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Hindu-Muslim violence in India: a national- and state-level study

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THESIS

HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE IN INDIA:
A NATIONAL– AND STATE–LEVEL STUDY

by

Christina E. Ortega

September 2014

Thesis Co-Advisors: Anshu N. Chatterjee
                                       S. Paul Kapur

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Hindu-Muslim violence has plagued India for centuries. Deaths caused by Hindu-Muslim violence constitute a small proportion of the Indian population; therefore the historical precedence and incendiary nature of this violence in India is cause for concern. Additionally, because India is geographically positioned between two majority Muslim states, India has a vested interest in addressing its violence problem so that it does not create national-level disturbances as it has in the past.

This thesis conducts a comparison of Hindu-Muslim violence in India at the national- and state-levels over two periods, 1950–1976 and 1977–1995, to demonstrate that Hindu-Muslim violence rose from the late 1970s through the 1990s, due to three main factors: 1) the organizational demise of the INC and the decay of the consociational system; 2) the emergence of the communal political party, the BJP; and 3) state-level variations of Hindu-Muslim violence based on the presence or absence of the INC's monopoly of power in the state.

The analysis recommends that only through a transparent and comprehensive communal violence policy and the promotion of the nonpoliticization of sociocultural data pertaining to the Indian population will the Indian government be effective in addressing the problem of Hindu-Muslim violence in India.

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**HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE IN INDIA:
A NATIONAL– AND STATE–LEVEL STUDY**

Christina E. Ortega
Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	Bharatiya Jana Sangh
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPI (M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
INC	Indian National Congress Party
IUML	Indian Union Muslim League
JP	Janata Party
ML	Muslim League
NFCH	National Foundation for Communal Harmony
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SP	Samajwadi Party
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Hindus and Muslims have a long history of living together on the Indian subcontinent, experiencing periods of volatility offset by periods of relative peace. Muslim invaders settled in North India in the seventh century, during which time they incrementally conquered the northern region. South India also witnessed the arrival of Muslims during this same period, but the Muslims largely arrived as merchants from across the Indian Ocean. Conventional wisdom contends that these traders, in search of business opportunities, quickly and peacefully assimilated themselves into the Hindu communities of the south. Consequently, many historians and political scientists alike attribute the disparities in Hindu-Muslim violence to each region's historical experiences of Muslim migration.

A.   MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

Following independence in 1947 and the brutal violence of the partition, India experienced a period wherein Hindu-Muslim violence was relatively low. However, the late 1970s saw a gradual increase in violence that peaked in the late 1980s and early 1990s. After almost 30 years of relative Hindu-Muslim peace while under Indian National Congress (INC) political dominance, what caused the increases of Hindu-Muslim violence in India from the late 1970s into the early 1990s? A correlation exists between the organizational decline of the INC and increases in Hindu-Muslim violence experienced in India during this time, but does a causal relationship exist? Did this violence increase uniformly across India, or were there variations? An additional correlation presents itself in the solid emergence of the communal political party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP); therefore, did the BJP contribute to increases in Hindu-Muslim violence?[1]

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[1] This thesis uses the term *communal* as it is historically used in India to reference "politics and conflict based on religious groupings." Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 4.

B.   IMPORTANCE

The study of Hindu-Muslim violence is of utmost importance to India's internal security and economic development because of the substantial size of the Muslim minority population and because India is flanked by two Muslim-dominated nations on its borders. Ranging from small personal assaults to lethal riots, large peaks of Hindu-Muslim violence are a regular occurrence throughout India. Hindu-Muslim violence peaked when it claimed 1,337 lives in India in 1992.[2] Again, Hindu-Muslim violence plagued the nation in 2002 during the Godhra riots in Gujarat. The Godhra riots were estimated to have resulted in over 800 deaths. This type of violence creates domestic volatility and oftentimes triggers a cycle of violence among Hindus and Muslims, where one event perpetuates another, ultimately weakening internal security overall. The Indian Ministry of Home Affairs 2013–2014 Annual Report attributes 133 deaths in India to communal violence.[3] Although death ranges from 94–1337 are admittedly small numbers for a country the size of India, the incendiary nature of Hindu-Muslim violence is cause for concern. Furthermore, India already faces other internal security challenges such as "Muslim separatists in Kashmir, . . . terrorist insurgencies . . . in the so-called 'Seven Sisters' states." and, most prominently, left wing extremism posed by the Naxalite insurgency.[4] While recent communal violence numbers are considerably lower than in the early 1990s, unexpected increases in Hindu-Muslim violence have the potential to compound the already complex internal security problem set in India.

Moreover, India's demographic profile with regard to its Muslim minority is significant because of India's sheer size. On a global scale, India is home to the world's

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2 Ashutosh Varshney and Steven I. Wilkinson, "Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004," http://dx.doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR04342.

[3] Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 2013–2014* (New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, 2014), 93, www.mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1314.pdf.

4 J. A. Piazza, "Terrorism and Party Systems in the States of India," *Security Studies* 19 (2010): 100.

"third-largest population of Muslims."[5] India's 2001 census, the last census published with socio-cultural demographic data enumerating religion in India, found that Muslims account for 138 million of its citizens.[6] The Pew Research Center estimates that from 2010 to 2030, India's Muslim population will constitute 14–16 percent of India's population.[7] These estimates are consistent with the government of India's 2001 census, which identified Muslims as the largest minority group in this Hindu majority country.[8] Hindu-Muslim violence, therefore, could potentially touch large portions of the Indian population that reside throughout the entire country.[9] Whether these communities are incited to violence or resisting violence, they still are affected in some form by the manifestation of Hindu-Muslim violence within India.[10] Chapter III will address this occurrence.

Lastly, potential increases in Hindu-Muslim violence in India would have a detrimental impact on the country's economy. Since implementing its liberalization policies in 1991, India has focused on attracting business and investment opportunities

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[5] Andrew Kohut, *Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population*, Washington, DC: The Pew Research Center and The Pew Forum, October 2009, http://pewforum.org/Muslim/Mapping-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx; Luis Lugo et al., *The Future of the Global Muslim Populations: Projections for 2010–2030,* (Washington, DC: The Pew Research Center and The Pew Forum, January 2011) 76, www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27/the-future-of-the-global-muslim-population.

[6] Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *2001 Census Socio-Cultural Aspects: Religious Composition*, New Delhi: Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, 2001, www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Social_and_cultural/Religion.aspx. Socio-cultural data for India's 2011 census was not published with the initial release of information in 2012.

[7] Lugo et al., *The Future of the Global Muslim Populations,* 76.

[8] Pew also estimated the Muslim population in India at 14.4 percent in 2010. Pew Research Center, "Global Religious Diversity: Half of the Most Religiously Diverse Countries are in Asia-Pacific Region," Washington, DC: The Pew Research Center, April 2014, www.pewforum.org/2014/04/04/global-religious-diversity. The government of India's 2001 census calculated the Muslim population at 13.4 percent of India's population overall. Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *2001 Census Socio-Cultural Aspects*.

[9] Lugo et al., *The Future of the Global Muslim Populations*, 77. The Pew Research Center's report states, "Muslims live throughout India. According to the 2001 census . . . Uttar Pradesh . . . Bihar . . . West Bengal . . . Assam . . . Kerala . . . [and] Jammu and Kashmir" are states with large percentages of Muslims.

[10] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 100. As discussed by Varshney, even states that are considered to be "communally peaceful" can experience communal violence in the face of large-scale occurrences of Hindu-Muslim violence across the nation.

for increased economic growth. Establishing and maintaining internal security is crucial for drawing in foreign direct investment and economic activity.[11] Therefore, increases in Hindu-Muslim violence could add volatility to India's internal security and potentially deter investors, ultimately affecting negative economic growth.

C.   HYPOTHESIS

To answer the question of what led to increases in Hindu-Muslim violence from the late 1970s through the 1990s, this thesis points to three main factors: 1) the organizational demise of the INC and the decay of the consociational system; 2) the emergence of the communal political party, the BJP; and 3) state-level variations of Hindu-Muslim violence based on the presence or absence of the INC's monopoly of power in the state.

D.   LITERATURE REVIEW

This review examines the existing literature addressing India as a consociational democracy, the scholarly analysis of Hindu-Muslim violence in India, and the civic institutions theory for preventing Hindu-Muslim violence.

Arend Lijphart argues India is a consociational democracy that exhibited strong elements of consociation theory between 1947 and 1967 and has since exhibited weaker elements.[12] Lijphart's consociational theory, also called power-sharing, is a democratic system for multi-ethnic societies in which political elites broker consensus among various ethnic groups.[13] The theory's four defining characteristics include "government by grand coalition, . . . cultural autonomy for religious and linguistic groups, . . . proportional representation" reserved for minorities, and "minority veto for the protection of

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[11] Shekhar Gupta, "Politics of Expediency," *Far Eastern Economic Review* 156 (1993): 27. In his article, Gupta alludes to the "allowances for some upheaval and violence" already being made by foreign investors in India.

[12] Arend Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy: A Consociational Interpretation," *The American Political Science Review*, 90, no. 2 (June., 1996): 258–268. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2082883.

[13] Ibid., 258.

autonomy."[14] Lijphart asserts India's consociational democracy weakened after 1967 when INC could no longer sustain a grand coalition due to the mass mobilization of smaller, previously passive groups.[15] This weakening in turn led to an "increase in intergroup . . . violence."[16]

Lijphart argues that even in India's organizational decay, India's and the INC's consociational aspects are confirmed.[17] As power-sharing weakened in India, the balances that previously existed between ethnic groups were thrown off and "intergroup tensions and violence . . . increased," particularly with regard to Hindu-Muslim violence.[18] Additionally, both Varshney and Ruparelia, separately present parallel arguments that agree with Lijphart's idea that the centralization of linguistic federalism resulted in less cultural autonomy, ultimately manifesting intergroup tensions and violence in the form of the Punjabi Suba and the Kashmir insurgencies.[19]

To date, three main scholarly sources for the documentation of communal violence emerge: Asghar Ali Engineer's collections, P. R. Rajgopal's analysis, and the Ashutosh Varshney and Steven Wilkinson dataset. Asghar Ali Engineer, a prominent Muslim-Indian scholar, publishes valuable commentary and yearly analyses on communal violence in India.[20] His observations, however, constitute annual highlights and are subsequently not comprehensive. In his analysis, P. R. Rajgopal catalogs communal violence events but beyond citing "official sources" provides no consistent

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[14] Ibid., 258–261.

[15] Ibid., 259, 263–265.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid., 258.

[18] Ibid., 265.

[19] As cited in Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 265, Ashutosh Varshney, "India's Democratic Exceptionalism and Its Troubled Trajectory," Revised version of paper presented at the 1990 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco. Sanjay Ruparelia, "How the Politics of Recognition Enabled India's Democratic Exceptionalism," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 21, no. 1/4, Secular Imaginaries (December 2008): 39–56.

[20] See Appendix A.

reference to his sources.[21] Furthermore, while indeed valuable, his analysis and observations "draw liberally from [his] own personal experiences" and can be argued to be less than objective.[22] Ashutosh Varshney and Steven Wilkinson's rigorous system for quantifying India's experience of this violence consolidates the standardized observations of Hindu-Muslim violence recorded in articles in every edition of the Times of India (Bombay) from 1950–1995.[23] Therefore, this thesis relies on the Varshney-Wilkinson dataset because it presents the most objective, comprehensive, and standardized collection of data cataloguing the occurrence of Hindu-Muslim violence in India.

Subsequently, Varshney argues that the occurrence of Hindu-Muslim violence in India varies based on the presence or absence of civic institutions, or "associational forms of civic engagement."[24] He defines the "associational forms of civic engagement . . . [as] business associations, professional organizations, reading clubs, film clubs, sports clubs, festival organizations, trade unions, and cadre-based political parties."[25] Varshney argues that it is these groups that "promote peace . . .[whereas] their absence or weakness opens up space for communal violence."[26] Civic institutions, therefore, offer a forum for intercommunal engagement enabling the development of relationships that prevent the escalation of violence.[27]

Contrariwise, Chapman argues that further analysis on the civic institutions theory is necessary based on three main points. He posits that:

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[21] P. R. Rajgopal, preface to *Communal Violence in India* (New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House, 1987).

[22] Ibid.

[23] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 90–91; Steven I. Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Communal Riots* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 243–265, http://site.ebrary.com/lib/nps/docDetail.action?docID=10131638. For details on the reasons the *Times of India* (Bombay) was chosen, see Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 92 and Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 248–249.

[24] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 3–4.

[25] Ibid. Varshney defines civil society as that "part of our lives that exists between the state on one hand and families on the other, that allows people to come together for a whole variety of public events and that is relatively independent of the state."

[26] Ibid.*,* 3.

[27] Ibid.

- The same civic institutions that can promote peaceful resolutions to ethnic conflict can also reinforce distrust amongst groups if these groups are not inclusive.

- Selection effects limit the theory because of the difficulty in measuring whether civic associations have actually limited ethnic conflict by influencing their members or if the people involved in the associations are simply inherently opposed to political violence, thus lowering the occurrence of ethnic conflict.

- Without a better understanding of civic institutions' pre-existing characteristics and agendas, causation for the occurrence of ethnic conflict cannot be determined.[28]

Chapman's overall analysis is valid; however, his call for further analysis will be hugely time consuming because of the magnitude of its proposed solutions. As the further analysis is undertaken and completed, the development of civic institutions between different ethnic groups will be valuable because they get people talking, understanding each other's concerns, and developing healthy community relationships that help in conflict resolution.

Varshney's analysis concludes that Hindu-Muslim violence is largely an urban phenomenon that is highly dependent on local-level variables addressing historical civic institutions.[29] Therefore, his analysis consists of a city-level comparison of three pairs of cities, measuring Hindu-Muslim violence in view of civic institutions in place and historical political constructs.[30] Varshney argues that the cause of communal violence in India requires analysis at the city-level because only at this level can local factors be taken into account.[31] Any higher-level analyses (state and national) cannot properly account for the local context of the violence.[32] In his conclusion, however, Varshney offers three methods by which civic linkages can be built: "movement politics aimed at

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[28] Terrence L. Chapman, "Unraveling the Ties between Civic Institutions and Attitudes toward Political Violence," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 3 (September 2008): 516–519, 528–529.

[29] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 3–7.

[30] Ibid., 5–9.

[31] Ibid., 7.

[32] Ibid., 284.

electoral politics, nonelectoral civic interventions, and initiatives led by the local administration."[33]

To date the literature does not address the application of Varshney's theory above the local-level, likely because of the compelling case that Varshney himself presents in favor of properly accounting for local-level variables.[34] However, this thesis shows that Varshney's civic institutions theory can indeed be extended to a state-level analysis if the state overall is addressed as a place where civic linkages need to be developed. Utilizing Varshney's first method for establishing civic linkages, "movement politics aimed at electoral politics," this thesis takes the political parties in each state, which typically represent different ethnic and communal groups, and analyzes their tendency toward creating coalitions.[35] This thesis argues that these "movements" constitute civic institutions at the state level to account for state-level variations in Hindu-Muslim violence.

E.   METHOD AND SOURCES

1.   Method

This thesis utilizes a two-part study to reveal the sources of Hindu-Muslim violence from the late 1970s to the early 1990s. First, the thesis discusses the Nehruvian tradition as a consociational construct, the decay of the Nehruvian tradition, and the opening this decay created for the entrance of the BJP onto India's political scene. Second, the thesis conducts a comparative study of the INC's monopoly of power, or lack thereof, in the two states of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh.

a.   Why Kerala and Uttar Pradesh?

This thesis compares the states of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh because of their similar historical economic conditions, religious diversity, and consistent qualitative

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[33] Ibid., 290.

[34] Ibid., 283–285.

[35] Ibid., 290.

experience of Hindu-Muslim violence. Both Kerala's and Uttar Pradesh's economies are primarily agro-based economies with the majority of their households being rural.[36] In 2003 and 2004, Uttar Pradesh began the expansion of its industrial, service, information technology, biotech, and tourism sectors by offering subsidies as well as fiscal and policy incentives to attract businesses to the state.[37] Likewise, in 2007, Kerala also implemented similar steps toward attracting these same business sectors.[38] Therefore, both agro-states are investing in similar business sectors with plans to utilize personnel and assets from agriculturally based economies.

Demographically, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh have similar Muslim-Indian population percentages. The 2001 Government of India Census recorded that Muslims comprise 24.7 percent of Kerala's population and 18.5 percent of Uttar Pradesh's population.[39] While Kerala is one of India's smaller states and Uttar Pradesh is India's largest state, Muslim-Indians represent roughly a quarter of either state's population— thus, similar proportional conditions exist for interactions between Muslim-Indians and other religious communities. Admittedly, Kerala's significant Christian population creates a slightly different environment for interactions between religious communities in Kerala compared to interactions in Uttar Pradesh; however, no two Indian states are alike. Therefore, this thesis compares these two states based on their approximate Hindu-Muslim population similarities.

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[36] Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *2001 Census Population,* New Delhi: Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, 2001, www.censusindia.gov.in/Census_Data_2001/Census_Data_Online/Population.aspx?cki=lLXtaBp7hhZ; India Brand Equity Foundation, Uttar Pradesh April 2010 Presentation, http://www.ibef.org/states/uttarpradesh.aspx; India Brand Equity Foundation, Kerala April 2010 Presentation, http://www.ibef.org/states/kerala.aspx; Recently, Kerala's tourism sector and agricultural sectors have become near equal contributors of 9% to the state's GDP. India Brand Equity Foundation, *Kerala State Report August 2013*, http://www.ibef.org/download/kerala-august-2013.pdf.

[37] India Brand Equity Foundation, Uttar Pradesh April 2010 Presentation.

[38] Kerala also included fiscal and policy incentives to attract computer hardware businesses. India Brand Equity Foundation, *Kerala April 2010 Presentation.*

[39] Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *2001 Census Population*; India Brand Equity Foundation, *Kerala April 2010 Presentation*; India Brand Equity Foundation, Uttar Pradesh April 2010 Presentation.

Finally, both states share consistent qualitative experiences of Hindu-Muslim violence. Varshney characterizes Kerala as a "communally peaceful" state in which "Hindu-Muslim peace normally prevail[s]" and Uttar Pradesh as a state with a consistent history of communal violence whose frequency of violence does not vary drastically over time.[40] Both states exhibit the same consistent qualitative experience of communal violence, just on either end of the spectrum.[41] In contrast, Gujarat is a state whose experience of Hindu-Muslim violence varies drastically; characterized by long periods without communal violence interrupted by years of extreme levels of communal violence.[42] Neither Kerala nor Uttar Pradesh are subject to drastic surges in Hindu-Muslim violence as is the case with Gujarat.[43]

b.   *Severity and Frequency Variables*

This thesis examines a communal violence model that can be measured on two variables, severity and frequency. To hold the frequency variable constant so that the thesis could measure the variation of severity, the thesis only accounts for the annual average number of deaths per Hindu-Muslim violence incident that year. In this calculation, only incidents that resulted in a minimum one death will be included in the calculations. Averaging the number of deaths per incident reveals how intense Hindu-Muslim violence was for that year and eliminates the possibility of counting an event that resulted in one death on the same scale as an event that resulted in 50 deaths.

2.   Sources

This thesis utilizes a variety of primary and secondary sources to complete the analysis. The primary sources are government of India products such as the 2001 census results, Electoral Commission of India statistics, Ministry of Home Affairs statistics, India Brand Equality Foundation statistics, as well as the state government websites of

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[40] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 98, 100.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Ibid.

Uttar Pradesh and Kerala. Secondary sources include scholarly journal and newspaper articles found in the Economic and Political Weekly, the Hindu, the Times of India and the Indian Express.

a. *Communal Violence Source Challenges*

Finding consolidated incidents of communal violence throughout India is a challenge because of the volatility of the topic. It is widely acknowledged that when reporting on Hindu-Muslim violence, the Indian news media purposefully omits details that might attribute the culpability of either group in order to prevent the instigation of further violence. Wilkinson contends that the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs compiles and maintains statistics on communal violence incidents but does not publish them to the public for this very reason.[44] In its annual reports, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs does address communal violence deaths and injuries; however, the reports do not differentiate these numbers by state nor by religious group.[45]

F. THESIS OVERVIEW

Overall, this thesis analyzes the occurrence of post-independence Hindu-Muslim violence in India. Chapter II discusses the influence of the INC's Nehruvian tradition on the incidence of Hindu-Muslim violence in post-Independence India and shows that one of the effects of the decay of the Nehruvian tradition was the political space created for the entrance of the BJP and subsequent Hindu-Muslim violence. Chapter III then compares the states of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh based on the INC's monopoly of power in each state and the effects the monopoly had on the states' civic institutions and the subsequent experience of Hindu-Muslim violence. Chapter IV concludes that a state capable of developing intercommunal civic institutions in the form of political coalitions is less likely to experience high levels of Hindu-Muslim violence and communal violence overall because of the disincentive such violence poses to electoral success.

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[44] Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 243–244.

[45] See Appendix B.

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II.   HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE INCREASES: INC'S ORGANIZATIONAL DEMISE THROUGH THE LENSES OF SECULARISM AND ECONOMIC POLICY

The 1947 partition establishing India and Pakistan as two separate states was undoubtedly caused the worst demonstration of communal violence on the subcontinent.[46] An estimated 12.5 million inhabitants were uprooted, leaving their homes for either India or the newly formed Pakistan.[47] The eruption of centuries-old animosities brought to fore in the partition has oftentimes been blamed for the brutal violence that ensued. Death estimates range from "several hundred thousand to one million."[48] Surprisingly however, in the years following the partition, Hindu-Muslim violence was relatively low throughout India. Some scholars argue that the brutality witnessed during this period exhausted the region; people had simply had enough of the violence. Others argue that the leadership of the INC—and Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership in particular— directly contributed to the low numbers. Through the lenses of secular and economic policies, this chapter examines the INC's consociational construct, commonly referred to as the Nehruvian tradition, and demonstrates its effects on the incidence of Hindu-Muslim violence in post-independence India. It then examines the decay of the Nehruvian tradition through the same lenses to show that this decay not only contributed to increases in Hindu-Muslim violence but also created the political space for the emergence of the BJP and its associated Hindu-Muslim violence.[49]

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[46] Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 213–219.

[47] Ibid., 218–219.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Myron Weiner, *The Indian Paradox: Essays in Indian Politics* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1989), 91. Weiner attributes the emergence of "new forms of both party and non-party mass politics in India," to the "de-institutionalization of the Congress party and the growth of patrimonial politics at the national level."

A. CONSOCIATIONAL NEHRUVIAN TRADITION AND LOW HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE

This section provides a brief summary of the formation of the Indian nation and the development of the Indian constitution and its consociational elements. The chapter then discusses the Nehruvian era's secular and economic policies and the consequent Hindu-Muslim violence between 1950 and 1976.

1. Partition and Formation of the Nation

From the outset of the pursuit of an independent India, Mohandas Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and other leaders of the INC "sought a unified [India] built around the principles of secularism and liberal democracy."[50] Ideally, India's Hindu majority notwithstanding, every religion and ethnicity would be treated equally within the construct of the state. The INC ran on this platform and projected itself as a secular party composed of members of "all major ethnic groups of India."[51] Congress thoroughly promoted the idea of an interreligious India.[52] Congress, however, also stood to benefit from characterizing itself in such a manner. Scholars argue that because of the political advantages it provided, the INC painted itself as the sole secular, modern leader of peace.[53] It went as far as framing other political groups with religious affiliations (such as the Muslim League (ML) and Hindu nationalists) as "communal" and "emotional."[54]

Despite the INC's promises, the risk of Muslim underrepresentation in this "interreligious" India was a real threat to the ML. In an attempt to force the development of equal representation for Muslims within India, Mohammed Ali Jinnah supported the two-nation theory whereby a separate nation for Muslims would be established if equal

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[50] T. V. Paul, "Causes of the India-Pakistan Enduring Rivalry," in *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, ed. T. V. Paul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 75.

[53] Ayesha Jalal, "Nation, Reason and Religion: Punjab's Role in the Partition of India," *Economic and Political Weekly* 33, no. 32 (August 8–14, 1998): 2183.

[54] Ibid.

representation could not be worked out.[55] Ayesha Jalal asserts that this theory was truly meant as a preposterous ultimatum whose aim was to force the INC to the table for real negotiation.[56] The INC, however, saw the two-nation theory differently.

The so-called demand for Pakistan offered the INC two main electoral advantages. First, it supported the INC's characterization of communal-based parties— and those parties' demands—as irrational, "emotional" movements and left the INC as the sole legitimate leader of peace under modern, rational terms.[57] This characterization effectively discredited other communal political movements nationally as irrational and "narrow-minded."[58] Second, the INC realized that with the clock ticking, satisfying ML demands for Pakistan allowed a transfer of power to a "strong [Congress-led] center" that might not exist if a compromise were struck with the ML and India remained unified.[59] Thus, the INC eliminated the competition by "allowing" the ML to depart unified India. Ironically, the INC conceded to the communal demands set forth by the ML. A truly secular INC might have challenged a division of unified India based on communal demands, demonstrating whole-hearted Muslim-protecting provisions to the ML and assuring Muslims that a unified Indian government was indifferent to religion. Instead, the INC saw the electoral advantages of the satisfaction of the ML demands for Pakistan and acquiesced.

2.   Development of Indian Constitution with Consociational Elements

Following the partition, the INC set out to create the democratic state it had promised. It started by electing Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, a member of the untouchable caste and a symbolic tribute to equality, to draft the Indian Constitution.[60] The preamble of the Constitution of India promised to secure the Nehruvian ideals of

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[55] Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Kindle edition, chap. 2.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Jalal, "Nation, Reason and Religion," 2183.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, chap. 2.

[60] Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 324, 375.

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justice, liberty, and equality and to promote fraternity amongst India's citizens.[61] By January 26, 1950, India's new constitution granted unprecedented rights and protections to previously invisible members of the population. The constitution abolished untouchability, immediately recognizing nearly 60 million new citizens of India.[62] Five years later India passed the Untouchability (Offences) Act, defining the punishments for "continued . . . discrimination against" untouchables.[63] Furthermore, recognizing India's largest minority, the new constitution enfranchised 50 percent of its population by granting citizenship to women.[64] Laws ranging from the Marriage Validation Act of 1949 to the Hindu Succession Act of 1956 now guaranteed Indian women's rights.

Examination of the new Indian laws from a consociational perspective reveals that Nehru and the INC built in consociational tenets of cultural autonomy and proportional representation. The implementation of Muslim Civil Law and earnest attempts by the national government to protect and recognize linguistically distinct groups in Jammu, Kashmir, and other regions provided for cultural autonomy.[65] To address colonial entitlement issues, the British produced a Muslim Civil Law based generally on Shariat law, thus enacting the Muslim Personal Law (Shariat) Application Act or Act XXVI of the Government of India Act, 1935.[66] With the passing of the Indian Constitution, Article 44 of the constitution further legitimized the existing Muslim Personal Law by giving it legal sanction.[67] Critics of the law have pointed out that Muslim Personal Law was only loosely based on Shariat Law and that the law and Article 44 are limited in scope since they only address "marriage, divorce, infants,

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[61] Government of India, *Government: Constitution of India,* http://india.gov.in/govt/constitutions_india.php.

[62] Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 385.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.*,* 386.

[65] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 260–261.

[66] Razia Patel, "Indian Muslim Women, Politics of Muslim Personal Law and Struggle for Life with Dignity and Justice," *Economic and Political Weekly* 44, no. 44 (October 31–November 6, 2009): 45, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25663732.

[67] Ibid," 46.

adoption of minors, intestacy of wills, successions, joint family and partitions."[68] Muslim Personal Law does not address criminal activity.[69] Despite the ongoing debate, Muslim Personal Law can be categorized as a thoroughly entrenched tool of consociational theory within India and its constitution.

Additionally, Nehru and the INC implemented the consociational tenet of proportional representation through the use of the reservation system.[70] This system ensured that "proportional shares of parliamentary representation" were "reserved" only for candidates of aboriginal or lower-caste origin.[71] Although imperfect, the system attempted to offer representation to groups that might not otherwise have any representation at all. India's new constitution, therefore, aspired to enfranchise large portions of India's previously unrecognized population through democratic and consociational ideals.

3.   Nehru's Secularism Policy

Having established the country's democratic constitution, Nehru and the INC pursued their promise of secularism. Nehru articulates his intolerance of communal groups in a May 1948 letter to the Chief Ministers for States: "We have stated that we will not recognize or encourage in any way any communal organization which has political ends."[72] He enforced secular politics by framing calls for identity politics as regional and national linguistic movements. The clearest example of this was how he dealt with the ethnic politics of the Punjabi Suba movement led by Master Tara Singh in October 1961. When Master Tara Singh and his followers in the Akali Dal made demands for a separate Sikh state based on religion, Nehru refused to recognize communal demands and instead worked with other Sikh leaders who utilized

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[68] Michael R Anderson, "Islamic Law and the Colonial Encounter in British India," Women Living Under Muslim Laws, London, Occasional paper No 7 (June 1996): 269, quoted in in Razia Patel, "Indian Muslim Women," 45.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 261.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Rajgopal, *Communal Violence in India*, 119.

noncommunal strategies.[73] Nehru backed Master Tara Singh's successor, Sant Fateh Singh, who having taken note of Nehru's refusal to negotiate Master Tara Singh's communal demands, removed all "communal associations" from his demands for the Punjabi Suba.[74] Sant Fateh Singh demanded a Punjabi state strictly based on linguistic lines and was ultimately successful in achieving the separate state of Punjab in 1966.[75] Paul Brass asserts that Nehru's central government understood the importance of allowing the development of regional identities so as not to stifle its maturation as a "multi-national state."[76] Granting Punjab statehood based on language allowed for the unification of this region under a language spoken by people of several faiths. Nehru not only was able to preserve cultural autonomy for Punjab, from a consociational perspective, but also was able to create a secular compromise with what began as a communal demand.

Although secular rule of Jammu and Kashmir would be complicated by issues of state independence, Nehru articulated his desire for that secular rule through his support of Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah and his secular party, the All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.[77] Nehru and Abdullah met in 1938, just after the formation of the National Conference, and immediately recognized their common beliefs in secularism.[78] In October of 1947, immediately "following the accession treaty between Maharaja Hari Singh" and the government of India, Nehru asked Abdullah to head the "emergency

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[73] Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India,* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 17, 316–317.

[74] Ibid.*,* 17, 317; Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 80–81.

[75] Harbir Singh, "Sant Fateh Singh's Role in the Creation of Punjabi Suba" in *Encyclopaedia of India and Her States* 4, edited by Verinder Grover and Ranjana Arora (New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications, 1996), 414–432 quoted in Bhupinder Singh, "Politics of Factionalism in Punjab: A Critical Study of Shiromani Akali Dal," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 67, no. 4 (October–December 2006): 841–842, http://www.jstor.org/stable/41856267. Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 400.

[76] Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, 16.

[77] Ramachandra Guha, "Opening a Window in Kashmir," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 35 (August 28–September 3, 2004): 3905–3906, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4415473. Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 372.

[78] Guha, "Opening a Window in Kashmir," 3906.

administration" of Jammu and Kashmir.[79] Rather than requesting that the communally tainted Maharaja lead the newly formed state, Nehru requested the leadership of the secular Sheikh, and both men signed the Delhi Agreement in 1952.[80] This agreement was short-lived. Calls from Hindu nationalists in Jammu for the elimination of Article 370 and the Delhi Agreement provoked statements of Kashmiri independence from Abdullah.[81] Within a year's time Abdullah was jailed on accusations that he was "plotting to break up the Indian union," by advocating for Jammu and Kashmiri independence.[82] Therefore, India deftly eliminated threats of Kashmiri secession because of the pride it took in its secularism policy and ability to accommodate multiple religions..

The case for the consociational preservation of cultural autonomy in Kashmir is weaker than that of the Punjab example. Nehru found that cultural autonomy in Kashmir quickly devolved into full-blown calls for independence, which, as mentioned earlier, was highly unacceptable for India. The complex and manipulative situation in Jammu and Kashmir aside, Nehru's initial support of Abdullah indicated his desire for secular leadership in Jammu and Kashmir.[83]

4.   Nehru's Economic Vision

Nehru, a modernist, deeply believed that the secular implementation of economic reforms for the alleviation of poverty would relieve tension over minority and communal

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[79] Reeta Chowdhari-Tremblay, "Responses to the Parliamentary and Assembly Elections in Kashmir's Regions, and State-Societal Relations" in *India's 1999 Elections and 20th Century Politics*, ed. Paul Wallace and Ramashray Roy (New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, 2003), 402.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Chowdhari-Tremblay, "Responses to the Parliamentary and Assembly Elections," 411; Reeta Chowdhari-Tremblay, "Nation, Identity and the Intervening Role of the State: A Study of the Secessionist Movement in Kashmir," *Pacific Affairs* 69, no. 4 (Winter 1996–1997): 489. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2761183.

[82] Guha, "Opening a Window in Kashmir," 3905.

[83] James Manor, "Center-State Relations," in *The Success of India's Democracy*, ed. Atul Kohli (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 95. Manor argues the manipulation of Jammu and Kashmir actually began during the Indian independence era, not during Indira's and Rajiv Gandhi's terms as prime minister.

issues.[84] Even before India's independence, Nehru argued that the resolution of Muslim economic problems spoke louder than communal issues, prompting Congress to adopt this platform for gaining Muslim support in the 1946 elections.[85] Nehru recognized that poverty was a problem that affected all Indians, regardless of religion.[86]

Once in office, Nehru moved forward with an economic development plan based on "a mixed economy in which the state would take responsibility for the provision of infrastructure as well as large and heavy industrial investment."[87] This economic model would allow the government to play a main role "not only in redistribution and reduction in poverty, but in providing a pattern of growth which would provide for a diversified industrial economy catering to mass consumption needs as well as mitigate the usual market failures."[88] To accomplish this, Nehru immediately enacted the first of his three economic plans called the *Five Year Plans*. The plans focused on the buildup of nationalized industry and aimed to create jobs for the Indian people in hopes of establishing stability for India's new economy.[89] Taking advantage of the share of industrial assets that the partition had bestowed upon the newly formed India, Nehru's Industrial Policy Resolutions of 1948 and 1956 defined India's national industrialization path.[90] He envisioned an India more capable of equitably sharing its wealth and therefore

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[84] Miss Neeraj, *Nehru and Democracy in India* (New Delhi: Metropolitan Book Company, 1972), 85.

[85] Paul R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, 176–177. Contrariwise, Jinnah's mobilization of the Muslim community in India was based on communal lines resulting in massive voter turnouts in the 1946 elections. The results of this election indicated a highly communally polarized nation. For more on the 1946 elections see Paul R. Brass's work above.

[86] Neeraj, *Nehru and Democracy in India,* 85.

[87] Jayati Ghosh, "Development Strategy in India: A Political Economy Perspective," in *Nationalism, Democracy and Development: State and Politics in India*, ed. Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 166.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 377–383. For an interview of Nehru concerning this issue, see Durga Das, *India: From Curzon to Nehru and After* (New York: The John Day Company, 1970), 293.

[90] Prabhat Patnaik, "Industrial Development in India since Independence," *Social Scientist* 7 (1979): 5; Government of India Ministry of Industry, *Statement on Industrial Policy* (New Delhi, July 24, 1991), http://www.dipp.nic.in/English/Policies/Industrial_policy_statement.pdf.

better able to erase class distinctions amongst its people.[91] With class distinctions "erased," he hoped communal differences, which were often highlighted in situations of grave economic disparity, would follow suit.[92]

However, the fruits of Nehru's economic plan failed to reach the poor. Between 1950 and 1964, the Indian economy grew on average 3.7 percent.[93] Since this growth was mainly "concentrated in heavy industry," it "barely benefited" the poor, who were (and still remain) widely "dependen[t] on agriculture."[94] But the nation was patient. Nehru's economic development plan bore modest results in the form of increased agricultural and industrial growth rates when compared with colonial levels, and actually increased "industrial diversification" and "national self-reliance" in food production.[95] Nehru's strict adherence to secular politics kept communal tensions to a minimum and compensated for his failed attempt to lower tensions economically.

5.   Hindu-Muslim Violence during the Nehruvian Era: 1950–1976[96]

This section argues that consociational democracy and the lack of significant Hindu nationalist communal politics led to low levels of Hindu-Muslim violence for nearly 30 years after independence. The combined terms of Nehru and his immediate successors, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi, spanned almost three decades during which all three leaders faced minimal incidents of Hindu-Muslim violence (see Figure 1). From a consociational standpoint, the Congress system was a system of consensus, or grand coalition where the INC acted as the primary broker of consensus for a consensual

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[91] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), 522; Government of India Ministry of Industry, *Statement on Industrial Policy,*1.

[92] Neeraj, *Nehru and Democracy in India,* 85.

[93] Atul Kohli, *Poverty amid Plenty in the New India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 85.

[94] Kohli, *Poverty amid Plenty*, 85–86.

[95] Ghosh, "Development Strategy in India," 166–167; Weiner, *The Indian Paradox*, 134.

[96] This chapter splits its examination into two timeframes; 1950–1976 and 1977–1995. The split at 1977 was chosen because that year marked the first successful national level election where a united opposition party ousted the INC majority, also regarded as one of the most visible indicators of the organizational demise of the INC.

democracy.[97] The Consociational Nehruvian tradition ensured the needs of "all main religious, linguistic and regional groups" were satisfied to a point that it kept intergroup violence, specifically, Hindu-Muslim violence levels relatively low[98] (see Figure 1). During this 27-year period, India witnessed 7.22 deaths a year due to Hindu-Muslim violence.
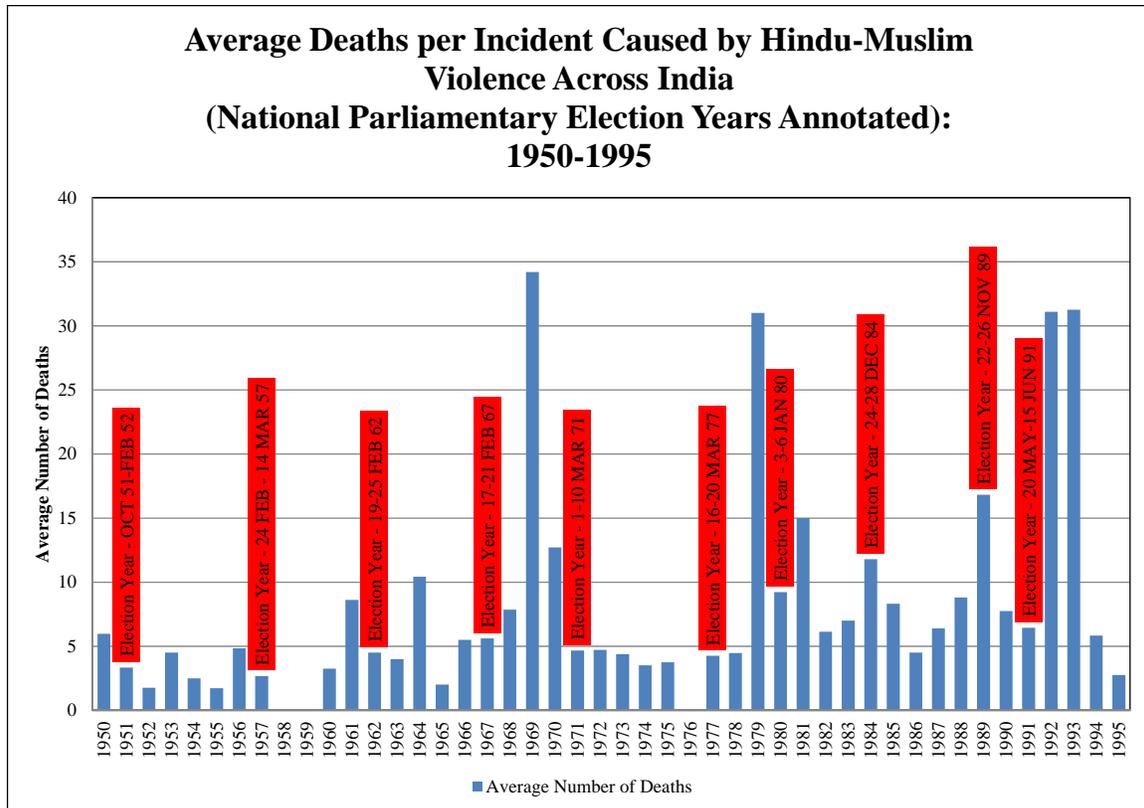
Note: Figure compiled with data from the following sources: Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004; Election Data from government of India Election Commission of India, Poll Dates of 14 Lok Sabha Elections, access date September 8, 2014, http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/poll_dates_of_loksabha_elc.aspx.

Figure 1.   Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence Across India (National Parliamentary Election Years Annotated): 1950–1995

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[97] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 260.

[98] Ibid.

Post-independence, the Hindu nationalist communal political party, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Janata Party (JP), the BJP's predecessors, did not enjoy a wide political following (see Table 1).[99] Stanley Wolpert asserts these opposition parties were simply unable to confront the INC with any "real issues."[100] The majority of Indians were interested in the programs Nehru and the INC offered for the strengthening of the new state and the alleviation of poverty. The INC enjoyed single-party domination for the first 30 years after India gained independence, enabling the execution of its secular policies and bolstering its ties to minority groups. Therefore, the system of consensus that the INC was able to maintain coupled with its domination of the political scene draws out the causal relationship between the INCs strong organizational presence and low Hindu-Muslim violence.

Table 1.   Performance of the Jana Sangh and the BJP in Lok Sabha in Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and India Overall, 1952–2009

PERFORMANCE OF THE JANA SANGH AND THE B.J.P. IN LOK SABHA ELECTIONS IN KERALA, UTTAR PRADESH AND INDIA OVERALL 1952 TO 2009 (SEATS WON AND SHARE OF VALID VOTES)															
1952	1957	1962	1967	1971	1977	1980	1984	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999	2004	2009
BJS	BJS	BJS	BJS	BJS	JP	JP	BJP	BJP	BJP	BJP	BJP	BJP	BJP	BJP
Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)	Seats (%)
Kerala --	--	0 (0.7)	0 (1.4)	0 (1.4)	2 (39.9)	1 (22.9)	0 (1.8)	0 (4.5)	0 (4.6)	0 (5.61)	0 (8.0)	0 (6.6)	0 (10.4)	0 (6.31)
Uttar Pradesh 0 (7.3)	2 (14.8)	7 (17.6)	12 (22.2)	4 (12.3)	85 (68.1)	3 (22.6)	0 (6.4)	8 (7.6)	50 (32.8)	52 (33.4)	57 (36.5)	29 (27.6)	10 (22.2)	10 (17.5)
India Total 3 (3.1)	4 (5.9)	14 (6.4)	35 (9.4)	22 (7.4)	294 (41.3)	31 (19)	2 (7.4)	85 (11.4)	119 (20.1)	161 (20.3)	182 (25.6)	182 (23.8)	138 (22.2)	116 (18.8)

Note: Table compiled with data from the following sources: The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India by Christophe Jaffrelot Appendix D for 1952–1991 data; 1996–2009 election data from Election Commission of India, *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1996–2009,* http://eci.nic.in/eci_main1/ElectionStatistics.aspx)

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[99] The BJS, JP and the BJP are political party offshoots of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Association of National Volunteers. The RSS is a Hindu revivalist group founded in 1925. For details on the RSS, see Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

[100] Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 382.

B. DECAY OF CONSOCIATIONAL NEHRUVIAN TRADITION AND INCREASED HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE

The section examines the shifted secular and economic policies under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi and the consequent Hindu-Muslim violence between 1977 and 1990.

1. Shifted Secularism Policies under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi

India witnessed the first major departures from the Nehruvian tradition and the INC's consociational construct during Indira Gandhi's second term as prime minister. With the precedent set, her son, Rajiv Gandhi, followed suit. "Mrs. Gandhi had a patrimonial view of Indian politics. She saw the political system as a kind of estate she inherited from her father, which she believed should be transmitted to her heirs."[101] Her desire to maintain power within familial lines caused Indira to tighten her grip and thus restrict the system that was in existence.[102] Thus, as Lijphart identifies, the consociational system set in place by Nehru and the INC gave way to a "centralized and hierarchical" system under Indira.[103] This centralization led to Indira's first breaches of the INC's secular policy, her interactions with communal political factions in both Punjab and Kashmir. Recognizing the communal demands of these groups legitimized their presence in the political sphere and thus opened national politics to communal discourse, beginning a cycle of communal concessions.[104] Rajiv Gandhi would mirror his mother's example in his handling of the Shah Bano case and the Rama Janmabhoomi movement.

Indira Gandhi's break with Nehruvian secularism in her late-1970s' recognition of Tarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the Sikh religious fundamentalist leader, legitimized Bhindranwale's religious demands and the role he was attempting to assume within the government.[105] The relationship initially offered Indira and the regional INC an

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[101] Weiner, *The Indian Paradox*, 89.

[102] Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr., "India on the Eve of Elections: Congress and the Opposition," *Pacific Affairs* 57, no. 3 (Autumn 1984): 411, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2759067.

[103] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 264.

[104] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 79.

[105] Ibid., 79–80.

opportunity to undermine the competition that the Akali Dal posed to Congress in Punjab by pitting factions of the Dal against each other and endorsing Bhindranwale's Sikh fundamentalist group, the Damdami Taksa.[106] In turn, Indira and the INC tolerated the Damdami Taksa's activities in support of the movement for a separate Sikh state, "Khalistan."[107] Her support of Damdami Taksa clearly broke with the secular precedent set by Nehru.[108] Indira's negotiations with the Sikh extremists "oscillated between accommodation and obduracy" as Bhindranwale's group grew increasingly violent in its movement for a sovereign Sikh state.[109] Now considered a "legitimized" political actor, Bhindranwale's rhetoric spiraled out of control as he continued on the Damdami Taksa's agenda for the establishment of a sovereign Sikh state.[110] Bhindranwale's rhetoric and Damdami Taksa's agenda quickly soured the alliance.[111] The situation to this point convinced Indira that the Sikh fundamentalist agenda no longer suited her interests, and she attempted to have Bhindranwale eliminated. Sikh moderates immediately saw through Indira's political tactics in Punjab and disapproved of her use of their community's political landscape at their expense. The nation witnessed these events unfolding and clearly understood that cleavages within religious minority groups would be exploited if gains were to be made by Indira and the INC. Indira veered from her father's secular path by accommodating religious demands; now her only recourse was to control the situation with violence. Bhindranwale based his fundamentalist group out of the most holy Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab. The culmination of events came with Operation Blue Star, when, in June of 1984, Indira ordered the storming of the Golden Temple and the elimination of Bhindranwale's movement. As a

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[106] Manor, "Center-State Relations," 92; A. S. Narang, "Akalis' Secular Turn," *Economic and Political Weekly* 34, no. 12 (March 20–26, 1999): 665, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4407754.

[107] Manor, "Center-State Relations," 92–93.

[108] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 80. The Damdami Taksa was formed in the late 1970s. For details, see Harjot Oberoi, "Sikh Fundamentalism: Translating History into Theory," in *Fundamentalisms and the State*, ed. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 256–285.

[109] Manor, "Center-State Relations," 92.

[110] Ibid., 92–93.

[111] Ibid.

direct result of her having commanded Operation Blue Star, Indira's Sikh bodyguards assassinated her six months later. James Manor's observation that "it is dangerous folly to play politics with religious sentiments," certainly applies to the way in which the political situation in Punjab was handled.[112] His quote applies not only to the ultimate price paid by Indira but also to the invitation of religious fundamentalism into the political realm. Her handling of the Sikh communal demands was the first major breach with Nehruvian secularism, and it set a precedent for the state's manipulation of religious groups for political gains. As Nehru had believed, the modern Indian political construct would not logically accommodate religious demands without opening the floodgates to communal politics.

Indira's meddling in Jammu and Kashmir provides an additional example of her departure from Nehruvian secularism. In 1975, in exchange for the position of Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Sheikh Abdullah dropped his demand for a plebiscite and accepted the status quo regarding the measures being used to better integrate Jammu and Kashmir with India, which had been put in place after his incarceration in 1953.[113] Despite the criticism Abdullah received for entering into agreement with Indira Gandhi, Abdullah and the National Congress remained formidable political competition versus the INC in Jammu and Kashmir, as demonstrated in the National Conference's performance in the 1977 elections.[114] After Abdullah's death, in an effort to undermine continued competition during the 1983 elections, Indira aligned the INC with Hindu nationalist parties in Jammu.[115] "Mrs. Gandhi appealed explicitly to communal sentiments among Hindu voters in Jammu (the Hindu-chauvinists) accusing the Conference…of harbouring

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[112] Ibid., 95.

[113] David E. Lockwood, "Kashmir: Sheikh Abdullah's Reinstatement," *The World Today* 31, no. 6 (June, 1975): 251, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40394860. For more detail on the "integrative measures" implemented in Jammu and Kashmir during Sheikh Abdullah's incarceration, see James Manor, "Center-state Relations," 95–97.

[114] Manor, "Center-State Relations," 96.

[115] Sumantra Bose, "'Hindu Nationalism' and the Crisis of the Indian State: A Theoretical Perspective," in *Nationalism , Democracy and Development*, ed. by Suguta Bose and Ayesha Jalal (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 121.

'anti-national' and 'pro-Pakistani' inclinations."[116] As she had in the Punjab, Indira's recognition of the communal feelings of the Hindu nationalist group legitimized their place in the political space. In effect, Indira's advocacy of the Hindu nationalist movement in Kashmir gave "a saffron colouring to the politics of the state," and completely violated Nehruvian secularism.[117]

Rajiv Gandhi's term as prime minister also brought about further secular violations. Rajiv's most prominent violation of Nehruvian secularism was the 1980s Shah Bano case, whose cascading effects led to the state recognition of Muslim civil law (Shariat law) over national civil law, and the opening of the Babri Mosque exclusively to Hindus.[118] These combined events cost the INC legitimacy in the eyes of the Indian people and ultimately justified the entrance of the major communal political party, the BJP, onto the Indian political landscape.[119]

Rajiv Gandhi opened a Pandora's box of religious appeasements in the political realm when he rescinded his support of the Supreme Court's April 1985 ruling on the Shah Bano case, which upheld secular law.[120] Shah Bano was a Muslim woman who filed for alimony under the Indian state's Code of Criminal Procedure, Section 125, after her husband filed for divorce.[121] The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Shah Bano, mandating that her husband pay alimony despite Muslim civil law stating otherwise.[122] Rajiv Gandhi initially supported that decision.[123] This ruling, in the eyes of the Muslim leadership in India, was an affront to Islam in that it denigrated the application of Muslim personal law. Several months later, facing pressure from Muslim politicians and

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[116] Ibid.

[117] Ayesha Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 179.

[118] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 80–81.

[119] Ibid., 79–80.

[120] Ibid., 81.

[121] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India,* 334.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Ibid.; Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 81.

widespread Muslim protests, Rajiv rescinded his support of secular law prevailing over personal law and allowed for the passing of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill in February of 1986.[124] This bill upheld Muslim personal law by affirming that a Muslim man was only obligated to pay alimony for the *iddat* period, a period of approximately three months after the divorce.[125] Other Muslim regulations upheld in the bill included the obligation of the woman to care for the children produced by the marriage and the arrangement of long-term maintenance of the woman in the event that "she had no relatives to care for her" after divorce.[126] Christophe Jaffrelot asserts that Rajiv's change of support was his attempt to prevent the alienation of Muslim political leaders and certainly the Muslim population altogether.[127] However, having made concessions to the Muslim community of India, Rajiv now felt obligated to do the same for the Hindu community.[128] Facing Hindu nationalist pressure over the state's accommodation of Muslim law, in 1986 Rajiv Gandhi decided to reopen the Babri Mosque to Hindu pilgrims and worshippers and in 1989 approved plans for the pouring of the foundation for the Rama Janmabhoomi Temple adjacent to the Babri Mosque.[129] This decision alienated Muslims who also sought access to the Babri mosque because of its historical significance for Muslim-Indians.[130] Far from Nehru's vision for a secular state, deviations in secular law at the hands of both Indira and Rajiv Gandhi had become

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[124] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India,* 334–336; Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 81.

[125] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India,* 334–336; Government of India, *Citizens: Personal Law,* http://india.gov.in/citizen/justice/personal_law.php.

[126] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India,* 335–336; Government of India, *Citizens: Personal Law*.

[127] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India,* 335.

[128] Francine Frankel, "India's Democracy in Transition," *World Policy Journal* 7 (1990): 534, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40209159.

[129] Frankel, "India's Democracy in Transition," 534–535; Balraj Puri, "Indian Muslims since Partition," *Economic and Political Weekly* 28 (1993): 2146, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4400229; Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 81. Believed to be a common holy site for Hindus and Muslims, for centuries the Babri Mosque was shared by worshipers of both religions. However, it was closed to both Hindu and Muslim worshipers in 1949 because of Hindu-Muslim disputes over access to the temple for worship. For details see Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 91–95.

[130] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 91–95.

legitimized common practice in India, in effect creating space for the entrance of the communal politics of the BJP.

The organizational decay of the INC between 1977 and 1995 while under the leadership of Indira and Rajiv Gandhi occurred concurrently with the weakening of the consociational democracy put in place by Nehru.[131] This decay contributed to the attraction of the alternative representation of the BJP. Indira Gandhi took the delicately balanced system of consensus she inherited from her father and in an effort to preserve it, clamped down on her power, thus centralizing the system.[132] To maintain and exert this power, though, she and her son required the forging of alliances with communal groups not traditionally sought out by Nehru and the INC. These alliances legitimized the communal demands of previously discredited groups such as the Hindu nationalists.[133] Now politically legitimized, these groups began demanding the abolition of critical aspects of the consociational democracy put in place by Nehru, such as the special power-sharing compromises preserved under cultural autonomy.[134] This shift away from consociational democracy ultimately enabled Hindu nationalist political groups to run on "fresh" platforms, addressing issues that were previously beyond consideration for the INC and thus attracting new followership.

2.   Shifted Economic Policies under Indira and Rajiv Gandhi

Indira Gandhi continued to implement economic policies in line with those of her father's through her first term as prime minister while giving a nod to the International Monetary Fund about future liberalization during her second term. During both terms, however, she considered all economic policies in terms of the effects they would have on her centralization tactics and her desire to maintain power.[135]

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[131] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 258–265.

[132] Ashutosh Varshney, "Contested Meanings: India's National Identity, Hindu Nationalism, and the Politics of Anxiety," *Daedalus* 122 (1993): 243; Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 264.

[133] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 79; Varshney, "Contested Meanings," 227–228.

[134] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 264.

[135] Kohli, *Poverty amid Plenty*, 86.

During her first term, Indira Gandhi faced challenges that would eventually erode hers and the INC's popularity. Indira's June 1966 devaluation of the rupee signaled to opposition parties and the country alike that the economic policies put in place by Nehru and the INC were unsuccessful.[136] Despite the steady yet modest growth the previous three Five-Year Plans had produced, this demoralizing blow was proof, for the opposition, that Congress's plans were deficient.[137] Confidence in the INC's economic plans was immediately lost and opposition platforms, such as those of the BJS, who had recently begun consolidating with other opposition parties in 1964, were strengthened.[138] As a result, the INC nearly lost the 1967 elections, winning only by a slim majority.[139] This close election was indicative of the unprecedented mounting opposition Congress faced at the time. With hers and Congress's popularity dwindling, Indira Gandhi announced vigorous economic reforms in July of 1969 in an attempt to appeal to the poor masses and to refocus India on her father's economic reforms for the alleviation of poverty.[140]

While overall success of agricultural reforms and the Green Revolution reflected well on Indira Gandhi, the uneven distribution of the benefits of these programs would undermine India's economic development overall and cause unrest later on. Indira's agricultural reforms included state- and national-level increases in agricultural spending to improve food production.[141] The Green Revolution introduced new high-yield food-grain varieties and seed-fertilizer technology and mechanization, which boosted agricultural production significantly.[142] These programs reaped tremendous benefits for

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[136] Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 399–401.

[137] Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 399–401; Atul Kohli, *Democracy and Discontent: India's Growing Crisis of Governability* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 307.

[138] For details on BJS alliance behavior, see Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India*, 238–239.

[139] Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 400. Election Commission of India, *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1967 to the Fourth Lok Sabha Volume I* (New Delhi: Election Commission of India, 1968), http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp.

[140] For details on Indira's reforms see Wolpert, *A New History of India,* 402–403.

[141] Wolpert, *A New History of India*, 406.

[142] Ibid.

the elevation of lower castes and peasants overall. In the case of Punjab, often described as India's "breadbasket," the upper and middle class landowning peasants were the primary beneficiaries of the Green Revolution.[143] In moves to advance their paths to wealth and to deal with the political challenges that the poor landless lower classes and castes posed, these newly rich landowners sought more political power.[144] The new reforms had created greater access to loans, which solidified the institutional participation of these groups.[145] Indira Gandhi and the INC had empowered lower caste landowners and peasants, winning their support of the INC at the cost of displacing upper middle caste groups. This alienation would eventually manifest itself during Indira's son's term as prime minister.

Rajiv Gandhi recognized the need to take the next step for India's economic development, and he deliberately moved away from the widespread industrial nationalization policies of Nehru and Indira Gandhi.[146] In 1986, he began to implement economic policies aimed at the deregulation and liberalization of electronics industries in India. Rajiv's new reforms opened India's economy to capital investment in private industries.[147] These reforms, therefore, first benefited the affluent upper castes that had the ready capital for immediate investment into these new markets. Relaxed licensing and tariff rules facilitated the rapid rise of wealth among these already affluent castes.[148] Immediately Rajiv Gandhi's reforms were perceived as "pro-rich."[149] With this perception, upper middle caste Hindus, feeling that their small businesses and industries were no longer protected, dropped their support of the INC. They found the economic

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[143] Harish K. Puri, "The Akali Agitation: An Analysis of Socio-Economic Bases of Protest," *Economic and Political Weekly* 18 (1983): 116, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4371776; Gopal Singh, "Socio-Economic Bases of the Punjab Crisis," *Economic and Political Weekly* 19 (1984): 42, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4372820.

[144] Harish K. Puri, "The Akali Agitation," 117.

[145] Gopal Singh, "Socio-Economic Bases of the Punjab Crisis," 42.

[146] Frankel, "India's Democracy in Transition," 543.

[147] Ibid., 531.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid.

protections promoted under the BJP more in line with their needs because the BJP's "swadeshi approach to economic development," emphasized "nationalist consumption" and rejected the entrance of multinational corporations into India.[150] These losses, compounded with the displacement felt during Indira Gandhi's first prime ministerial term, sufficiently convinced the Hindu upper middle castes that the INC would not support economic policies in line with protecting their economic interests. Effectively economically marginalized, the Hindu upper middle caste provided a population base for the popular growth of the Hindu nationalist political party, the BJP. Thus, the stage was set for the entrance of the BJP's economic policies.

3. Hindu-Muslim Violence during INC's Organizational Decay: 1977–1995

This section argues that for the 1977–1995 period, Hindu-Muslim violence incidents increased because of a weakening of the consociational democracy and the subsequent legitimization of Hindu nationalist political representation at the national level. Lijphart asserts that after the late 1960s in India, "the weakening of power sharing [was] . . . accompanied by an increase in intergroup hostility and violence."[151] Specifically referencing Hindu-Muslim violence, intergroup violence increased because groups previously able to share power under consociational tenets were no longer able to find compromise and therefore resorted to violence. As the political environment became more communally charged, intergroup violence increased. During this 19-year period, India witnessed 23.16 deaths a year because of Hindu-Muslim violence, which constitutes 3.2 times as many deaths when compared with the 1950–1976 period discussed earlier. This is a small number in a country as populous as India, but an increase nonetheless. Figure 1 depicts the increase in Hindu-Muslim incidents of violence, with spikes in 1979, 1981, 1989, 1992, and 1993. These spikes are discussed in the next section. The next section also discusses how Hindu nationalist political parties,

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[150]Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 171.

[151] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 265–266.

now emboldened by the legitimization of their demands at the national level, utilized Hindu-Muslim violence as a vehicle for recruitment.

C.   THE BJP: A "NEW" ALTERNATIVE

The BJP took advantage of Congress's inconsistent secular policy that now recognized religious groups' grievances in the political realm and thus legitimized their existence in the political space. With a legitimized communal platform, BJP was able to mobilize support by focusing on Hindu nationalism. The BJP's mobilization along religious lines created an environment conducive to religious conflict and competition, which subsequently led to increases in Hindu-Muslim violence. This section discusses the origins of Hindu nationalism and the BJP.

Hindu nationalism's roots lie in the British colonial period when the revivalist movement that aimed at "resurrect[ing] cultural pride" began to emerge.[152] In 1925 K. B. Hedgewar created the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which has since become the main component of the Hindu nationalist movement.[153] The RSS is a militant Hindu nationalist organization "dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmans."[154] The group draws its inspiration for its militant traditions from its heritage "of the Maratha war bands."[155] The Hindu nationalist movement has evolved into the Sangh Parivar, a family of associations of Hindu nationalist groups that consolidated in the 1960s.

After independence, the RSS decided to diversify its "affiliated organizations within different sectors and institutions of Indian society as a means of infusing Hindu nationalist values into public life."[156] By doing that, it began to create branch organizations for greater reach into religious life, youth activities, and politics. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) is the religious branch of the RSS. To make the religion

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[152] Varshney, "Contested Meanings," 232.

[153] Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 71.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement*, 114.

of Hinduism more accessible, the VHP was charged with creating an easy-to-understand set of common Hindu symbols for wider appeal.[157] Likewise, the Bajrang Dal is the VHP's militant youth wing whose aim is to indoctrinate young people into the RSS.[158] The political branch of the RSS started as the BJS, also known as the Jana Sangh. S. P. Mookerjee started the group in 1951 with the support of *pracharaks* (full-time RSS propagandists) and other politicians in opposition to Nehru's "pro-Pakistan" stance.[159] The party initially supported mildly anti-Islamic positions such as "support of cow protections, . . . advocacy of Hindi as the country's official language, and opposition to Urdu," among other issues.[160] The Jana Sangh's economic platform consisted of the promotion of small business merchants, middle peasants, and "urbanized lower middle class."[161] Until 1977 the Jana Sangh enjoyed very little political representation at the national level (see Table 1). However, in the wake of Indira Gandhi's 1975–1977 Emergency Rule, "the Jana Sangh played an important role in forming the Janata party in 1977," the coalition of political parties in opposition to Indira and the INC.[162] In three years, once the Janata party began to disintegrate, the BJP was formed.[163] Today the BJP is the most recent iteration of the RSS's political arm.

Recognizing the window of opportunity created by Congress's imperfect execution of its self-imposed secular policies and economic reforms, the BJP was able to develop a credible political platform as an alternative political choice for those recently disillusioned with INC representation.[164] Hoping to appeal to the Hindu majority, the main thrust of the BJP's political agenda lay in the acceptance of Hinduism as the sole

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[157] Hansen, *The Saffron Wave,* 101–102.

[158] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement*, 363.

[159] Ibid., 114, 117.

[160] Myron Weiner, "Party Politics and Electoral Behaviour," in *India's Political Parties*, ed. Peter Ronald deSouza and E. Sridharan (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 139.

[161] Ibid., 140.

[162] Ibid., 139.

[163] Ibid.

[164] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 76.

source of India's identity.[165] Therefore, in order to create a unified "Indian nation," India's Muslims, India's largest minority, were targeted for submission to Hindu nationalist tenets.[166] Varshney identifies these tenets as the following:

> 1) Accept the centrality of Hinduism to Indian civilization; 2) Acknowledge key Hindu figures such as Ram as civilization heroes, and not regard them as mere religious figures of Hinduism; 3) Accept that Muslim rulers in various parts of India (between roughly 1000 to 1857) destroyed the pillars of Hindu civilization, especially Hindu Temples; and 4) Make no claims to special privileges such as the maintenance of religious personal laws, nor demand special state grants for their educational institutions.[167]

Hindu nationalists believe that only through the acknowledgement of these tenets will Muslims be fully assimilated into the Indian nation.[168] Those unwilling to acknowledge the tenets were therefore denying Indian unity and were to be excluded.[169] Looking to gain political support from the Hindu majority, the BJP embarked on a plan that politicized religious symbols as a means of recruiting followers.

1.   Use of Hindu Symbols to Mobilize Followers

The most prominent examples of the BJP's politicization of religious symbols are the emphasis placed on Hindu religious processions knows as *yatras*, or journeys, and the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, whose ultimate goal was the destruction of the Babri Mosque in order to build a temple dedicated to the Hindu god Ram.[170] The combined effects of the politicization of these symbols resulted in increases in Hindu-Muslim violence beginning in the 1980s and continuing through the early 1990s. The "waves of violence" left in the wake of these public displays of Hindu nationalist sentiment demonstrate the power of mobilization along religious lines.

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[165] Varshney, "Contested Meanings," 230. This was of particular importance in light of the partition, when many Muslims left India to create Pakistan while many also stayed behind in India.

[166] Varshney, "Contested Meanings," 231.

[167] Ibid.

[168] Ibid., 231–232.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 81–82; Hansen, *The Saffron Wave,* 154.

The Sanctuary Parivar utilized yatras to gain support for the Hindu nationalist movement. Beginning in 1982 and 1983, the VHP successfully organized several yatras in South India to rally support.[171] Two prime examples of yatras were the processions known as the Ram Shila Pujan held in 1989 and the Rath Yatra held in 1990. The goal of the Ram Shila Pujan was to collect consecrated bricks from across India for the reconstruction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya, thus "liberating" Ram from Babri domination.[172] This procession began in Bihar, ended at the mosque in Ayodhya, and was successful in consecrating several hundred thousands of bricks from all across India and from Hindus around the world.[173] See Figure 2 for a depiction of the death intensity per Hindu-Muslim violence incident by state for the year of 1989, the year the Ram Shila Pujan yatra took place. Figure 2 indicates that Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh experienced the most intense events of Hindu-Muslim violence that year. Bihar was the starting point of the Ram Shila Pujan and the location of the Bhagalpur riots.[174] The Bhagalpur riots sparked similar violence across all India.[175] This VHP-organized event, in which the BJP actively participated, incited increased levels of Hindu-Muslim violence in Bihar in 1989. The commission for the investigation of the Bhagalpur riots blamed the BJP for its active involvement in the riots and its incitement of Hindu-Muslim violence. The BJP was therefore an active proponent of the incitement of Hindu-Muslim violence.

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[171] Hansen, *The Saffron Wave,* 154.

[172] Christophe Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 280.

[173] Hansen, *The Saffron Wave,* 161–162.

[174] Paul R. Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 26; Asghar Ali Engineer, "Bhagalpur Riot Inquiry Commission Report," *Economic and Political Weekly* 30 (1995): 1729.

[175] Asghar Ali Engineer, "Bhagalpur Riot Inquiry Commission Report-A Comment," *Progressive Prospective* 7 (1995): 1, quoted in Paul R. Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 26.

Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence By State: 1989 Year of Ram Shila Pujan
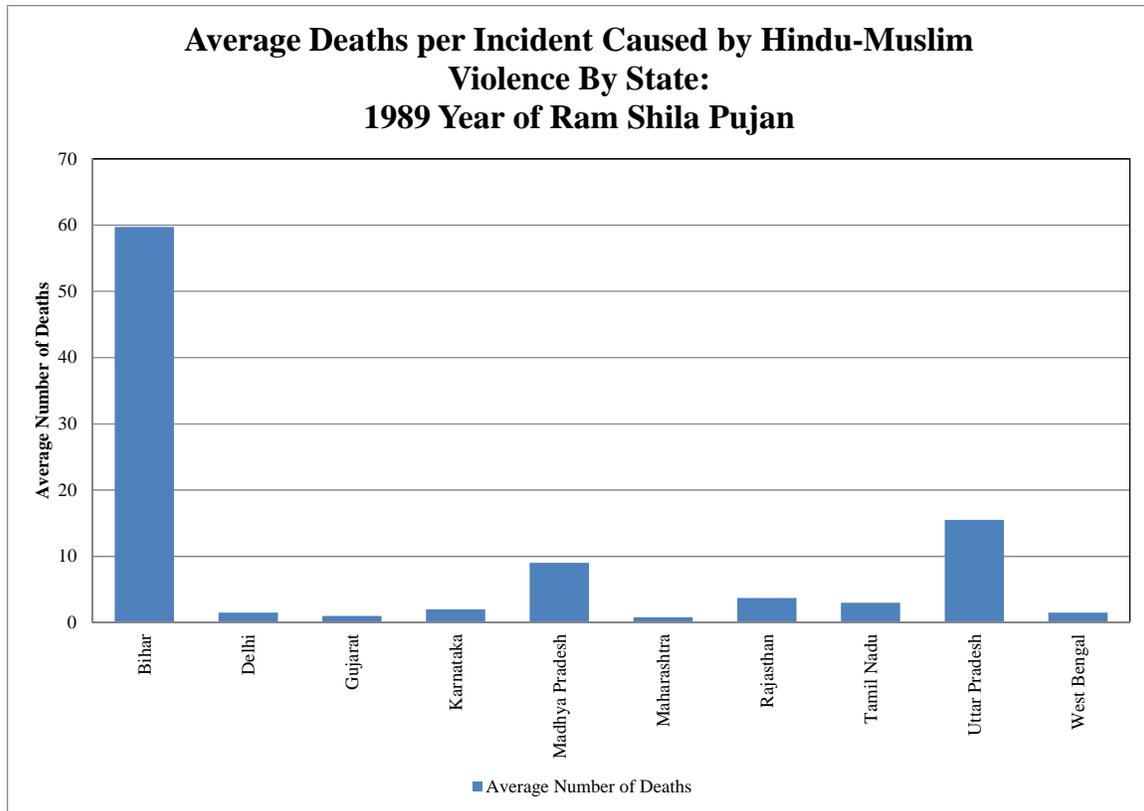
Note: Data from the Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004.
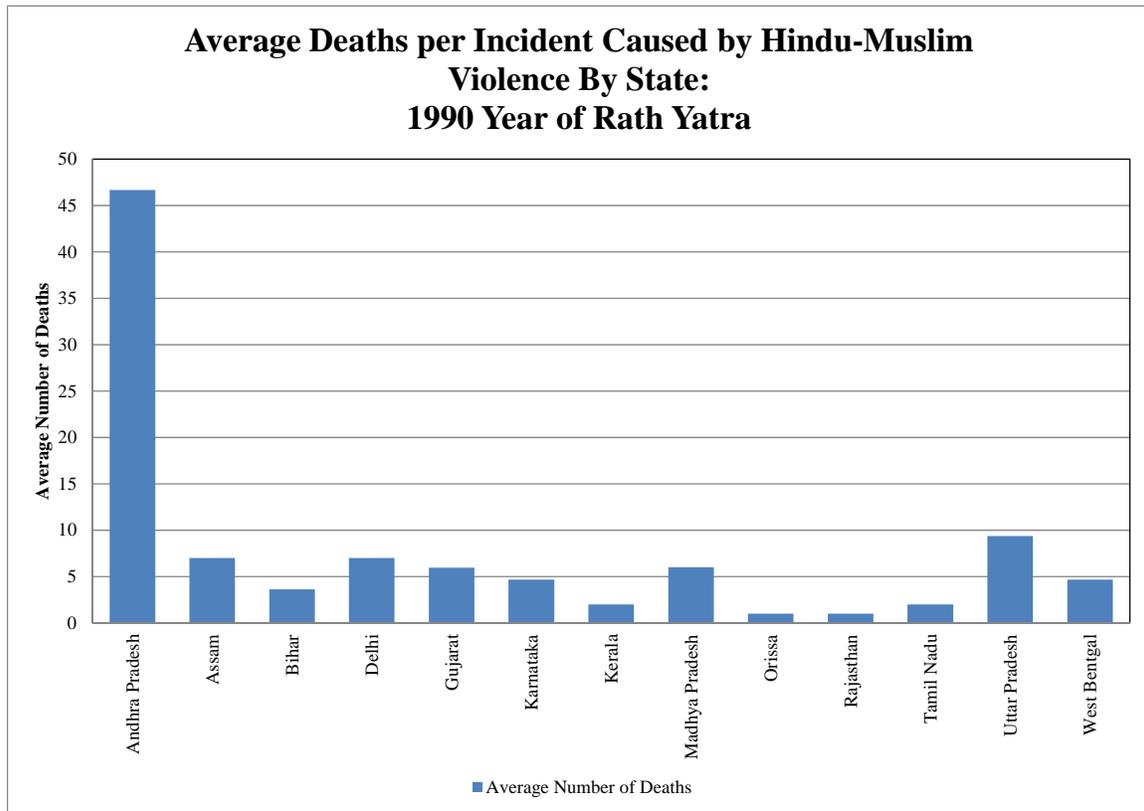
Figure 2.   Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence by State: 1989 Year of Ram Shila Pujan.

The same can be shown for the Rath Yatra procession led by then president of the BJP, L. K. Advani in 1990.[176] Advani's Rath Yatra was a pilgrimage that traversed the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Delhi until its abrupt end in Bihar.[177] Its aim was to conduct a procession from Gujarat to Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, recruiting Hindu nationalist *kar sevaks* (religious workers) along the way. The BJP designed the yatra as a national-level demonstration and hoped for extensive media coverage for the

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[176] For a depiction of the route of the Rath Yatra see Mushirul Hasan, "Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims Since Independence," in *India's Muslims: An Omnibus*, by Mushirul Hasan, ed. Barbara Daly Metcalf, Rafiuddin Ahmed and Mushirul Hasan (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 257.

[177] Christophe Jaffrelot, "The Hindu Nationalist Reinterpretation of Pilgrimage in India: the Limits of Yatra Politics," *Nations and Nationalism* 15 (2009): 12–13.

wider dissemination of the purpose of the event.[178] Again, the Varshney-Wilkinson dataset shows that some of the states through which the Rath Yatra passed experienced some of the most intense Hindu-Muslim violence that year (see Figure 3).[179]

Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence By State: 1990 Year of Rath Yatra

Note: Data from the Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004.

Figure 3.   Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence by State: 1990 Year of Rath Yatra.

Both these processions, as planned, demonstrated the domination of Hindus in the public space of India.[180] Subsequently, both events successfully incited Hindu-Muslim violence.[181] The advocacy and participation of the BJP in both yatras indicates that yatras

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[178] Hansen, *The Saffron Wave,* 165.

[179] Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004.

[180] Hansen, *The Saffron Wave,* 161.

[181] Ibid., 164.

were a preferred method of Hindu recruitment and Muslim intimidation. These yatras set prime conditions for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

The Ram Janmabhoomi movement was a similar precession-type event based on the belief that the Babri Mosque had been built on top of the birthplace of the premier Hindu god, Ram. The belief was that Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty, had destroyed the original Hindu temple that marked the birthplace of Ram and subsequently built a mosque in its place. The Hindu nationalist argument, in line with its call for the recognition and rectification of past Muslim destruction of Hindu temples, demanded the destruction of the Babri Mosque in order to rebuild Ram's temple for the Hindu majority. This movement culminated on December 8, 1992, when thousands of kar sevaks descended on the Babri Mosque and destroyed it. This event set off waves of violence between Hindus and Muslims throughout all of India. Figure 1 depicts the peak of Hindu-Muslim violence that India experienced in 1992. Because of the BJP's recent electoral gains, discussed in the next section, the BJP remained a quiet supporter of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.[182] Jaffrelot explains that its support to the movement was more readily apparent at the local and regional levels.[183] Overall, however, the BJP's association with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and the Hindu-Muslim violence it incited was widely acknowledged if not outright publicized.

2. BJP Use of Communal Violence and Riots

The communal riot is the most violent form of expression between communal groups and often signifies the utter devolution of communication between opposing groups. Smaller, spontaneous communal violence incidents may provoke the onset of a full-blown communal riot, but scholars have found that communal riots more often than not are planned events. In this context the BJP has utilized communal riots in India. Brass asserts that the BJP utilized mobilization along communal lines to empower the political

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[182] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement,* 382–383.

[183] Ibid., 383.

party in India.[184] Therefore, the BJP's use of communal violence and riots, pitting the Hindu majority against the Muslim minority, served to further its agenda. Engineer asserts that communal parties (read the BJP) can exploit small incidents of communal violence for inciting full-scale riots.[185] Calling attention to smaller events, communal parties can justify larger, more devastating riots. Therefore, scholars generally accepted that the communal riot itself is a constructed event, "requir[ing] previous planning and provision of infrastructure."[186] Both Engineer and Brass assert that no large-scale communal riot is spontaneous.[187] Brass explains that communal riots serve multiple purposes, including deliberate affronts, recruiting, and communal messaging.[188] Every minute aspect of the riot is designed to serve a particular purpose.[189]

In the discussion of communal riots in India, the BJP's interaction with the institutional mechanisms for dealing with the riots, particularly the police, is a critical piece of the progression of riots. The role of the police must be examined given that they are local citizens themselves and usually act as first responders to communal violence events. Engineer argues that depending on the goals of communal forces, local police are either left to quell the communal violence or encouraged to let it escalate.[190] In cases where small events trigger a communal riot, oftentimes police are "under pressure not to act and to let the violence spread."[191] In either case, communal parties such as the BJP are in command of either the escalation or de-escalation of communal riots by "pressuring" local police.[192]

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[184] Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence*, 6–7.

[185] Asghar Ali Engineer, "Communal Riots, 2004," *Economic and Political Weekly* 40 (February 2005): 520, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4416163.

[186] Engineer, "Communal Riots, 2004," 520.

[187] Ibid.; Paul R. Brass, "Development of an Institutionalised Riot System in Meerut City, 1961 to 1982," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39 (2004): 4839, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4415744.

[188] Brass, "Development of an Institutionalised Riot System," 4839.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Engineer, "Communal Riots, 2004," 520.

[191] Ibid.

[192] Ibid.

3.   The Manipulation of Hindu-Muslim Violence for Electoral Results

The previous examples show that Hindu nationalists and their primary political party, the BJP, utilized Hindu-Muslim violence to promote their agenda and for recruiting during the 1980s and 1990s. The entrance of the BJP onto India's political landscape caused India to experience its highest levels of Hindu-Muslim violence since the 1947 partition. The BJP was first elected to a national-level parliamentary seat in 1984. Figure 1 depicts the dramatic increase in Hindu-Muslim violence beginning in the 1980s, just prior to the 1984 election. While the decades prior show variations, in the 1980s a consistent increase in Hindu-Muslim violence occurred. As Figure 1 shows, throughout the 1990s a considerable amount of Hindu-Muslim violence ensued. Wilkinson and Basu attribute this rise directly to the BJP's political strategy aimed at mobilizing the majority Hindus on an anti-minority platform just prior to the 1991 general elections.[193] Wilkinson points out that once having captured power, the BJP stops inciting Hindu-Muslim violence, which partially accounts for the sharp drop in Hindu-Muslim violence in 1991 and then again in 1994 and 1995, after the Babri Mosque destruction in 1992.[194] Wilkinson also attributes this drop in violence to the coalition the BJP had entered.[195] The BJP was able to develop alliances with other smaller political parties, which led to their capture of the majority in the Lok Sabha (India's lower parliamentary house) in 1998 through 2003.[196] Many scholars agree that the BJP has moderated its use of Hindu-Muslim violence because of the emergence of coalition politics in India and the subsequent realization of the need to appeal to as many constituents as possible.

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[193] Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence,* 164–165; Amrita Basu, "The Transformation of Hindu Nationalism? Toward a Reappraisal," in *Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy*, Francine R. Frankel et al. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 390.

[194] Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 164–165.

[195] Ibid.

[196] Election Commission of India, *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1998 to the 12th Lok Sabha* (New Delhi: Election Commission of India, 1998), http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp; Election Commission of India, *Statistical Report on General Elections, 1999 to the 13th Lok Sabha* (New Delhi: Election Commission of India, 1999), http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp.

Finally, the increasingly communal sociopolitical environment created by Indira Gandhi and the INC through the recognition and legitimization of communal political groups and leaders such as the Akali Dal and Bhindranwale facilitated the advance of the BJP. Nehru reframed calls for communal politics as linguistic and regional movements to keep clear of any association between political demands and communal groups. He separated himself from those associations by maintaining a decentralized INC and encouraging regular state INC elections so the local experts could broker the consensual governance necessary for a nation as diverse as India.[197] Indira Gandhi, on the other hand, acknowledged the demands for communal politics, and by negotiating with them, legitimized them. Her centralization of the party necessitated this legitimization. A communally-charged sociopolitical environment enabled the BJP to justify its communal demands and observations, drawing in many more followers than previously possible.

4. Current Activity

Scholars today assert that the BJP is moving toward a more centrist political platform to ensure its ability to win a broader array of the electorate, as recently demonstrated in the overwhelming majority win in 2014.[198] The Jana Sangh, the BJP's predecessor, became more centrist and less "anti-Muslim when it came into national power in 1977 via a coalition of Congress opposition political parties."[199] Stephen Cohen explains that because of the influence of coalition politics, as discussed earlier, the BJP is forced to ignore the calls of "its radical elements and Parivar to take extreme [political] positions."[200] Overall, India's political party landscape has seen steep increases in coalition politics. Consequently, the BJP has lessened its use of Hindu-Muslim riots because of the potential loss of Muslim voters to Congress.[201] In a democracy where

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[197] Weiner, "Party Politics and Electoral Behavior," 151.

[198] Stephen P. Cohen, *India: Emerging Power* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 121; Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 164–165.

[199] Myron Weiner, *India at the Polls, 1980: A Study of the Parliamentary Elections* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1983), 114.

[200] Cohen, *India: Emerging Power,* 121.

[201] Ibid., 120.

minute voting margins often dictate political victory, the BJP has had to change its methods of mobilization to remain a viable national political party.

D. CONCLUSION

At the national level, the decay of the consociational Nehruvian tradition, as demonstrated by the practice of inconsistent secular politics as well as structural shifts in economic hierarchies, created an opening for the entrance of the BJP onto India's political landscape. By recognizing and appeasing religious groups in a political setting, Indira Gandhi and her son set a precedence that legitimized the entrance of religious groups with political agendas, namely the BJP. Under the leadership of Indira Gandhi and then her son, Rajiv, consistent economic reforms favoring lower-caste Hindus caused structural shifts among lower- and upper-caste Hindus economically and politically. Lower castes now found themselves beneficiaries of increases in central and state agricultural spending and subsidies, displacing upper-caste Hindus. Alienated by Congress's economic reforms, these displaced upper-caste Hindus became the population base for the Hindu nationalist movement.

Once an emerging national political party, the BJP chose to use Hindu-Muslim violence throughout the 1980s and 1990s as a means of recruitment of Hindus and intimidation of the Muslim minority. In stark contrast to Nehruvian principles, the BJP sought to legitimize religion and Hindu nationalism in the political realm.

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III. THE INC'S STATE-LEVEL MONOPOLY OF POWER AND ITS EFFECTS ON HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE: A COMPARISON OF KERALA AND UTTAR PRADESH

This chapter compares the states of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh based on the INC's monopoly of power in either state, specifically examining the effects this monopoly had on the states' formation of civic institutions and subsequent experience of Hindu-Muslim violence. The chapter examines the political landscape and levels of Hindu-Muslim violence in each state during the same periods covered in Chapter II; 1950–1976 and 1977–1995.

This chapter demonstrates that the INC has never been able to establish or maintain a monopoly in the state of Kerala because of the Communist Party's presence. From the outset, the INC has had to form intergroup coalitions with communal political parties in Kerala in order to remain competitive. Because of these coalitions, which are in essence civic institutions, and the consequent disincentive for communal violence for any party's electoral success, Hindu-Muslim violence has historically remained low in Kerala. Conversely, the INC has been successful in establishing a monopoly of power in Uttar Pradesh. However, the state has felt the effects of both a healthy and a decayed INC organization. True to its secularist platform, from 1950 to 1976 while the INC thrived, the INC itself brokered intercommunal grievances within the construct of the state party organizations, thus eliminating any need for the building of civic institutions and consequently keeping Hindu-Muslim violence relatively low. As the INC's organization decayed, the lack of intercommunal civic institutions coupled with the INC's inability to broker consensus and facilitated the entrance of the Hindu nationalist political party on the political scene. Accordingly, Uttar Pradesh experienced increases in Hindu-Muslim violence.

A. INC'S MONOPOLY OF POWER AND HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE: 1950–1976

Immediately after partition, the INC was successful in fulfilling a relatively centrist platform that appealed to a wide variety of constituents across almost all of India. Congress, in all states except for Kerala, was able to maintain its appeal to the masses and control internal conflicts by implementing a system utilizing state party organizations.[202] Myron Weiner attributes this ability to the power that Congress state party bosses had from 1952 through 1969 because they "ran party machines based on control over patronage."[203] Some of the functions they performed were "mobilizing local support, accommodating [state Congress parties] to local factions, providing opportunities for competing political elites, transmitting to state and central governments information about the local scene, and most importantly managing social conflict."[204] Congress, allowed state party bosses to deal with their own constituents, the people and groups they knew best, which guaranteed the satisfaction of local needs and the creation of credible leaders who could build coalitions within their states.[205] State bosses best understood the factions within each of their states and were able to satisfy factional demands. Because Congress had these in-state mechanisms to satisfy the wide array of needs of multiple ethnicities and classes, it was opposed to creating coalitions with opposition parties because it had the manpower and resources to maintain a majority and stay in power.[206] These in-state mechanisms applied in all states except for Kerala, where Congress was competing with the Communist Party. The preventions of the spread of communism thus necessitated Congress to make an exception to its coalition policy.

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[202] Myron Weiner, "Party Politics and Electoral Behavior," in *India's Political Parties*, edited by Peter Ronald deSouza and E. Sridharan (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 152.

[203] Ibid., 151.

[204] Ibid., 153.

[205] Ibid., 151.

[206] K. V. Varghese, "Party Ideology and Coalition Politics," in *Dynamics of State Politics, Kerala*, ed. N. Jose Chander (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1986) 34.

1.   Kerala Political Landscape and Hindu-Muslim Violence: 1950–1976

Kerala's historical political landscape presented Congress with unique challenges. In 1951, a left-leaning branch of Congress in Kerala broke off and formed the Communist Party of India (CPI).[207] Kerala was also home to the only remaining post-partition Muslim League organization. Therefore, predating the state's formation in 1956, Kerala's political landscape consisted of the CPI, Congress, the ML, and various Christian and socialist parties.[208] Overall, the smaller caste and communal political groups put pressure on the larger political parties creating a system wherein minority groups' grievances were heard and addressed.[209] From the state's inception, Kerala's various groups coupled with the presence of the Communist Party necessitated a coalition government system, where political parties bound together to form a majority. The coalitions of this period, however, had no desire to develop "aggregate interests" among these groups, if not to simply gain the majority.[210]

Therefore, coalition politics became standard practice in Kerala. Initially opposed to intercommunal coalitions, Congress's strong desire to check the spread to communism in South India eventually led it to join in coalition with the Muslim League.[211] However, Congress remained skeptical.[212] In 1960, Congress, the ML, and the Praja Socialist Party formed the United Front against the CPI in Kerala and successfully ousted the Communists from power.[213] However, after the elections, facing pressure for having joined forces with a communal group, Congress returned to its secularist ideology and

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[207] V. K. Sukumaran Nayar, "Political Development," in *Dynamics of State Politics, Kerala* ed. N. Jose Chander (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1986), 9.

[208] N. Jose Chander, "Political Culture," in *Dynamics of State Politics, Kerala*, ed. N. Jose Chander (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1986), 25.

[209] Ibid., 25–26.

[210] Ibid., 25.

[211] Varghese, "Party Ideology and Coalition Politics," 34.

[212] Ibid.

[213] Smith, *India as a Secular State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 482. For more details on the CPI's split into the Communist Party of India Marxist (CPI(M)) see Valerian Rodrigues, "The Communist Parties in India," in *India's Political Parties*, ed. Peter Ronald deSouza and E. Sridharan (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 199–252.

alienated the ML, causing the alliance to disintegrate.[214] This reversal of Congress laid the foundation for the Seven-Party United Front Government of 1967.

The 1967 elections in Kerala rode an anti-Congress wave with a coalition that consisted of the communist parties, the ML, and various socialist parties.[215] Kerala's political party coalitions were void of ideological foundations, as evidenced by the formation of the 1967 United Front that consisted of parties that had contested against each other in the previous election.[216] However, void of ideological founding, the formation of the United Front was the birth of the coalition government in Kerala. The formation of coalitions is a trend that continues through to present day and allows even small political and communal parties to create coalitions and advance their particular needs, shifting their alliances when necessary and with impunity.[217] In subscribing to coalition politics, the political parties of Kerala became interdependent despite their ethnic, religious, or caste differences. Allies in one election invariably became opponents in the next election and vice versa. Most importantly, however, these political coalitions, or civic institutions, recognized the need for each other's support, be it immediate or at some point in the future.[218] These coalitions were in essence movements for electoral politics.[219] Albeit the movement only consisted of gaining the electoral majority, gaining the majority valued intercommunal civic institution building that subsequently led to low numbers of Hindu-Muslim violence.

The intercommunal exchanges that occurred to establish these political coalitions discouraged and thwarted the use of communal violence by any political party.[220] This is evident in the low Hindu-Muslim violence numbers in Kerala during this period (see Figure 4). Over 27 years, Kerala experienced only four lethal Hindu-Muslim violence

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[214] Varghese, "Party Ideology and Coalition Politics," 38.

[215] Ibid., 39, 47–49.

[216] Ibid., 39.

[217] Ibid., 46.

[218] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 167.

[219] Ibid., 290.

[220] Ibid., 167.

events. While it may be a state less prone to communal violence, Kerala is still not immune to it. This lack of immunity is especially evident in the face of high-profile agitation as seen in Kerala's peak experience of two lethal Hindu-Muslim violence incidents in September and December of 1969, following the Ahmedabad riots that rocked the nation.[221]
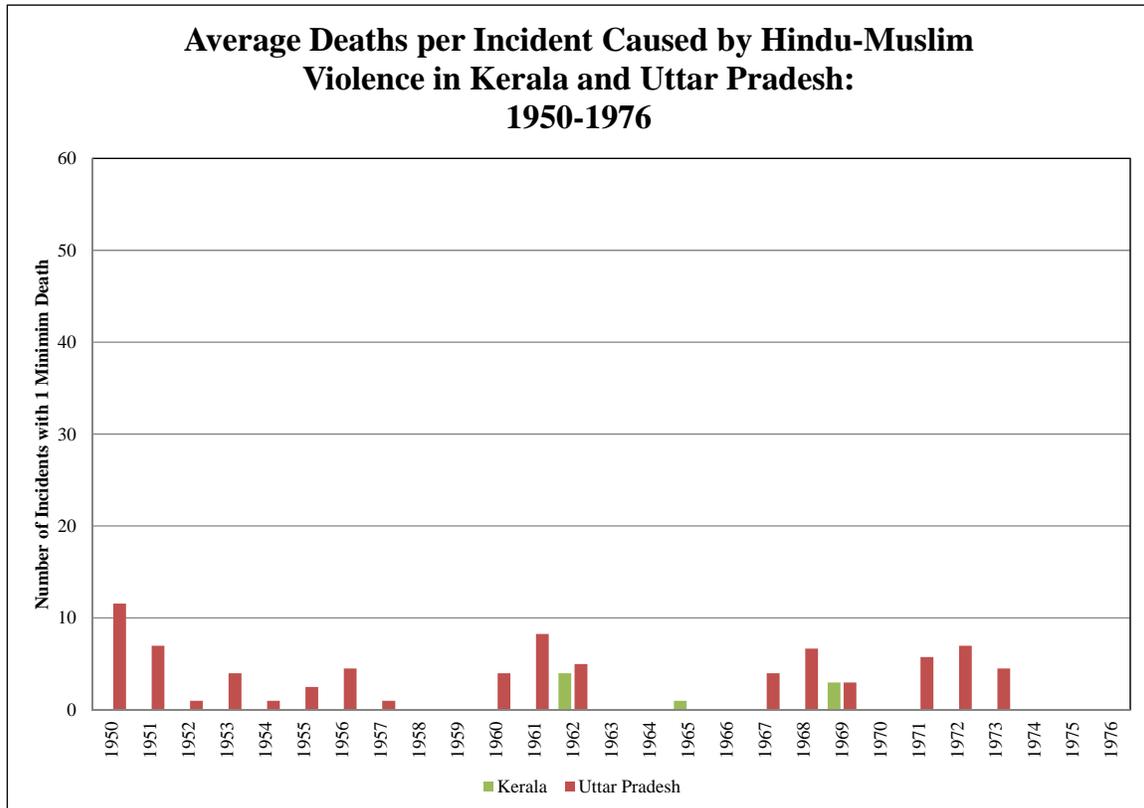
Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh: 1950-1976

Note: Data from the Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004.

Figure 4.   Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence Incidents in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh: 1950–1976.

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[221] Ibid., 98, 100. Varshney only references the 1992 Ayodhya riots, which sparked wide-spread national response; however, Kerala experienced a similar spike in Hindu-Muslim violence in the face of the 1969 Ahmedabad riots, which received similar wide-spread response across the nation.

2. Uttar Pradesh Political Landscape and Hindu-Muslim Violence: 1950–1976

Basing its ideology on the Nehruvian traditions that founded India, Congress was able to successfully appeal to the wide variety of constituents in Uttar Pradesh immediately following independence.[222] This appeal lasted virtually unchallenged for almost 30 years as the INC remained the dominant political party in Uttar Pradesh until the 1977 elections. Historically, Uttar Pradesh's population has consisted of approximately 20 percent scheduled castes, 20 percent forward castes, 40 percent backward castes and 16–18 percent Muslims.[223] From a consociational perspective, the INC built a grand coalition among these groups with the use of the state-party-boss system discussed earlier in the chapter, and built consensus within the state, thus eliminating the need for building civic institutions and coalitions. Thus, while the INC maintained the monopoly of power, it did not allow civic institutions to develop. Allowing the development of civic institutions would have, in effect, put the INC out of a job. Civic institutions and their associated communal ties therefore remained undeveloped in Uttar Pradesh. Despite Uttar Pradesh's lack of intercommunal civic institutions, the INC was still able to effectively and internally broker coalitions with minority ethnic and caste groups. Consequently, from 1950 to 1976, the INC was able to keep Hindu-Muslim violence low in Uttar Pradesh because of the consensus it built at the state-level.

Because of the INC's success in managing intergroup violence through consensus building, and despite the lack of Hindu-Muslim intercommunal civic institutions, Hindu-Muslim violence established itself as an ordinary occurrence in Uttar Pradesh but at a relatively low rate (see Figure 4).[224] Over 27 years, Uttar Pradesh experienced on average 1.48 lethal Hindu-Muslim violence events per year, resulting in 40 lethal events total.

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[222] Zoya Hasan, "Representation and Redistribution: the new lower caste politics of north India," in *Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy*, ed. Francine R. Frankel et al. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 149.

[223] Weiner, *India at the Polls, 1980*, 76.

[224] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 98.

Uttar Pradesh's strong consociational construct under the INC kept Hindu-Muslim violence numbers to a relative minimum during this period. Uttar Pradesh still experienced Hindu-Muslim violence during this period, under the INC, but at much lower levels than what was to come in the following 19 years.

Hindu-Muslim violence levels between 1950 and 1976 remain low in both Kerala and Uttar Pradesh but for different reasons. In Kerala, the monopoly of power causes the creation of civic institutions through coalitions creating disincentives for Hindu-Muslim violence; in Uttar Pradesh, the INC builds consensus and maintains a grand coalition that results in relatively low Hindu-Muslim violence.

B. INC'S MONOPOLY OF POWER AND HINDU-MUSLIM VIOLENCE: 1977–1995

While Congress's popularity waned in the late 1970s and Indira Gandhi eliminated state party organizations in her consolidation of power at the center, India saw more political parties assert themselves along caste, ethnic, and religious lines. From a consociational perspective, these assertions are examples of previously passive groups now becoming vocal and expressing their needs, thus weakening the consociational system.[225] Zoya Hasan asserts that since the 1970s, all political parties have relied more on ethnic appeals rather than class-line appeals because "group identity has supplanted class interest as the chief vehicle of political mobilization."[226] As this occurs, competition among existing and emerging political parties increases. Since 1977, Congress has no longer been the dominant political party in India, and it will become less so as more parties emerge. This chapter discusses the effects of the INC's organizational and consociational demise, the rise of ethnically based political parties, and the effects these events had on Hindu-Muslim violence between 1977 and 1995.

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[225] Lijphart, "The Puzzle of Indian Democracy," 263.

[226] Zoya Hasan, "Representation and Redistribution," 147.

1.   Kerala's Political Landscape and Hindu-Muslim Violence: 1977–1995

Kerala's political landscape showed very little change from 1977–1995 when compared with the previous timeframe. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI (M)), now the major communist branch in Kerala, and its primary opponent, the INC, continued to dominate the Lok Sabha in Kerala.[227] These larger parties continued to negotiate with smaller communal and ethnic parties to form the two major coalitions in Kerala, the Left Democratic Front, led by the CPI (M), and the United Democratic Front, led by the INC. As discussed earlier in the chapter, these coalitions can be considered "movement politics aimed at electoral politics," leading to lower levels of Hindu-Muslim violence.[228]

Similar to Kerala's political landscape, Kerala witnessed little to no change regarding the amount of Hindu-Muslim violence it experienced. Despite its consistently low experience of Hindu-Muslim violence, Kerala was still susceptible to spikes in national levels of Hindu-Muslim violence. Varshney points out that in 1992, when the rest of India was rocked by the events at Ayodhya, Kerala's relatively long period of peace was also disrupted.[229] Additionally, comparing the rates at which Hindu-Muslim violence occurred between the two periods shows only a narrow deviation. The rate at which Hindu-Muslim violence occurred from 1950 to 1976 was 0.148 incidents per year. At that rate, this thesis estimates that 2.52 incidents of Hindu-Muslim violence would have occurred between 1977 and 1995. Kerala witnessed three lethal Hindu-Muslim violence incidents during this period, only 19 percent over the projected estimates based on the previous 27 years.

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[227] See Appendix C.

[228] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 290.

[229] Ibid., 100.

2. Uttar Pradesh's Political Landscape and Hindu-Muslim Violence: 1977–1995

The broken success Congress experienced during the general elections from 1977 to 1995 was indicative of the INC's decline in popularity in Uttar Pradesh, due in part to its organizational demise and the weakening of its consociational construct. Therefore, because of the lack of civic institutions within Uttar Pradesh, the INC's demise also resulted in increased Hindu-Muslim violence. A win at the polls in 1984 bisected decisive losses during the 1977 and 1989 general elections. After almost 30 years of single-party domination, the INC was no longer the singularly dominant political party in India.

In direct response to the "excesses" of Indira Gandhi's emergency rule, from 1975 to 1977 Congress's losses in Uttar Pradesh starkly confirmed Congress's loss of support. During India's 1977 general elections, the JP won all 85 Lok Sabha seats belonging to Uttar Pradesh. Shortly afterward, the 1980 general election saw a narrow statewide return to the Congress party; however, the Lok Dal and the JP trailed closely behind.[230] However, short-lived, the JP's time in power demonstrated the demise of Congress's single-party domination and the people's desire to choose alternatively.

After Indira Gandhi's assassination in 1984, Congress again won an overwhelming majority, taking 83 of the 85 seats in the Lok Sabha. While much of the public attributed Congress's victory to the sympathy vote, Brass argues that the INC's success was due to Rajiv Gandhi's campaign focus on eliminating both internal and external threats to the state.[231] Having recently experienced the devastating effects of a Sikh separatist threat, Congress successfully campaigned to lead the Indian nation on a security-based platform.

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[230] Weiner, *India at the Polls, 1980*, 79.

[231] Paul R. Brass, "The 1984 Parliamentary Elections in Uttar Pradesh," *Asian Survey* 26 (1986): 663, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2644129.

Then, in 1989, Congress saw a serious decrease in support, primarily visible in the disintegration of its supporters in Uttar Pradesh as they turned to caste-based political groups.[232] The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP) emerged as INC's newest competitors. The BSP primarily appealed to the Scheduled Castes of Uttar Pradesh, while the SP took up the Backward Caste vote. Then, starting in the 1990s, the BJP displaced Congress as the dominant party in Uttar Pradesh.[233] As discussed earlier, the BJP appealed to the upper caste Hindus who comprised approximately 20 percent of the state's population.[234] This support gave the BJP the ability to electorally edge out Congress. Additionally, Congress's popularity decline in Uttar Pradesh accelerated because of its passive approach to the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, which alienated both Hindus and Muslims alike.[235]

Prior to the 1991 general elections, the BJP pursued an anti-minority campaign to persuade the Hindu majority's patronage in what the BJP expected to be a close electoral race against the Samajwadi Party and the BSP.[236] Brass asserts that the BJP focused its effort on building Hindu support around the Ram Janmabhoomi movement while simultaneously contesting the recent findings of the Mandal Commission.[237] Encouraging Hindu-Muslim violence and contesting certain Hindu exclusions from segments of the Mandal Commission report, the BJP began its campaign drive. Wilkinson directly attributes the increases in Hindu-Muslim violence during late 1990 and early 1991 to the BJP anti-minority campaign (see Figure 5).[238]

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[232] Zoya Hasan, "Representation and Redistribution," 148–149.

[233] Ibid., 150.

[234] Ibid., 152, 166.

[235] Ibid., 150.

[236] Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 164.

[237] Paul R. Brass, "The Strong State and the Fear of Disorder," in *Transforming India: Social and Political Dynamics of Democracy*, ed. Francine R. Frankel et al. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 83.

[238] Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 164.

While the occurrence of Hindu-Muslim violence in Uttar Pradesh did not change qualitatively, it did show a significant quantitative jump in the period between 1977 and 1995. Uttar Pradesh effectively demonstrates Varshney's assertion that in the absence of civic institutions that provide intercommunal engagement opportunities, Hindu-Muslim violence thrives.[239] Neither Hindus nor Muslims in Uttar Pradesh are fully integrated into any civic institutions that would offer protection from the escalation of violence directed at either group. The occurrence of lethal Hindu-Muslim violence during this period saw a more than threefold increase when compared with the previous 27 years in Uttar Pradesh.[240] Based on the 1950 to 1976 rate at which Hindu-Muslim violence was projected to continue, Hindu-Muslim violence incidents would occur at 1.48 incidents per year. For the period between 1977 and 1995, this thesis estimates that 26 incidents of lethal Hindu-Muslim violence would have occurred. Instead, Uttar Pradesh witnessed 89 lethal Hindu-Muslim violence incidents, 340 percent above projected estimates based on the previous 27 years. The compounded effects of the lack of intercommunal civic institution relationships to halt the incitement of Hindu-Muslim violence, the emergence of the BJP, which advocated Hindu-Muslim violence, and the increasing competition provided by the emergence of increasing numbers of lower caste political parties contributed to the increase of lethal Hindu Muslim incidents in Uttar Pradesh.
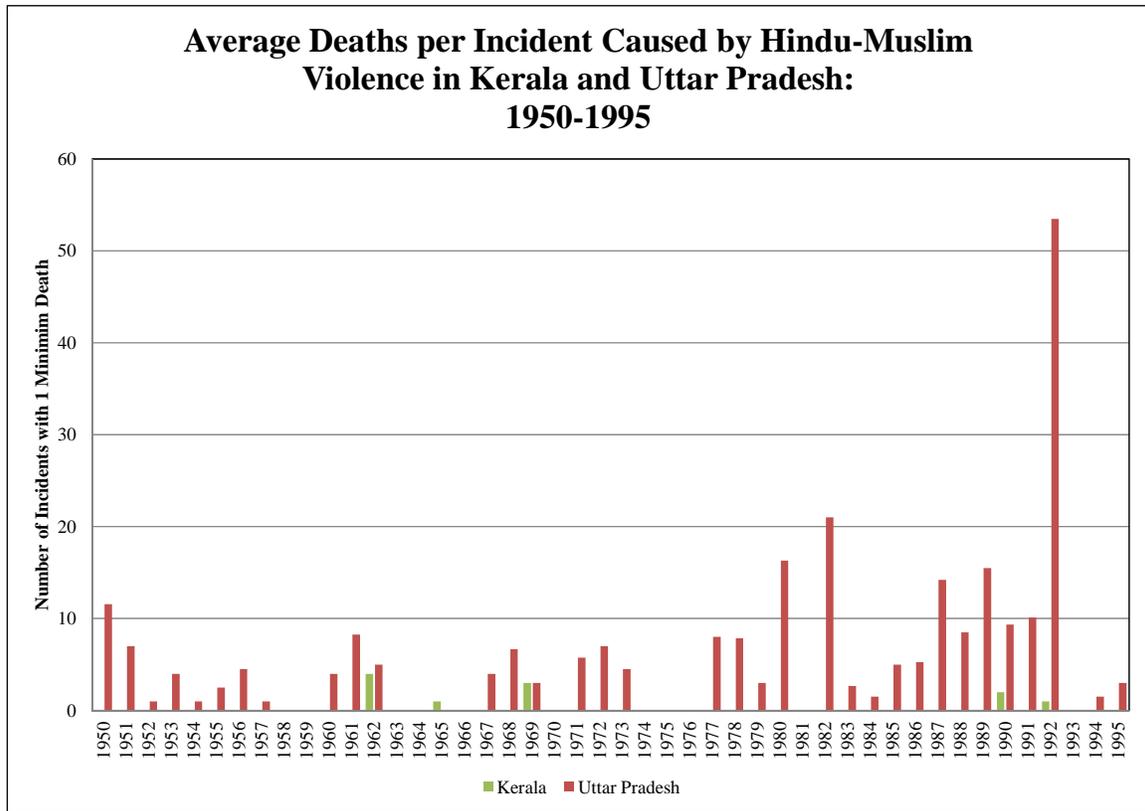
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[239] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life*, 4.
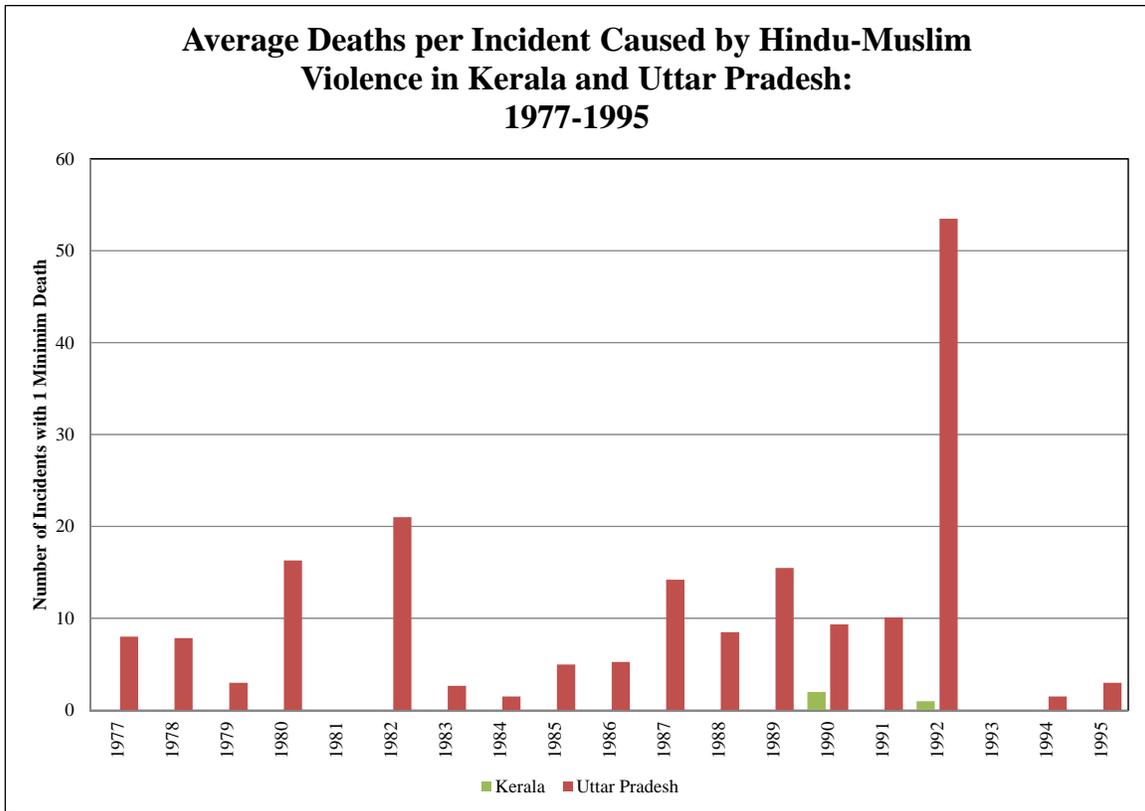
Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh: 1977-1995

Note: Data from the Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004.

Figure 5.　Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh: 1977–1995.

Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh: 1950-1995

Note: Data from the Varshney Wilkinson Dataset on Hindu-Muslim Violence in India, Version 2, October 8, 2004.

Figure 6.   Average Deaths per Incident Caused by Hindu-Muslim Violence in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh: 1950–1995.

C.   CONCLUSION

Two observations emerge from the analysis completed in this chapter. First, the presence of civic institutions appears to be the key factor to communal peace, no matter what political party has the monopoly of power. The INC's lack of a monopoly of power in Kerala enabled the development of civic institutions in the form of "movement politics aimed at electoral politics" or coalitions.[241] These coalitions kept Kerala free of large amounts of Hindu-Muslim violence for the 45 years examined in this thesis. Ironically, the INC's monopoly of power in Uttar Pradesh also kept Hindu-Muslim violence relatively low from 1950–1976. However, the INC's monopoly of power prevented the

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[241] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 290.

development of intercommunal civic institutions within the state, so upon the INC's organizational demise and consociational weakening, intergroup violence arose in the form of Hindu-Muslim violence. The groups that the INC had previously negotiated with had no associations with each other once the INC was not the dominant political force.

Second, despite Kerala's experience of consistently low levels of Hindu-Muslim violence, the power of widespread national-level violence is demonstrated even in a state such as Kerala. Even with well-established civic institutions capable of thwarting the instigation of Hindu-Muslim violence amongst their state's population, widespread national-level Hindu-Muslim violence is able to pierce those civic institutions and spark Hindu-Muslim violence.[242] Spanning both of the examined periods, large-scale nation-wide experiences of Hindu-Muslim violence triggered lethal occurrences within this peace-prone state.

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[242] Ibid., 100.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study verifies that the emergence of state-level civic institutions in the form of political coalitions for electoral gain prove the most effective means of keeping levels of Hindu-Muslim violence low.[243] With or without a monopoly of power or single-party dominance, a state that can develop intercommunal civic institutions can insulate itself from the temptation of Hindu-Muslim violence and communal violence overall for political gain. As is the case with Kerala, intercommunal civic institutions at the state level or coalitions among communal political parties are developed from the outset of the state to combat the spread of the Communist Party within the state. Because of these coalitions, Hindu-Muslim violence has remained historically low in Kerala. Ironically, the INC's consociational construct and maintenance of a grand coalition tempered intergroup violence during the time it had a monopoly of power in Uttar Pradesh. As the provider of consensus, the INC, however, inhibited the development of intercommunal civic institutions so that when the INC no longer maintained the monopoly of power in Uttar Pradesh, the state experienced increased levels of Hindu-Muslim violence. This lack of civic institutions, coupled with the solid entrance of the Hindu Nationalist political party, the BJP, exacerbated increases in Hindu-Muslim violence nationally and statewide.

A. CURRENT TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS

The current trend among national parties vying for mass appeal in a country as large and diverse as India requires these parties to offer policies that are more centrist in nature. Varshney asserts that to come into power at the national level, political parties must offer a "multicaste, multiclass, multilinguistic and multireligious political platform."[244] Doing so forces political parties to move toward the center and become more moderate. Recently Hindu nationalists, in particular, have had to make many

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[243] Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life,* 85.

[244] Ibid.

ideological concessions to maintain power at the national level.[245] Hindu nationalists have been forced to drop some of their more "ideologically pure" Hindu nationalist demands in order to form coalitions with other political parties and ensure their electoral success.[246] These changes include their use of Hindu-Muslim violence as a recruitment tool, which accounts for the recent decrease in Hindu-Muslim violence nationwide. While the use of Hindu-Muslim violence has proven effective in the past for gaining constituents and votes in the Hindu majority, this tactic can simultaneously alienate Hindus as well. India's political landscape today is one where every vote counts. Therefore, political parties in general and Hindu nationalists in particular are better off utilizing inclusive rather than exclusive tactics when pursuing electoral success.

B.   RECOMMENDATIONS

To address the prevention of future communal violence in India, this thesis recommends the government of India do the following:

1. *Develop and implement a transparent and comprehensive policy for preventing communal violence.*

The closest the government of India has come to implementing such a policy thus far has been its efforts in drafting and discussing what exists today as the Government of India's Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparations) Bill, 2011. While the passing of this bill has been stalled, reinvigorating this effort would legitimize the government of India as a responsible actor concerned for public safety. Enacting such a bill would empower the central and state governments to prevent potentially provocative events from occurring. Currently, communally provocative events are prevented by concerned individuals via informal means. A recent example of these informal means is the reversal of a train that was carrying more than a

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[245] Ibid.

[246] Ibid.

thousand BJP members to a Hindu nationalist political rally in Jammu and Kashmir.[247] The central government and state train officials that sent the train back to its point of origin, Bangalore, acted on an informal basis to prevent what was obviously a communal violence incident waiting to happen. While the volatility of this event can be debated, the redrafting and passing of the Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparations) Bill, 2011, might help better define the parameters for central and state officials' capacity for preventing such events from occurring. A comprehensive policy would also offer the ability to prosecute those organizations that politicize issues in order to create communal disharmony. With the recent election of a majority BJP government into office, this discussion would be of particular significance, albeit highly optimistic, given the method by which the BJP has utilized Hindu-Muslim violence in the past.

While the 1992 establishment of the National Foundation for Communal Harmony (NFCH) under the Ministry of Home Affairs is a commendable start, the foundation's reach is limited. The foundation's charter is to promote "communal harmony, fraternity and national integration amongst the diverse segments of [Indian] society."[248] The primary focus of its activities is to "implement programmes and projects for assisting in the rehabilitation of children affected by communal, caste, ethnic, terrorist and any other form of violence which fracture[s] social harmony."[249] Although an admirable effort, the foundation and its activities are largely reactionary and not preventative. In addition, the focus on child victims overlooks the needs of adults affected by communal violence. Lastly, the foundation is not currently tied into a forward-looking plan that lays a base for a society that is structured to prevent socially disruptive acts of communal violence from occurring, something that perhaps a revision

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[247] *Times of India,* "Train carrying Karnataka BJP workers stopped," Jan 24, 2011, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Train-carrying-Karnataka-BJP-workers-stopped/articleshow/7350377.cms. 2.

[248] Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 2013–2014,* 93, http://www.mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/AR(E)1314.pdf.

[249] Ibid., 94.

and implementation of the Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparations) Bill, 2011, could offer.

2. *Promote nonpoliticized and transparent sociocultural awareness within India.*

Of the two recommendations, this one would be the harder to achieve because it calls for a cultural shift within the government of India and the people of India. As discussed in the sources section of Chapter I, to date the government of India has purposefully shrouded accounts of communal violence from the public.[250] While done with the hopes of preventing further communal violence, the practice breeds ignorance on a relevant issue that has affected many people in the past and could potentially affect many more in the future. Additionally, the 2011 census publications have thus far omitted sociocultural data. Consequently, the most current sociocultural data released to the public was that which was collected for the year 2001. Although recent information was not provided for fear of the data being politicized, as it was in 2001, withholding this data deprives the public of gaining a clear understanding of the composition of Indian society. Rather than restrict information from the public, the government of India should firmly prosecute those who frame the information for political gain and consequent public disharmony. Again, the implementation of a comprehensive policy for preventing communal violence could help with this issue.

The government of India should continue its efforts through the NFCH-organized Communal Harmony Campaign Week, an annual celebration of Indian diversity and the annual granting of the National Communal Harmony Award to individuals and organizations "for outstanding contribution[s] in the field of communal harmony and national integration."[251] Such efforts promote awareness and are visible reminders that the government takes sociocultural awareness seriously.

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[250] Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence*, 243–244.

[251] Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, *Annual Report 2013–2014,* 94.

APPENDIX A

This thesis consulted the following articles on communal violence in India written by Asghar Ali Engineer:

Engineer, Asghar Ali. "Communalism and Communal Violence 1994." *Economic and Political Weekly* 30, no. 5 (February 4, 1995): 249–250. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4402346.

———. "Communalism and Communal Violence in 1995." *Economic and Political Weekly*, no. 51 (December 23, 1995): 3267–3269. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4403582.

———. "Communalism and Communal Violence, 1996." *Economic and Political Weekly,* no. 7 (February 15–21, 1997): 323–326 http://www.jstor.org/stable/4405088.

———. "Communalism and Communal Violence, 1997." *Economic and Political Weekly* 33, no. 1/2 (January 10–16, 1998): 11–13. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4406256.

———. "Communal Violence, 1998: Shifting Patterns." *Economic and Political Weekly* 33, no. 52 (December 26, 1998–January 1, 1999): 3300–3303. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4407511.

———. "Communalism and Communal Violence 1999." *Economic and Political Weekly* 35, no. 5, Money, Banking and Finance (January 29–February 4, 2000): 245–247+249. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4408866.

———. "Communal Riots, 2000." *Economic and Political Weekly* 36, no. 4, Money, Banking & Finance (January 27–February 2, 2001): 275–277+279. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4410219.

———. "Communal Riots: Review of 2001." *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 2 (January 12–18, 2002): 100–104. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4411586.

———. "Communal Riots in 2002: A Survey." *Economic and Political Weekly* 38, no. 4 (January 25–31, 2003): 280–282. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4413122.

———. "Communal Riots, 2003." *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, no. 1 (January 3–9, 2004): 21–24. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4414457.

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APPENDIX B

This thesis consulted the following annual reports written by the government of India Ministry of Home Affairs:

Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs. *2003–2004 Annual Report: Departments of Internal Security, Jammu & Kashmir Affairs, Border Management, States and Home.* New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, 2003–2004. http://www.mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/pdf/ar0304-Eng.pdf.

———. *2009–2010 Annual Report: Departments of Internal Security, States, Home, Jammu & Kashmir Affairs and Border Management.* New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, 2009–2010. http://www.mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/pdf/AR(E)0910.pdf.

———. "Annual Reports." Last modified August 25, 2014. http://www.mha.nic.in/AnnualReports.

———. *Annual Report 2004–2005: Departments of Internal Security, Jammu & Kashmir Affairs, Border Management, States and Home.* New Delhi: Ministry of Home Affairs, 2004–2005. http://www.mha.nic.in/sites/upload_files/mha/files/pdf/ar0405-Eng.pdf.

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