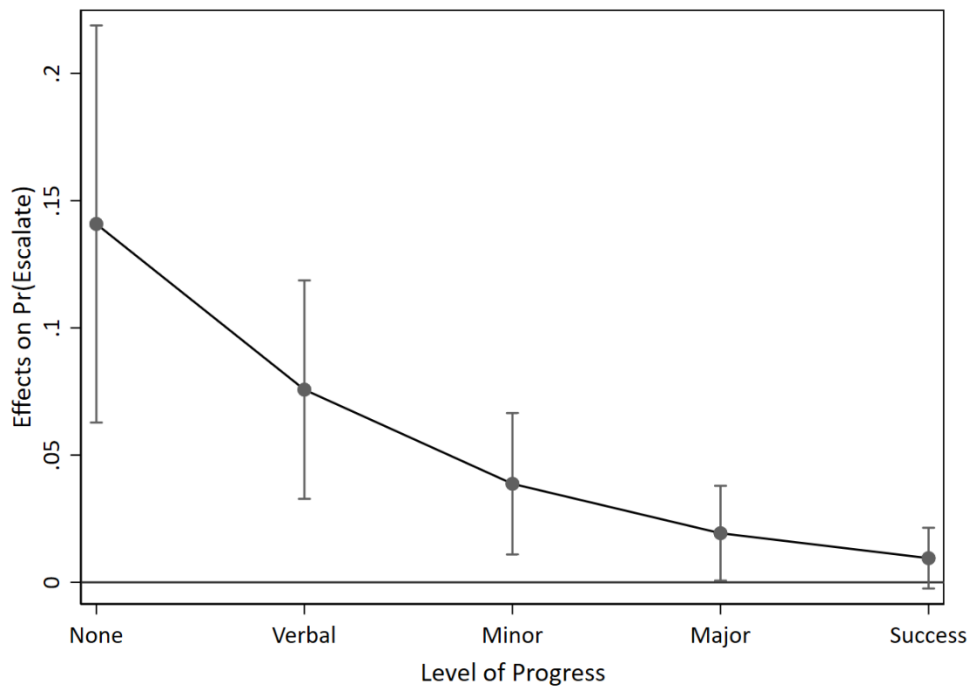*Figure 1. First Differences Plot, Model 1*

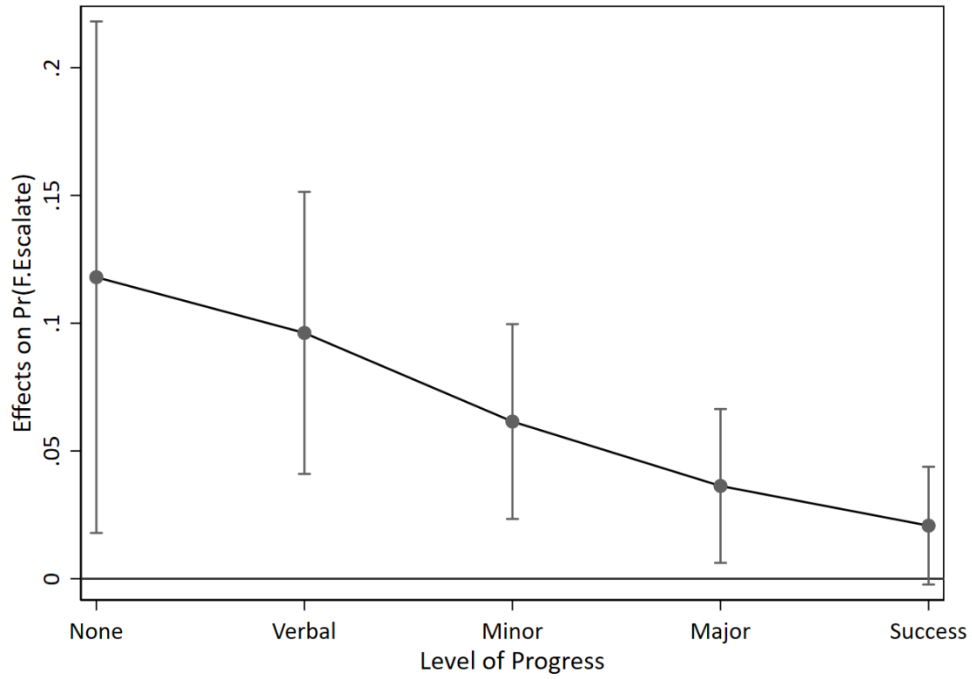*Figure 2. Marginal Effects of Violent Groups, No Interaction Term*

Figure 3. Marginal Effects of Violent Groups, with Interaction Term
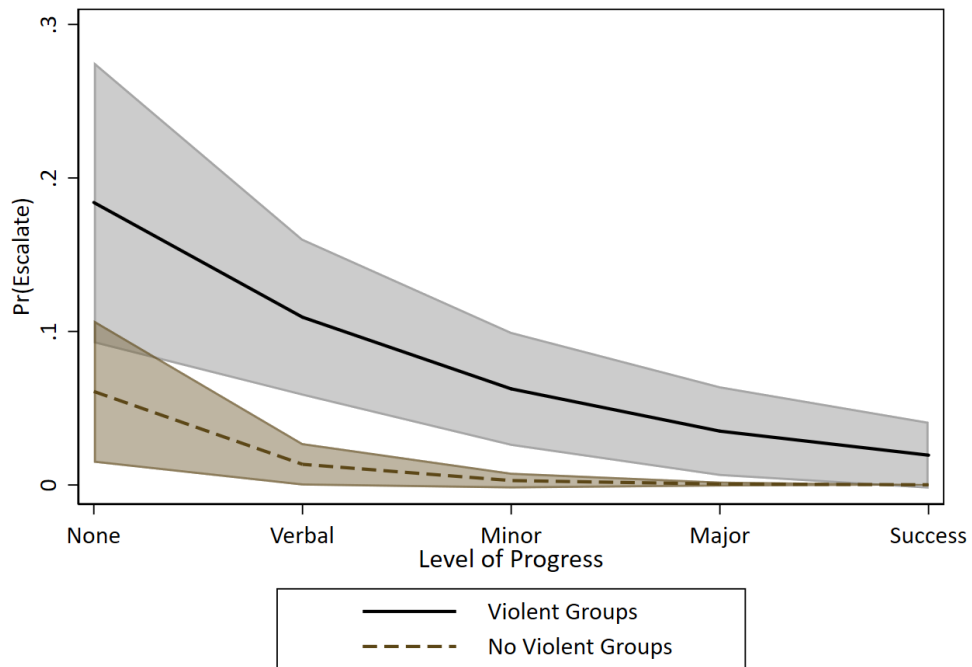

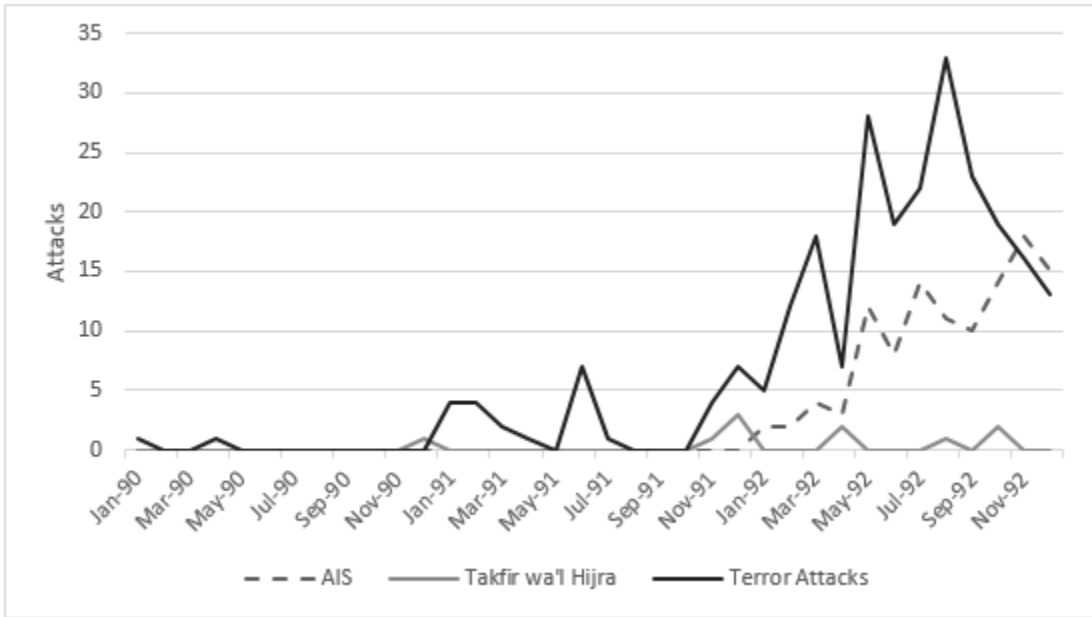*Figure 4. Predicted Probabilities of Violent Groups across Levels of Progress, Model 2*

Figure 5. Attacks by Group and Month in Algeria, January 1990-December 1992