THE COLONIAL ORIGINS OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Ajay Verghese
Did Colonialism Cause Ethnic Violence?
Problems

1. How can we be sure that widespread ethnic violence did not already exist prior to colonialism?
Precolonial Violence
Problems

1. How can we be sure that widespread ethnic violence did not already exist prior to colonialism?
2. How can we be sure that colonialism did not simply co-vary with the real cause of ethnic violence?
Causes
Isolating the Effects of Colonialism
Isolating the Effects of Colonialism
The Argument

1. British provinces (direct rule) experience more contemporary *caste and tribal* violence
2. Princely states (indirect rule) experience more contemporary *religious* violence
Assumptions

1. British are not annexing because of ethnic conflict
2. Princes are autonomous from the British
3. Political developments in the provinces are distinct from political developments in the princely states
Research Design

1. Qualitative Analysis
   5 Case Studies
   2 Controlled Historical Comparisons, 1 Deviant Case
   Primary Source Research in 6 Archives
   Elite Interviews

2. Quantitative Analysis
   Ethnic Violence across 589 Modern Districts
Geographic Discontinuities
Geographic Discontinuities
Jaipur-Ajmer
Precolonial Violence
Hindu Temples Destroyed in Ajmer:

1. 1192 by Mohammed Ghori, Delhi Sultanate
2. 1613 by Jahangir, Mughal Empire
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Jaipur (P)</th>
<th>Ajmer (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu kings discriminate against Muslim population</td>
<td>British administrators enforce religious neutrality, protect Muslims</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Religious Policies

Jaipur (P): “...so far as repression and excesses against the Musalmans are concerned this state [Jaipur] has surpassed even the states of Kashmir and Gwalior.” – The Sarosh, 1946
Ajmer (B): “...[the data] will show that taking into account the compete total of employees a larger number of Mohammadans is employed than their proportion to the population warrants.” – NAI, Foreign & Political Department, Establishment Branch, 1925, #509-E
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jaipur (P)</th>
<th>Ajmer (B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Hindu kings discriminate against Muslim</td>
<td>British administrators enforce religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>population</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castes and</td>
<td>Hindu kings protect low castes and tribal</td>
<td>British administrators discriminate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribes</td>
<td>groups</td>
<td>against low castes and tribal groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Caste Policies

Jaipur (P): “…we have the honor to state that these Minas & Baories are living here since the [state] was founded & are only cultivators…We, therefore, recommend that [they] may not be declared as Criminal Tribes.” – NAI, Jaipur Agency Part II, Jaipur Residency, 1930, #253
Caste Policies

Ajmer (B): “[The British Commissioner of Ajmer] had made the mistake of over-estimating the resources of the District, and the baneful effects of this error extended many years. This, added to several years of distress...reduced the District to a state of abject poverty.” – *Imperial Gazetteer of India* (Vol. 5): 161
BRITISH PROVINCES
(Ajmer)

PRINCELY STATES
(Jaipur)
High Castes

Favorable Policies

Dominant Religious Groups

BRITISH PROVINCES (Ajmer)

PRINCELY STATES (Jaipur)
BRITISH PROVINCES (Ajmer)

- High Castes
- Low Castes/Tribals

PRINCELY STATES (Jaipur)

- Minority Religious Groups
- Dominant Religious Groups

---

Favorable Policies

Discriminatory Policies
High Castes

Low Castes/Tribals

BRITISH PROVINCES
(Ajmer)

Low Castes/Tribals

Minority Religious Groups

PRINCELY STATES
(Jaipur)

Low Castes/Tribals

High Castes

Dominant Religious Groups

Favorable Policies

Discriminatory Policies

Protective Policies
Modern Ethnic Conflict
# Modern Ethnic Conflict

Hindu-Muslim Riot Casualties, 1950-1995 (per 100,000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaipur (P)</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajmer (B)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>Hindu-Muslim Riot Casualties, 1950-1995 (per 100,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaipur (P)</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajmer (B)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1992
Quantitative Analysis

589 districts
Explanatory variable: Type of colonial rule
Outcomes:

1. Caste and Tribal Conflict (2005-9)
2. Religious Conflict (1990-95)

Controls: population, area, demography, geography, poverty, social development, etc.
Colonialism and Caste/Tribal Violence

Maoist Conflict, 2005-9

Number of Years Under Direct Rule

Casualties in Maoist Conflict
Colonialism and Religious Violence

Hindu-Muslim Conflict, 1990-95
Comparative Implications
THE COLONIAL ORIGINS OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN INDIA

Ajay Verghese