Parties and Peacebuilding: The Institutional Origin of Multiethnic Politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa

Geoffrey P. Macdonald
University of Denver

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd
Part of the Political Science Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/865

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Studies at Digital Commons @ DU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ DU. For more information, please contact jennifer.cox@du.edu,dig-commons@du.edu.
PARTIES AND PEACEBUILDING: THE INSTITUTIONAL ORIGIN OF
MULTIETHNIC POLITICS IN INDIA, INDONESIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA

A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the Josef Korbel School of International Studies

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

by

Geoffrey P. Macdonald

November 2013

Advisor: Dr. Timothy Sisk
ABSTRACT

Under what conditions do multiethnic parties win elections in deeply divided societies? To investigate this question, this dissertation examines the historical and institutional conditions that explain the formation and success of multiethnic parties in three ethnically divided, conflict-prone democracies: India, Indonesia, and South Africa.

The character of liberation movements can influence the formation of multiethnic political parties. Ethnically inclusive liberation movements create conditions conducive to the formation of inclusive parties. After regime collapse, the liberation movement transitions into politics, using its extant organizational structure and mass appeal to dominate the newly democratic political system. South Africa, India, and Indonesia each experienced a unifying liberation movement against an oppressive ruling authority. Nelson Mandela, Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, and Sukarno were charismatic figures that promoted multiethnic nationalism. These independence movements sought to create an inclusive and unified political system, which created the foundation for multiethnic political parties to form and thrive in the short term.

Yet after this juncture point of party formation, multiethnic politics have dominated India and Indonesia while South Africa has experienced a slow degeneration into ethnic politics. Using a five-part theoretical framework to measure ethnic and multiethnic politics, this dissertation examines manifesto content, campaign rhetoric, voter contents, parliamentary composition, and voting behavior. This framework was
supplemented with elite interviews of members of parliament and party officials in each country. The investigation shows that South Africa’s African National Congress uses higher levels of ethnic appeals than the Indian National Congress in India or the main political parties (PD, PDIP, and Golkar) in Indonesia.

This divergence is explained by examining the interaction of election rules and ethnic cleavage structure. India and Indonesia reinforce broadly crosscutting cleavages with multiple-district and candidate-centered elections. This forces parties to contest elections in ethnically diverse districts with local candidates, which encourages broad-based, inclusive political appeals. South Africa’s electoral system does the opposite. Its functionally single-district proportional representation system incentivizes identity politics by translating control of the racial majority into control of parliamentary power. This has resulted in the slow degeneration of Nelson Mandela’s multiethnic liberation movement into an ethnically exclusive political party.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A dissertation is never completed without extensive support from advisors, colleagues, friends, and family. I am particularly indebted to my committee—Tim Sisk, Martin Rhodes, Ben Reilly, and Aaron Schneider—who provided guidance and encouragement throughout this project. I am also grateful to the faculty, staff, and students at the University of Denver’s Josef Korbel School of International Studies, who created an excellent learning and research environment to complete my graduate studies.

This dissertation involved twelve months of fieldwork in three distant and disparate countries to which I had never traveled and in which I knew no one. I therefore built a network of local friends, colleagues, and research assistants who provided invaluable support. In South Africa, I am grateful to my colleagues at the University of Cape Town’s Democracy in Africa Research Unit, including Professor Bob Mattes, Moletsane Monyake, Carlos Shenga, and Nasiphi Moya, who was my research assistant. In Indonesia, I am indebted to my colleagues at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta, including Matt Bock, Sunny Tanuwidjaja, and Philips Vermonte. In India, I am thankful to my colleagues at the Institute of Social Sciences in Delhi, including Balveer Arora, Ash Roy, George Mathew, Bobby Moussavi, Kelsey Utne, and Johny Varghese, who was my research assistant. These individuals were not only colleagues but also friends, who provided both academic and personal support as I endeavored to write a dissertation far from home. To them I am forever grateful.

Finally, I must thank my family, who has endured my absence from parties, weddings, and holidays for far too long. Thank you for your continuous love and support.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction ........................................................................................................... 1
  Puzzle and Research Question ................................................................................................. 1
  Main Argument ......................................................................................................................... 3
  Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................................ 5
  Research Design ....................................................................................................................... 7
  Methodology ............................................................................................................................. 10
    Historical Analysis ............................................................................................................... 10
    Empirical Analysis ............................................................................................................... 11
    Theoretical analysis ............................................................................................................. 14
  Limitations ............................................................................................................................... 14
  Chapter Outline ......................................................................................................................... 16

Chapter Two: Ethnic Politics, Peacebuilding, and Political Parties ........................................... 17
  Introduction ............................................................................................................................... 17
  Literature Review: Ethnic Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Political Parties ....................... 18
    Political Parties and Party Systems: Formation and Typologies ................................ 19
    Ethnic Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Institutional Design .................................................. 28
    Peacebuilding, Institutional Design, and Political Parties .................................................. 34
  Conclusion ............................................................................................................................... 46

Chapter Three: Liberation Movements, Path Dependence, and Party Politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa ................................................................. 47
  Introduction ............................................................................................................................... 47
  Colonialism, Rebellion, and the Development of Multiethnic Politics in India .......... 49
    Moderation and Early Multiethnic Resistance: 1857-1905 ............................................ 49
    Division and Extremism: 1905-1919 ................................................................................... 52
    The INC and Multiethnic Resistance in the Gandian Era: 1919-1939 ......................... 53
    Communalization and The Two-State Solution: 1939-1946 ........................................... 59
  From Liberation Movement to Party Politics ................................................................. 61
  Colonialism, Resistance, and Multiethnic Politics in Indonesia .......................................... 61
    Islam, Colonialism, and Early Multiethnic Nationalism .................................................... 62
    World War Two and Independence ..................................................................................... 64
    Indonesia’s First Democratic Period and Collapse ............................................................ 67
    Guided Democracy to the New Order: Multiethnic Identity by Force .......................... 69
    Suharto and the New Order Regime .................................................................................... 71
  From Liberation Movement to Party Politics ....................................................................... 72
  Apartheid, Resistance, and Multiethnic Politics in South Africa ........................................ 74
    The Union of South Africa and the African National Congress .................................... 75
    The Formalization of Apartheid and the ANC’s Radicalization ...................................... 77
    The Freedom Charter and Growing Multiethnic Resistance .......................................... 79
    Militarism and Repression .................................................................................................... 82
  Consolidating Multiethnic Resistance and the End of Apartheid ...................................... 84
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Behavior</th>
<th>291</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diverging Trends of Multiethnic Politics</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining Multiethnic Politics: Alternative Hypotheses</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Setting: The Political Party is Instinctually Inclusive</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Setting: A Naturally Cohesive Society That Cares About Policy Issues</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption: Parties Win by Buying Votes</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Economy: Incumbent Parties Win Through Redistribution</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Inadequacy of Alternative Explanations</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electoral Decentralization and Multiethnic Politics</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India and Electoral Decentralization</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia and Electoral Decentralization</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa and Electoral Centralization</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India, Indonesia, and South Africa: Comparing Electoral Logic</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter Eight: Conclusion | 354 |

References | 362 |

Appendices | 384 |

Appendix A: Survey Data Used for Coding Rubric, South Africa | 384 |
Appendix B: Interview List | 386 |
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Case Selection Variables ................................................................. 9
Table 2: Agree or disagree, loyal to region first then to the country? .................... 102
Table 3: Coding Rubric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral.................................. 120
Table 4: Bridging, Bonding, Neutral Coding Rubric........................................... 185
Table 5: What is your tribe, ethnic, or cultural group? .................................... 223
Table 6: Which language do you use most frequently at home? (By race) ............. 224
Table 7: Coding Rubric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral.................................. 243
Table 8: Rhetoric from the 2009 Campaign ....................................................... 247
Table 9: Comparing Multiethnic Politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa ....... 292
Table 10: Conditions for Electoral Decentralization ........................................... 353
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Mechanisms of a Party’s Voter Outreach During Elections .......................... 6
Figure 2: Population by Religion ................................................................................. 98
Figure 3: Languages Spoken ......................................................................................... 99
Figure 4: National Population Percentage by State ...................................................... 99
Figure 5: Religious Party Rhetoric, Election 2009 ...................................................... 121
Figure 6: Religious Composition of the Lok Sabha Compared with Population ......... 134
Figure 7: Religious Composition of Lok Sabha Terms by Year, 1952-2009 ............. 135
Figure 8: Religious Composition of INC MPs with INC Seat Totals, 1952-2009 ....... 136
Figure 9: Religious Composition of BJP MPs with BJP Seat Totals, 1952-2009 ....... 138
Figure 10: Muslim MPs - Seat Totals and Seat Percentage ........................................... 139
Figure 11: Seat Share by Party in Gujarat, 1962-2009 .................................................. 140
Figure 12: Seat Share by Party in Uttar Pradesh, 1952-2009 ....................................... 141
Figure 13: Muslim MPs from Uttar Pradesh, 1952-2009 .............................................. 142
Figure 14: Voting by Religious Group, 2004 Election .................................................. 144
Figure 15: Within-Party Support by Religious Group with Total Population, 2004 ..... 145
Figure 16: Agree or disagree, should you vote the same as your caste/community? ..... 147
Figure 17: Five Largest Tribal Groups in Indonesia, 2000 ........................................... 160
Figure 18: Tribal Group Composition by Province, 2000 ........................................... 161
Figure 19: Religious Population by Province ............................................................... 162
Figure 20: Population Percentage by Population ......................................................... 164
Figure 21: Religious Identity within Tribal Groups ....................................................... 165
Figure 22: Do you consider yourself a member of a particular ethnic group or an Indonesian citizen? ................................................................. 166
Figure 23: Combined Campaign Rhetoric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral .............. 186
Figure 24: Percent of Indonesians Contacted By Each Party .................................. 198
Figure 25: Indonesians Contacted, Percent By Party .............................................. 199
Figure 26: In-Person Party Contact by Ethnic Group .............................................. 200
Figure 27: In-Person Party Contact by Religious Group ......................................... 201
Figure 28: Religious Composition of Parliament: 2009-2014 DPR ............................ 202
Figure 29: Communal Composition of MPs by Party, 2009 DPR ............................. 203
Figure 30: Party Constituency by Religion ............................................................... 205
Figure 31: Religious Group Vote by Party ............................................................... 206
Figure 32: Party Constituency by Tribal Group ....................................................... 207
Figure 33: Tribal Group Vote by Party ................................................................. 208
Figure 34: Party Vote by Region ............................................................................. 209
Figure 35: Regional Vote by Party .......................................................................... 210
Figure 36: Racial Composition of South Africa ...................................................... 221
Figure 37: Home Language Use ............................................................................. 222
Figure 38: Comparative Rhetoric from 1994, 1999, and 2009 campaigns ............... 248
Figure 39: Racial Composition of Voter Contacts (In person, SMS, Telephone, Mail, Email) ................................................................. 263
Figure 40: Racial Composition of COPE’s party lists, 2009 ................................... 266
Figure 41: Racial composition of DA lists .............................................................. 267
Figure 42: Racial composition of DA party lists across elections ............................ 268
Figure 43: The racial composition of ANC party lists .......................................... 269
Figure 44: Racial composition of ANC party across elections................................. 270
Figure 45: Voting by Religious Group, 2004 Election........................................... 272
Figure 46: Within-Party Support by Race (2004 National Election)...................... 273
Figure 47: Within-Party Support by Race (2009 National Election)...................... 274
Figure 48: Racial Composition of Party Vote (2009 National Election)............... 275
Figure 49: ANC 2009 national vote by province with demographics .................... 277
Figure 50: DA 2009 national vote by province with demographics ..................... 278
Figure 51: Campaign Rhetoric in Comparison: INC, ANC, and Indonesian Parties ..... 286
Figure 52: ANC and INC Constituency Trends, 2004 to 2009 Election ................. 287
Figure 53: Type of Housing Among ANC Voters, 2004 and 2009......................... 317
Figure 54: Type of Neighborhood Among ANC Voters. .................................... 318
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Puzzle and Research Question

Political parties serve an integral function in the peacebuilding process. In the aftermath of conflict, the type of political parties that form can profoundly shape democratic peace and stability. Parties that organize around previously warring groups can enflame tension and rekindle violence by mobilizing along conflict-prone schisms. Alternatively, parties that build broad and inclusive constituencies that span conflict boundaries can reduce tension and potentially reshape social identities around cooperation. This is especially true after ethnic-based conflicts, which are often premised on a belief in ancient, primordial, and inalterable ethnic antagonism. Under these circumstances, divisive ethnic political parties are the likely outcome of democratic competition.

In their classic text on ethnic politics, scholars Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle argue:

The proliferation of ethnic groups, which defines the fragmented society, encourages a commensurate proliferation of political parties; the plethora of parties, in turn, inhibits cooperative ethnic behavior. The resulting product is instability, or at best a most tenuous stability. (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 187)

Rabushka and Shepsle contend that ethnic identities, such as race, language, religion, or tribe, impede social cohesion and shape individual interaction. When ethnicity is salient,
they argue, political parties become communally oriented, the distribution of public goods becomes ethnicized, and moderation fails (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 84).

This situation is clearest in many countries where ethnic identity has combined with conflict. In places like Bosnia, post-Saddam Hussein Iraq, or Lebanon, ethnic groups have strong social and political importance. Ethnic militias morphed into political parties, which represent the narrow interests of their group and excluded all others. Such particularistic politics exacerbate division and undermine peacebuilding processes. However, ethnic political parties are not inevitable in plural societies. In some deeply divided countries, political parties eschew narrow ethnic constituencies in favor of building an inclusive multiethnic consensus.

Solving this puzzle would have important theoretical and policy implications, yet there has been little investigation into the development and success of multiethnic political parties. Electoral systems scholar Benjamin Reilly writes:

Political parties are thus intimately linked to the rise and fall of conflict in ethnically plural societies. But despite the impressive body of scholarship on constitutional engineering that has appeared over the past decade, there has been surprisingly little attention given to the ways in which multi-ethnic political parties can be developed and sustained (Reilly 2006, 811–812).

Similarly, John Ishiyama notes that the interaction of ethnicity and political parties is “little understood, and systematic work on how these parties form, or on the process by which a party as an organization links with ethnic boundaries, would advance the field considerably” (Ishiyama 2011, 147). In an attempt to address this research gap, this project investigates the question: Under what conditions do multiethnic political parties win elections in deeply divided societies?
Main Argument

In short, using the cases of India, Indonesia, and South Africa, this dissertation argues that the underlying cause of ethnic or multiethnic political behavior over time is electoral system design, which interacts with ethnic cleavage structure to encourage or discourage identity-based appeals.

This dissertation first contends that the nature of liberation movements in India, Indonesia, and South Africa created a soft path dependence that affected party formation and early party politics. Ethnically inclusive liberation movements can create conditions conducive to the formation of multiethnic political parties. After regime collapse, a liberation movement transitions into politics, using its extant organizational structure and mass appeal to dominate the newly democratic political system. India, Indonesia, and South Africa experienced such unifying freedom movements against British colonialism, Dutch colonialism, and apartheid respectively. Nelson Mandela, M.K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, and Sukarno were charismatic figures that expressed a broad multiethnic nationalism. The success of these liberation organizations and leaders over both foreign rule and domestic ethnic challengers created a significant political advantage for post-independence electoral mobilization. However, as the long shadow of the liberation faded, opposition political forces—which were quieted rather than eliminated by multiethnic nationalism—reemerged in these deeply divided societies.

In each country, movement-based parties entered a period of post-colonial political and ideological dominance. The Congress Party dominated Indian politics until
In Indonesia, the Indonesian Nationalist Party, Golkar, and later PDI-P ideologically dominated post-independence authoritarian and democratic politics. And the African National Congress continues to dominate South African politics. However, in each country, ethnic and multiethnic challengers emerged to contest the political dominance of these parties, in particular the Hindu BJP in India, the Islamic PKS in Indonesia, and the multiethnic Democratic Alliance in South Africa. The political response from the dominant parties has differed. In short, the Indian National Congress and Indonesia’s main multiethnic parties have largely retained their multiethnic character while the African National Congress has become—in comparative and absolute terms—more ethnic.

This variation is explained with an institutional analysis. An electoral system interacts with demographic cleavage structure to create incentives for multiethnic politics. This dissertation calls this logic of political behavior electoral decentralization, which is defined as the rule-based strategic necessity for a political party to compete with localized appeals across a large part of a country in order to control national political institutions. Political parties in India and Indonesia face a high degree of electoral decentralization whereas political parties in South Africa do not. As the following chapters will explore in detail, Indian and Indonesian parties are moderated by forced competition across large and diverse countries. In contrast, South African parties are pushed to ethnic appeals by a highly centralized electoral logic. Therefore, whether a

1 Though the Congress Party lost its first election in 1977, it rebounded quickly, winning back large levels of support in 1980. The party’s second loss in 1989 marked a distinct downturn in its electoral performance that lasted more than a decade.
party wins with ethnic inclusion or division depends on the incentives created by institutional rules, which are shaped by the preexisting historical and social conditions in which they are embedded.

**Theoretical Framework**

This dissertation is theoretically grounded in the existing definitions used in the study of ethnic politics. First, an ethnic group is a "cluster of individuals who share an ascriptive label," which can include “region, religion, sect, language, family, language, dialect, caste, clan, tribe or nationality or one's parents or ancestors or one's own physical features” (K. Chandra 2011, 154). Second, an ethnic political party is a “champion of the particular interests of one ethnic category or set of categories.” Third, a multiethnic party is “one that champions the interests of all significant ethnic categories in a society without excluding any” (K. Chandra 2011, 155).

Utilizing these definitions, a five-part theoretical framework measuring voter outreach—the extent to which political parties exclude or include specific ethnic groups in their mobilization effort during elections—is used to assess the multiethnic character of political parties in India, Indonesia, and South Africa. The first dimension of voter outreach is a party’s manifesto, which presents a succinct agenda to the public. The second dimension is campaign rhetoric. A manifesto represents the public image of the party, but the rhetoric of the campaign is targeted specifically to mobilize voters and can differ from the written agenda. The third dimension is candidate selection. The ideological and demographic composition of a party’s candidates signals to the electorate whom it will represent if selected to govern. The fourth dimension is voter contacts,
which can be done directly (in person) or indirectly (by mail, email, or phone) and will be targeted at those voters most likely to vote for the party.

Figure 1: Mechanisms of a Party’s Voter Outreach During Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Manifesto</th>
<th>Campaign Rhetoric</th>
<th>Candidate Selection</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These four dimensions assess the process of election campaigning. But the outcome of elections can also indicate the multiethnic character of political parties. A high degree of ethnic polarization in voting behavior can be the result of ethnic campaigning, though not always. A multiethnic party might simply be unable to attract voters of a particular ethnic group for reasons unrelated to its election appeals. However, ethnic polarization or depolarization in voting can confirm the validity of the theoretical framework’s process dimensions. In other words, we should expect a country with a high level of ethnic campaign appeals to also have ethnically polarized elections and vice versa. In sum, the theoretical framework includes four process dimensions (manifestos, campaign rhetoric, candidate selection, and contacts) and one outcome dimension (ethnic polarization in voting behavior), which is systemically applied to selected parties in each country under investigation. The project focuses on the Congress Party and the BJP in India; the ANC, the Democratic Alliance, and COPE in South Africa; and the PDI-P, Democrat Party, Golkar, and PKS in Indonesia.

Because this project is focused specifically on peacebuilding and conflict management, each party’s multiethnic character is assessed according to the primary conflict cleavage of each society rather than all ethnic cleavages. A primary conflict
cleavage is defined as the ethnic cleavage that has caused the largest, most widespread, and most continuous violence in a country. In India, Indonesia, and South Africa, the primary conflict cleaves are religion, tribe/religion, and race respectively. Indonesia has two primary conflict cleavages because both tribal groups and religious groups have equally engaged in ethnic violence. For the purposes of this analysis, therefore, a multiethnic party is one that explicitly mobilizes ethnic groups on both sides of the primary conflict cleavage. An ethnic party is one that only mobilizes voters on one side of the conflict. These two types of parties respectively will either facilitate or undermine inter-ethnic cooperation and postconflict peacebuilding.

Research Design

In order to investigate the electoral success of multiethnic political parties, “least-likely” cases were sought: countries with conditions conducive to ethnic political parties. Such countries are often referred to as “deeply divided societies,” which are “both ethnically diverse and where ethnicity is a politically salient cleavage around which interests are organized for political purposes” (Reilly 2001, 4, original emphasis). A simple logic was employed to find such cases: any country that has suffered recent ethnic conflict and has progressed to democracy is likely to produce ethnic parties. In short, elites and masses that fight along ethnic lines are also likely to mobilize and vote along ethnic lines; multiethnic parties that do form will likely be outmaneuvered in a political setting that favors ethnic chauvinism and outbidding. The core of the case selection logic thus requires two characteristics: the presence of recent ethnic conflict and democracy.
Data on ethnic conflict was retrieved from the *Major Episodes of Political Violence, 1946-2012* (MEPV) database, which is compiled by Monty G. Marshall at the Center for Systemic Peace. The database includes all major forms of armed conflict since 1946, coding episodes of conflict as, *inter alia*, ethnic violence and ethnic civil war. These two types were combined into one category called ethnic conflict, which was used to establish the potential political salience of ethnic identity.

Next, the presence of democracy was determined using data from the democracy research institute Freedom House, which rates countries as free, partly free, and not free. Only “free” countries were sought, which, according to Freedom House’s methodology, have a wide range of political rights, including free and fair elections, competitive political parties, and minority rights and inclusion. Additionally, “free” countries ensure civil liberties, including freedom of expression, assembly, association, education, and religion. The selection of only “free” countries was important because ethnic groups in “partly free” and “not free” countries might be suppressed and unable to express their political will; therefore obscuring the true salience of ethnic politics and potentially exaggerating the success of multiethnic parties.

Using the MEPV database and Freedom House, countries were then sorted by the two primary case selection dimensions. In order to isolate recent ethnic conflict, the MEPV database was limited to countries that experienced ethnic violence or ethnic civil war since 1990. This could be ethnic conflict that 1) began prior to 1990 but ended after; 2) began and ended after 1990; or 3) is ongoing regardless of its start date. There were 78 cases that fit this time parameter. The Freedom House scores were then added. Of the
78 countries that have experienced ethnic conflict in the last 23 years, only nine were rated “free” in 2013.

An additional criterion had to be added to narrow the number of cases to those that shared a stricter set of fundamental characteristics. Population size was chosen, as it made little sense to compare India with the Solomon Islands, two conflict-prone democracies separated by a population of over one billion people. When these nine cases were sorted by population size, three clearly similar cases emerged: India, Indonesia, and South Africa. These countries are the three largest ethnic-conflict-prone democracies in the world. Indeed, all three countries are among the top twenty-five largest countries in the world.

Table 1: Case Selection Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ethnic Violence/War Since 1990</th>
<th>Freedom House Score</th>
<th>Population Size (apprx. in millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ethnic Violence/War from http://www.systemicpeace.org/warlist.htm

India, Indonesia, and South Africa also share several other features that make them similar cases. Each country has a dominant majority ethnic configuration (Hindu, Muslim, and Black respectively) along with a high ethnic and cultural fractionalization
score (each country is in the upper quintile globally, which is distinct from the other six cases) (Fearon 2003). Additionally, all three countries experienced a significant period of colonialism\(^2\) that ended through a broad-based liberation movement.

Yet despite these similarities, multiethnic and ethnic political parties have achieved varying levels of electoral success in each country. This makes the cases well suited for controlled cross-case comparisons. Together these three large, deeply divided, conflict prone democracies create a most-similar system research design with variation on the dependent variable (the success of multiethnic parties). Using Mill’s Method of Difference, the causal independent variable or variables can be determined by locating the one condition or set of conditions that co-varies with the dependent variable. Rather than testing a preexisting theory, this method was chosen to generate a new theory of multiethnic and ethnic politics in deeply divided societies.

**Methodology**

This research employs a structured, focused comparison that uses historical process tracing, content analysis, survey data, elite interviews, and institutionalism. The country-study template is broken into three analytical parts: historical, empirical, and theoretical.

**Historical Analysis**

Party formation is assessed through in-depth process tracing that links liberation movements to party formation and party system development. Alexander George and

\(^2\) The ANC and other observers called apartheid “internal colonialism” (see ANC documents, e.g., http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=4518)
Andrew Bennett argue that in-depth process tracing allows for the clear identification of causal mechanisms in case study analysis (George and Bennett 2005). The formation of parties is assessed through primary source documents, secondary studies, as well as interviews with party officials and academic experts. In this analysis, process tracing identifies the causal chain leading from the ethnic nature of liberation movements to post-independence party politics.

Empirical Analysis

The empirical analysis operationalizes the five components of the theoretical framework—campaign rhetoric, candidate selection, voter contacts, manifestos, and voting behavior—in order to measure the multiethnic character of political parties.

First, campaign rhetoric is measured with a content analysis of campaign statements made during the most recent legislative/presidential election in each country (2009 in India, 2009 in Indonesia, and 2009 in South Africa). A campaign statement is defined as any statement by candidates or party officials designed to convince a voter to vote for the party and/or against another party. Campaign statements were taken from interviews, press statements, television advertisements (when covered in the press), debates, rallies, and speeches. Editorials and manifestos were excluded. Statements were collected through electronic searches of newspaper databases. Because political parties and their candidates tend to repeat a limited and defined set of voter appeals, a relatively small dataset of statements will be broadly representative of the much larger set of rhetoric repeated across an entire campaign.
Campaign statements were then coded as bridging, bonding, or neutral, which follows the content analytic method used by Gavin Davis to assess the rhetoric of South African politics during the 1994 and 1999 election (Davis 2004). A bonding statement is one that targets the party’s natural ethnic constituency. A bridging statement is one that targets the party’s non-natural constituency. And a neutral statement is one that addresses a specific policy issue that does not clearly target any ethnic constituency. An indigenized coding rubric was designed and applied in each country. This project’s investigation expands Davis’s analysis with rhetoric from the 2009 South African election and applies this method for the first time to Indian and Indonesian election campaigns.

Second, a content analysis is used to assess a party’s candidate selection process. In South Africa, political parties produce pre-election candidate lists, which were collected from the electoral commission and coded according to race. India and Indonesia do not use party lists systems, so the religious composition of elected leaders was used as a proxy for the broader demographic of candidates. A local research assistant coded the racial and religious identity of MPs in South Africa and India respectively based on the ethnic character of the official’s name. Both Indians and South Africans have ethnically distinctive names that make this method highly accurate. In Indonesia, the official catalogue of elected MPs includes religious identity, which made an independent coding

______________________________

3 Davis borrows the terminology of bridging, bonding, and neutral from Pippa Norris (Norris 2004).

4 It is too difficult to code tribal group in Indonesia, so only the religious group was assessed.
process unnecessary. This method produced an original dataset of the ethnic composition of political candidates in each country.

Third, voter contacts were assessed using data from the Comparative National Elections Project, which conducts pre and post-election surveys in Indonesia and South Africa. CNEP does not survey India and therefore the comparison is limited to only two of the three cases in this study. CNEP asks voters which parties, if any, contacted them during the election. When cross-tabulated by ethnic group, the answers to this question show the extent to which political parties target different ethnic groups by phone, mail, email, or in person. With this data, this project illuminates the ethnic breakdown of voter contacts in Indonesia and South Africa for the first time.

Fourth, the manifestos of the major parties in each country are assessed through a narrative content analysis. Manifestos are not included in the campaign rhetoric coding analysis because they are designed to represent the public face of the party and can differ dramatically from the rhetoric used to mobilize voters during the campaign. Nevertheless, each party’s self-proclaimed agenda signifies a part of its ethnic or multiethnic character. In Indonesia, political parties do not publish pre-election manifestos. Therefore, the opening statements made during the presidential and vice-presidential debates, which were essentially uncontested annunciations of the party’s platform, were analyzed along with the party manifestos from South Africa and India.

Fifth, ethnic polarization or depolarization is measured using survey data from the Comparative National Elections Project and the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. In each country, party choice was cross-tabulated with ethnic group identity to
decipher whether ethnic identity can predict voting behavior. CNEP data was used for Indonesia and South Africa and CSDS data was used for India. Survey data for the 2009 elections in India and Indonesia have not been released, so data from the 2004 election for each country were analyzed.

Finally, elite interviews were conducted in each country to supplement the data gathered from process-tracing, content analysis, and surveys. Elected officials, party strategists, and journalists were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire, which asked participants about a political party’s election strategy, history, and ethnic composition. The opinions and perspectives of political elites were not used as independent facts in this analysis, but rather were used to provide confirmation and context to the collected data.

Theoretical analysis

The theoretical analysis uses rational choice institutionalism to connect electoral system design to a political party’s ethnic or multiethnic mobilization strategy. Within the context of ethnic cleavage structure, a close examination of each country’s election rules indicates distinct incentives for ethnic or multiethnic politics built into their respective institutional design. The logic of (multi)ethnic politics in each country is first shown theoretically and then confirmed through an in-depth analysis of party behavior over time as well as with interviews with party elites, who can elucidate electoral strategy.

Limitations

There are two key limitations to this study. First, the comparative empirical analysis is not fully structured. Some data were not available for all the cases. For
example, survey data is not available for the most recent elections in Indonesia and India but is in South Africa; Previous studies of South Africa’s parliamentary demographics and election rhetoric allow these dimensions to be analyzed over time, which was not possible for the other cases; And data on voter contacts is only available for Indonesia and South Africa. To overcome this, missing survey data were compiled from the penultimate election (as opposed to the most recent) when applicable. Moreover, missing or incomplete data only minimally weakens a multidimensional framework, which analyzes a specific phenomenon from a variety of angles. The project can still provide a compelling narrative of party politics in each country as long as there is no reason to believe the missing or incomplete data would contradict the identified pattern across other dimensions. For example, voter contact data is unavailable for India. However, considering that all other dimensions of the theoretical framework indicate strongly multiethnic politics in India, it is extremely unlikely that any party’s voter-contact strategies would use ethnicity. Therefore, the larger claim is not undermined.

The second limitation is inherent to institutional arguments: it is difficult to establish causality. This study argues that electoral system design shapes party behavior over time: for example, strategically rational actors use multiethnic appeals in India and Indonesia because of the structure of the electoral system. This claim is potentially tautological: Rational actors have internalized the incentives of the institution while irrational actors have not yet (but will) internalize the incentives. Two attempts are made to overcome this logical dilemma. First, a series of alternative hypotheses are outlined and then rejected, leaving an institutional argument as the most compelling remaining
Second, this dissertation attempts to demonstrate strategic learning behavior across elections through an in-depth narrative of party strategy across elections.

**Chapter Outline**

The next chapter (chapter 2) situates this project within the literature on ethnic politics, peacebuilding, and political parties. This study’s main argument is then broken into three parts. The historical analysis (Part I) includes chapter 3, which connects multiethnic liberation movements to the development and initial dominance of multiethnic parties in India, Indonesia, and South Africa. The empirical analysis (Part II) includes chapters 4, 5, and 6, which measure the continuing level of multiethnic politics in each country. Chapters 4 and 5 show that multiethnic political parties remain vibrant and electorally successful in India and Indonesia respectively. Chapter 6 demonstrates the declining multiethnic character of South Africa’s African National Congress as well as its comparatively high level of ethnic appeals. The theoretical analysis (Part III) includes chapter 7, which concludes the study. It synthesizes the three-case comparison and explains variation in multiethnic politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa with an institutional analysis.
CHAPTER TWO: ETHNIC POLITICS, PEACEBUILDING, AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Introduction

This project asks under what conditions do multiethnic political parties win elections in deeply divided societies? In short, it argues that multiethnic liberation movements create a soft path dependence for party system development, which is marked by the dominance of movement-based parties in the early democratic period. However, as political challengers emerge, these dominant multiethnic parties are faced with a choice: maintain its ethnically inclusive appeals thereby sustaining peacebuilding efforts or target the latent and politically potent ethnic divisions that still simmer beneath the surface of tenuous postconflict cooperation. The choice a political party makes is determined by the political incentives built into the electoral system, which interacts with ethnic cleavage structure, federalism, and party rules to shape electoral behavior.

This argument’s focus on political parties and peacebuilding is justified by two assertions: 1) political parties are fundamentally important to democracy; and 2) multiethnic parties are fundamentally important to peacebuilding in divided societies. Democratic politics cannot function without political parties aggregating interests into clear choices and participating in open and fair competition. Hans-Jurgen Puhle argues:

Political parties are at the core of democracy…Along with the voters…parties and their elected representatives are the key actors in the most basic procedure that
essentially constitutes democracy: the election of the legislature and (directly or indirectly) the government. (Puhle 2002, 58)

In ethnically divided countries, political parties are also “intimately linked to the rise and fall of conflict.” Benjamin Reilly writes, “multi-ethnic parties need to appeal to a broader support base, and thus tend to have a more centrist impact, aggregating diverse interests and de-emphasizing mono-ethnic demands” (Reilly 2006, 811).

However, there remains significant debate around the mechanisms of conflict-management in deeply divided societies. The literature on ethnic conflict, peacebuilding, and political parties—in which this project is situated—is rife with competing assumptions, approaches, perspectives, and theories that have generated vociferous and persistent disagreement. This dissertation’s study of political parties and multiethnic politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa both builds upon and contributes to this debate, in part challenging and in part confirming various claims in the literature.

**Literature Review: Ethnic Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Political Parties**

This project is situated at the nexus of ethnic conflict, peacebuilding, and political parties. Scholars of political parties have produced myriad typologies, both of parties and of the systems in which they compete. The existing analytical frameworks focus on various aspects of political parties including their support base, organizational structure, relationship to the state, electoral purpose, and voter linkages. Party systems are categorized by the number of parties, level of institutionalization, level of competitiveness, and the nature of their emergence. The literature on ethnic conflict and peacebuilding is similarly diverse. The origins of ethnic identity and conflict is examined with essentialist, constructivist, and instrumentalist approaches. Scholars of institutional
design and peacebuilding dispute the effect of electoral system choice, federalism, and party rules on ethnic conflict. The following sections synthesize these debates.

Political Parties and Party Systems: Formation and Typologies

Political science has developed a multitude of classifications and typologies of political parties and party systems, but none has become hegemonic in the literature. This indicates the complex and oftentimes unique formation, organization, and behavior of political parties that emerge and compete within distinct historical, social, and political settings. Much of the field’s theorizing builds on the early writing of political scientists Maurice Duverger and Sigmund Neumann and uses mostly European cases studies (Wolinetz 2002). Although the literature provides competing and complementary frameworks valuable to our understanding of the development and action of political parties, it does not produce a unified theory or provide much insight into the potentially unique politics of the newly democratic developing world.

Political Party Typologies

Maurice Duverger’s classic book Political Parties provided a foundational understanding of the topic (Duverger 1954). Duverger theorized two core party types: cadre and mass. Cadre parties are elite-oriented, have weak organizational structures, and low party enrollment. In contrast, mass parties have large party membership and highly developed organizational structures. These parties are differentiated by their ratio of members to voters and the extent of their non-governmental activity. This typology is grounded in Duverger’s belief in the class foundation of political parties. Cadre parties are able to raise funds and resources from the middle and upper classes whereas mass
parties are reliant on membership for votes and resources (Wolinetz 2002). Duverger’s mass party is comparable to Sigmund Neumann’s equally cited concept of a mass-integration party (Neumann 1956).

Many scholars continue to modify and apply Duverger’s typology to present-day political parties. Ruud Koole writes that modern cadre parties have a low voter-to-membership ratio and small and elite centers of power while now mimicking the mass-party structure and drawing funds from party members (Koole 1994). Alan Ware adapts Duverger’s typology into a new two party framework: elite-centered and mass membership parties. Elite parties have large membership but a highly centralized power center. Mass membership parties disperse far more power to party members. Ware distinguishes further between elite and mass parties with high and low membership (Ware 1987).

In 1966, Otto Kirchheimer theorized a new type of party that remains widely cited: the catch-all party (Kirchheimer 1966). Looking specifically at Western Europe, Kirchheimer argued that previously mass-based parties had transformed into catch-all parties, which had abandoned ideology in favor of votes, become leadership driven, and were dominated by elites. The emergence of a catch-all party, he believed, would spur an ideological depolarization of a party system, during which all parties would begin to converge on the political center in an effort to maximize vote share. Catch-all parties are distinct from their predecessor, mass integration parties, which represent the interests a economic class or religious group (Williams 2009).
Angelo Panebianco approaches political parties from the perspective of organizational power dynamics, which “offer the key for understanding its functioning, as well as the changes it undergoes” (Panebianco 1988, xii). Panebianco’s two primary party types are therefore distinguished by organizational structure. First, a mass-bureaucratic party—similar to the mass-based models of Duverger and Neumann—is defined by the central role of party bureaucracy, strong ties to membership, preeminence of internal leaders, membership financing, and emphasis on ideology. Second, an electoral-professional party is marked by the central role of professionals, weak ties to membership, preeminence of public representatives, and emphasis on issues and leadership (Panebianco 1988, 264).

Building on Duverger and Kircheimer, Richard Katz and Peter Mair theorize a linear movement of dominant party types from elite-based to mass-based to catch-all to—what they term—cartel parties (Katz and Mair 2002; Katz and Mair 1995). Elite parties, they argue, rely on a small core of wealthy and powerful individuals who can place their representatives in parliament without the assistance of central party structure or mass-level support. However, as demands for universal suffrage began, elite parties gave way to mass parties, which amassed funds from ordinary people and used an extensive organizational apparatus—both internal and local—to manage the interests of competing organizational and public constituencies.

With the achievement of universal suffrage and political power, write Katz and Mair, mass parties morphed into catch-all parties, which sustained electoral victories with broad and non-ideological messages. The success of this strategy brought dominance and
ultimately corruption. Katz and Mair call this new ascendant party type a cartel party. These erstwhile catch-all parties have become reliant on state resources and collude with each other to maintain power and access. Their leadership, say Katz and Mair, have more in common with each other than with their own party members.

Steven Wolinetz, borrowing a typology from the literature on coalition formation, advocates a new classification scheme: policy seeking, vote seeking, and office seeking (Wolinetz 2002). A policy-seeking party pursues policy goals. A vote-seeking party aims to maximize its vote and win elections. An office-seeking party looks to secure the benefits of public office, i.e., patronage and influence. Wolinetz acknowledges that the blurred boundaries between the categories undermine his typology. For example, an office-seeking party must also be to some extent a vote-seeking party and a policy-seeking party must also be to some extent an office-seeking party. It is unlikely an actual political party will correspond to any one of these theoretical types.

Voter linkages can also constitute fundamental differences between parties. Herbert Kitschelt’s classification differentiates three party types based on the nature of the linkage between the party and its voters (Kitschelt 2000; Kitschelt 1995). Charismatic parties derive popularity from a single leader, therefore avoiding the high costs of organization and mobilization. Clientelistic parties exchange electoral support for policy favors and are therefore highly organized. Programmatic parties present a well-developed platform to the voters; these parties require a high information and high intelligence electorate to decipher between competing alternatives. Kitschelt’s typology suffers from the same drawbacks as Wolinetz’s classificatory scheme. The categories of charismatic,
clientelistic, and programmatic are theoretically mutually exclusive; however, in practice, parties could employ these strategies simultaneously in different districts within elections or change their approach between elections.

An additional typology, ostensibly distinct from the above literature though conceptually linked, analyzes the ethnic character of a political party, positing three types: ethnic, multiethnic, and nonethnic. The literature on ethnic political parties focuses on two classification dimensions: 1) the extent to which a party draws its votes from a particular ethnic group; and 2) the extent to which a party portrays itself as representing a particular ethnic group (Ishiyama and Breuning 2011). Kanchan Chandra emphasizes the latter dimension when identifying the fundamental difference between multiethnic and ethnic parties: whether a party purposefully excludes a particular ethnic group. (K. Chandra 2011; K. Chandra 2007).

The important distinction, therefore, is not how many groups a party includes, but rather whether a group is deliberately excluded. An ethnic party must be in some way exclusive. However, Chandra argues that an ethnic party can and should be identified by a variety of characteristics, including its name, campaign messages, legislative behavior, voter base, and composition of leadership Consequently, Chandra defines the three party types in the following way. A multiethnic party champions the interests of all ethnic groups without excluding any. An ethnic party promotes the interests of a particular group or set of groups. A nonethnic party does not include or exclude groups on the basis of ethnicity.
This typology appears logically separate from the elite-mass-catch-all-cartel classification that predominates the study of European political parties. However, multiethnic and ethnic parties should in fact be understood as distinct types of the party categories postulated in conventional typologies. An ethnic party mimics a mass or mass-integration party, which relies on membership activity, high organizational capacity, and appeals to a specific group—in this case an identity group. A multiethnic party can be understood as type of catch-all party, which is non-ideological, elite dominated, and pursues all ethnic groups in order to maximize vote share.

Party Systems: Formation and Typologies

Political parties are situated within party systems, which have their own set of typologies and theories of emergence and change, on which there is ample academic literature (Kitschelt 2009; Charles Boix 2009). Herbert Kitschelt borrows a theoretical framework from international relations theory to elucidate the relationship between parties and party systems. Using Ken Waltz’s levels of analysis, Kitschelt explains party-system theories are systemic theories, which operate at a high level of abstraction and identify the number of players, distribution of resources, and capabilities and rules that shape the way parties interact (Kitschelt 2009, 523). Similar to international relations theory, there remains a high degree of disagreement over the nature and impact of party systems.

A long-standing typology of party systems examines the number of parties competing in the system (Mair 2005). Duverger divided party systems into categories of two-party or multiparty (Duverger 1954). Jean Bondel’s typology included four
categories: two-party, two-and-a-half party, multiparty with one dominant party, and multiparty without a dominant party (Blondel 1968). Stein Rokkan identified particular case-based numerical types, such as the British-German system and the Scandinavian system (Stein 1968). Giovanni Sartori distinguished between two-party systems and types of multiparty systems, including moderate and polarized multiparty systems (Sartori 1976; Sartori 1966).

In their study of Latin American party systems, Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully look not only at the number of parties but also the nature of their connection to society and the polity (Mainwaring and Scully 1996). They differentiate between institutionalized, inchoate, and hegemonic party systems. An institutionalized party system includes stability of inter-party competition, parties with stable roots in society and a sophisticated organizational structure, and the societal legitimacy of parties and elections. Parties that populate inchoate party systems have weak connections to social organizations, high levels of party switching and indiscipline, and high electoral volatility between elections. Finally, a hegemonic party system is centered on one party, which does not allow formal competition between itself and other secondary parties.

A hegemonic party system can be distinguished from dominant party systems—what Dahl calls “inclusive hegemonies” (Dahl 1972)—in which the dominant party establishes “the system of interactions resulting from inter-party competition” (Sartori 1976, 44). Therefore, the presence of a dominant party by definition creates a dominant party system. Yet the point at which a party becomes “dominant” is contested: the threshold has been put at 70 percent of seats (Coleman 1960), 60 percent of seats (De
Walle and Butler 1999), and 50 percent of seats (Ware 1996), among other estimates (Bogaards 2004). Regardless of the exact threshold of dominance, theorists of dominant parties/party systems largely agree that a dominant party is one which has won one or more elections and is unlikely to lose in the foreseeable future (Suttner 2006).

Level of competitiveness also differentiates party systems. Robert Dahl’s classic account of party system competitiveness included strictly competitive, cooperative-competitive, coalescent-competitive, and strictly coalescent systems (Dahl 1966). Herbert Kitschelt argues that five conditions constitute “intense” competitiveness in a party system: when marginally greater support for a politician translates into substantial political leverage in the parliament; when there are identifiable alternative parties or party blocs competing for power; when elections results are close; when there is a high number of ‘floating’ voters; and when the stakes of competition are high (Kitschelt 2009, 533–534).

Another body of literature examines how and why particular party systems emerge. This literature is predominantly divided between sociological and historical theories (Charles Boix 2009). The archetypal sociological account of party-system emergence in Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan’s *Party Systems and Voter Alignments* (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). They argue that national revolutions and industrial revolutions shape party systems. During national revolutions, state consolidation and centralization challenges existing peripheral territorial power centers and religious power. Additional conflicts emerge during industrialization, during which capitalism and urbanization create divisions between rural areas and cities and between capital and
workers. Lipset and Rokkan link the nature of a country’s parties and party system to the
prevalence of whichever conflict was most salient (territorial, religious, capital-labor, or
rural-urban). Their influential social-cleavage approach to party-system emergence has
been used in many other studies, including Gregory Luebbert’s examination of agrarian
constituencies and party politics (Luebbert 1991) and Kalyvas’s work on confessional
parties and the Catholic Church (Kalyvas 1996).

The second core explanation of party-system emergence is institutional, which
postulates that electoral and constitutional rules determine the characteristics of party
competition (Duverger 1954; Cox 1997; Sartori 1997; Taagepera and Shugart 1989). The
central claims of this approach focus on the differing political incentives embedded in
proportional representation and majoritarian systems. PR is argued to produce multiparty
systems, coalition governments, a low number of wasted votes, greater accountability to
voters, and policy inefficiency. In contrast, majoritarianism is associated with two-party
systems, single-party governments, a high number of wasted votes, low accountability to
voters, and policy efficiency. The institutional approach also examines the effects of
district magnitude, minimum vote thresholds, party lists, and other election rules on the
attributes of party systems.

The discord in the literature regarding typologies and approaches to parties and
party systems indicates the extraordinary diversity of political competition across the
world. Even within the European cases on which most of the current literature focuses,
there is little consistency in the formation or behavior of political parties. When
developing countries—with their unique histories and cultures—are included, a
generalized theory of political parties becomes significantly more complicated.

Ethnic Conflict, Peacebuilding, and Institutional Design

The formation and nature of parties and parties systems is an essential component
of conflict processes in deeply divided societies. Party systems dominated by ethnic
parties can create instability and perpetuate conflict. Alternatively, multiethnic political
parties employing catch-all election strategies can stabilize political competition and
alleviate ethnic tension. Consequently, scholars of institutional design have debated
extensively the possibility of fostering moderation and stability through electoral
institutions. The various perspectives on this debate are informed by differing
assumptions about the origin and nature of ethnic identity and ethnic conflict.

Ethnic Identity and Ethnic Conflict

The literature on ethnic identity and conflict rests upon a broad definition of an
ethnic group, which includes effectively all descent-based identity categories. Donald
Horowitz’s *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* is the foundational text for the study of ethnic
politics. Horowitz advocates “an inclusive conception of ethnicity that embraces
differences identified by color, language, religion, or some other attribute of common
origin” (Horowitz 1985, 41). Horowitz refutes critics who argue race is fundamentally
dissimilar from other ‘ethnic’ types: “the thesis that color-group relations are especially
conducive to group cohesion and intergroup hostility is not merely insupportable in
comparative terms; it is also historically inadequate” (Horowitz 1985, 43).
The mainstream literature on ethnicity and ethnic conflict has followed Horowitz’s lead. Kanchan Chandra defines an ethnic group as an identity category based on “region, religion, sect, language, family, language, dialect, caste, clan, tribe or nationality of one's parents or ancestors or one's own physical features” (K. Chandra 2011, 154). Raymond Taras and Rajat Ganguly define an ethnic group as “united by a common inherited culture (including language, music, food, dress, and customs and practices), racial similarity, common religion, and belief in common history and ancestry…” (Taras and Ganguly 2006, 1). Alvin Rabushka and Ken Shepsle studied the politics of race, language, religion, and tribe under a single rubric of “cultural pluralism” (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 8–10). Ashutosh Varshney writes that ethnicity “designates a collective belonging, which could be based on common descent, language, history, culture, race, or religion (or some combination of these).” He calls common objections to the definition’s inclusion of religion a “semantic quibble” (Varshney 2009, 277).

The accepted definition of ethnicity, however, does not explain how and why some ethnic identities become “activated” (K. Chandra 2011) and their members “exhibit a strong psychological sentiment of belonging to the group” (Taras and Ganguly 2006, 1) whereas other groups remain dormant. Theories addressing these questions regarding the origin and salience of ethnic identity are closely related to explanations of group conflict. These theories are commonly grouped into three categories: essentialism, constructivism, and instrumentalism (Varshney 2009; Cordell and Wolff 2010; K. Chandra 2001a).

Essentialism (also called primordialism) is the oldest explanation of ethnic identity. Commonly associated with anthropologist Clifford Geertz, this perspective
claims that ethnic identities are deeply rooted in the history and culture of societies. In Geertz’s famous 1963 essay on the “new states” of the developing world, he writes that tribalism, parochialism, and communalism are “literally pandemic to the new states” and at odds with the burgeoning civic nationalism of the time. The developing world’s “sense of self remains bound up in the gross actualities of blood, race, language, locality, religion, or tradition.” A “primordial attachment,” writes Geertz, stems from the “givens of social existence” that “are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves.” Geertz concludes that primordial ethnic groups view absorption into a civic policy as risking “a loss of definition as an autonomous person” (Geertz 1963, 106–109).

Scholars of ethnic politics have mostly abandoned Geertz’s ethnic essentialism. The most recent and prominent combination of ethnicity and historical determinism is journalist Robert Kaplan’s analysis of the Balkans conflict. Drawing (probably unknowingly) on Geertz, Kaplan argues that centuries-old ethnic hatreds explain the drivers of Bosnia’s conflict in 1992. “This was a time-capsule world,” writes Kaplan about the Balkans, “a dim stage upon which people raged, spilled blood, experienced visions and ecstasies.” In this region, “men have been isolated by poverty and ethnic rivalry, dooming them to hate” (Kaplan 1993, xxi-xxii). Kaplan’s argument is often called the “ancient hatreds” thesis, which has been heavily criticized by many constructivist and instrumentalist scholars.

Roger Peterson employs a more sophisticated version of essentialism in his study of ethnic conflict in Eastern Europe. He writes that if the “ancient hatreds” thesis is
understood to mean either permanent and intense ethnic hatred or uninterrupted ethnic war, then it is rightly dismissed. However, “if hatred is conceived as a historically formed ‘schema’ that guides action in some situations, then the conception should be taken more seriously” (Petersen 2002, 63). He argues emotion, particularly fear, “helps explain the essentialization of identities that underlies ethnic conflict.” Despite multiple sources of identity, such as religion, language, or traditions, “perpetrators of ethnic violence arrive at the same basic essentializing sequence: ‘I am a member of X, he is a member of Y, and members of Y should be targeted for violence’” (Petersen 2002, 3).

Other studies examine the effect of ethnic structure on conflict implicitly using the primordialist assumption of unchanging identity. Alvin Rabushka and Ken Shepsle argue that specific ethnic configurations—either balanced, dominant majority, dominant minority, or fragmented—can significantly influence ethnic cooperation (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 89–91). Similarly, Robert Dahl argues that the intensity of sub-national identity can be moderated by “crosscutting cleavages,” or the intersection of multiple identity cleavages within a group (Dahl 1966). Applying this insight directly to ethnic conflict, the presence of crosscutting cleavages could potentially mitigate tension by dividing ethnic loyalties across multiple cleavages.

Constructivist approaches to ethnic identity and conflict are diametrically opposed to strict essentialism. Constructivists argue that individual identities are multiple, situational, and fluid across time and space. Identity is endogenous to a set of social, economic, and/or political processes, such as modernization, colonialism, or political entrepreneurship, and can shift with these processes. At its foundation, ethnic identity is a
shared symbolic framework that creates artificial unity among a collection of dissimilar fragments (K. Chandra 2001a; K. Chandra 2001b). Although constructivism’s insight into the fluidity of identity challenges the historical determinism of essentialist approaches, constructivists do not claim that identities are created or changed easily. Both processes can generally occur only over long periods of time.

Benedict Anderson’s constructivist account of nationalism has become a core text in the study of ethnicity. Anderson argues all meaningfully sized communities, including nations, are imagined. This is “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” This “deep, horizontal comradeship” is so profound that it has made possible “over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willing to die for such limited gatherings” (B. Anderson 1991, 6–7). Anderson writes that modern national consciousness was slowly constructed in the minds of citizens through print capitalism, which used the printing press to spread a unified identity in a common language across disparate peoples.

Using Anderson’s insight into the mechanisms of socially constructed changes in identity, many scholars of ethnic politics have examined the extent and alacrity of ethnic identity change. David Laitin’s classic study of Nigeria identifies the possibility of slow identity change between historically constructed hegemonic discourses on ethnicity and newly formed “counter-hegemonies” (Laitin 1986). Chandra argues that scholars who identify rapid identity change are focusing on relevant identity “categories,” which rise and fall based on various exogenous factors. Whereas scholars who find slow identity
change are generally analyzing ethnic group “attributes”, i.e., the ancestral language, occupation, or religion associated with a particular group, which shift gradually over time. Examples of this debate include Chandra and Boulet’s use of mathematics to show the possibility of rapid short-term identity change and Karen Ferree’s examination of electoral volatility in Africa, which finds that rapid identity change is significantly restricted under specific ethnic structures (K. Chandra and Boulet 2012; Ferree 2012).

The final approach to understanding ethnic identity and conflict is instrumentalism, which focuses on the use of ethnicity as a tool for some other purpose. Instrumentalism is implicitly constructivist because it rejects ethnicity as either inherent or permanent, but its advocates argue identity can be constructed—indeed manipulated for ulterior purposes—quickly, which is generally opposed by many constructivists who theorize identity shifts over long time periods. Instrumentalist’s under-theorizing of identity formation creates several logical weaknesses: Even if elites mobilize using ethnic symbols, why are the masses so willing to follow? If all actors are instrumental, should not the instrumentally rational masses free ride on elite ethnic mobilization (Varshney 2009)?

David Laitin and James Fearon use an instrumentalist approach to study the absence of ethnic conflict (Fearon and Laitin 1996). They argue that ethnic groups frequently have highly developed social networks that facilitate the flow of information within the group. They theorize a “spiral regime” between ethnic groups in which individual-level conflict can quickly engulf both respective groups. Therefore, ethnic groups employ strong “in-group policing” to prevent destructive intergroup conflict. With
the guarantee of internal reprimand, an opposing ethnic group will allow the other group to police its own members rather than escalate group conflict by responding to provocation. In this study, ethnicity functions as an informational shortcut for group membership and behavior.

Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler also use an instrumentalist approach in their study of the economic causes of civil war (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). Sparking the ‘greed versus grievance’ debate, Collier and Hoeffler argue that relative-deprivation explanations of civil war—first argued by Ted Gurr (Gurr 1970)—fail to recognize the economic drivers of conflict. Most civil-war prone countries are highly dependent on a single natural resource, such as diamonds, the exploitation of which drives violence and enriches rebel leaders. Applied to ethnic conflict, Collier and Hoeffler’s analysis suggests elites use ethnicity to create conflict during which they stand to gain economically. Collier and Hoeffler have now, however, hedged their argument significantly. They claim that the ‘greed versus grievance’ debate over-simplifies the causes of civil war. Both models, they say, have explanatory power (Collier, Hoeffler, and Sambanis 2005).

Peacebuilding, Institutional Design, and Political Parties

The literature on postconflict peacebuilding offers a multifaceted approach to resolving conflict and sustaining peace. The various dimensions the peacebuilding include human security, gender, the role of NGOs, reconciliation, demilitarization, democratization, and development (Jeong 2005; Murithi 2009; Richmond 2010; Crocker et al 2007). Within this complex process of peacebuilding, electoral system design and party competition play vital roles. Peacebuilding scholar Ho-Won Jeong writes,
“Institutions that encourage bargaining and accommodation are more likely to produce political stability. Coalitions can be built to undermine intergroup rivalries and preserve national cohesion…” (Jeong 2005, 94). Benjamin Reilly contends, “Particularly in societies split along ethnic lines, cross-regional and multi-ethnic parties that compete for the centre ground appear to be a—and perhaps the—crucial determinant of broader democratic consolidation and peace building” (Reilly 2011, 17, original emphasis). However, ethnic identity and conflict create deep challenges for the persistence of inclusive and moderate politics.

Ethnic Conflict, Ethnic Parties, and Instability

The presence of conflict-prone ethnic divisions greatly complicates the work of postconflict peacebuilding and democratic stability. Paul Brass argues there is a reciprocal process of conflict production involving elites, the masses, and institutions that embeds itself in a society. Using the case of India, Brass contends the causes of so-called “ethnic” conflicts are in fact often open to a variety of explanations other than identity. Yet generic conflict is often transformed ex post facto into ethnic conflict by political elites who seek to capture or maintain state power. The construction of a “master narrative” around a particular identity discourse, writes Brass, “is grounded within a set of institutions that promote its persistence” (Brass 1997, 29).

Important to the construction and persistence of “master narratives” of ethnic animosity is the use of symbolic politics (Kaufman 2001; Kaufman 2006). Stuart Kaufman notes that political elites in ethnically divided countries often foster conflict with “mythically based feelings of hostility that can be tapped using ethnic symbols”
Kaufman claims his approach provides a conceptual foundation to conventional theories of ancient hatreds, manipulative elites, and economic rivalry, which are incomplete without first understanding how historical mythologies shape mass attitudes toward inter-ethnic relations.

The politicization and institutionalization of combative ethnic identities is particularly damaging to postconflict peacebuilding because it is extremely difficult to reverse once initiated. Stephan Van Evera argues, “Ethnic identities are hardened by violent conflict with others” because it enhances “the emotional impact of recorded national memories” and “creates a stronger we-feeling than the experience of people who escape these tragedies.” Consequently, Van Evera concludes, “groups in conflict are especially poor candidates for identity change, and identity change is an especially unlikely remedy for ethnic conflict” (Van Evera 2001, 20–21). Similarly, Chaim Kaufmann writes, “in ethnic wars both hypernationalist mobilization rhetoric and real atrocities harden ethnic identities to the point that cross-ethnic political appeals are unlikely to be made and even less likely to be heard” (Kaufmann 1996, 137).

Rabushka and Shepsle’s classic study of “plural societies” outlines the challenges of ethnic divisions for democratic politics. Writing in 1972, they use case studies of Guyana, Belgium, Ceylon, South Africa, and other countries to conclude “that most independent plural societies fail to retain, over any sustained period, stable democratic politics” (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 21). They argue that the primary task of a plural nation-state is to subordinate “primordial sentiments” to state sovereignty. However, “loyalties to subnational cultural groups often undermine the stability, if not the very
existence, of the state” (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 8). This process spirals out of control because politicians reinforce perceptions of incompatible communal values, sooner or later, through the widespread use of ethnic appeals…intragroup politics soon becomes the politics of outbidding…brokerage institutions, e.g., the political parties of pluralistic democracies, become inefficacious…communal institutions of aggregation are rapidly converted into corporate representatives of communal values…[and] competitive politics ultimately leads to winners and losers whose temporary status is made permanent through the manipulation of electoral machinery. (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 66)

Rabushka and Shepsle acknowledge that the alien rule of colonialism can provide an impetus for interethnic cooperation and temporally submerge ethnic differences. However, “As the cooperative movement disintegrates, ethnic communities provide a natural source of political support” (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 105). Slowly, they argue, ethnic outbidding replaces the politics of moderation and politicians begin to manipulate the rules of the game to maintain power. Dominant-majority ethnic configurations are particularly conducive to this pattern because a majority group does not need to cooperate with minority groups; therefore “ethnic parties are organized and extremists soon come to dominate the electoral arena” (Rabushka and Shepsle 2009, 157).

Numerous other scholars share Rabushka and Shepsle’s focus on ethnic outbidding. In their overview of the ethnic politics literature, James Fearon and David Laitin summarize that elites in ethnically divided countries can construct ethnic identity and cultivate conflict to strengthen their hold on power: “the provocation of violence by elites can construct groups in a more antagonistic manner…and in turn set in motion a spiral of vengeance,” which sharpens identity boundaries and undermines moderate
political agendas (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 865). Kaufman contends that during periods of violent ethnic outbidding, reasoned appeals to moderation are “simply swept aside by the tidal wave of emotional nationalism channeled against them by the symbolic appeals” (Kaufman 2001, 210). Similarly, Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder contend that democratizing states with weak institutions are prone to outbidding elites who provoke conflict to maintain or seize power (Mansfield and Snyder 2005). When a society is ethnically divided, they write, “the path to democratization is likely to be neither smooth nor peaceful” (Mansfield and Snyder 2007, 173).

Donald Horowitz has also written extensively on ethnic outbidding and conflict (Horowitz 1985; Horowitz 2003b). Horowitz argues that ethnically divided societies are prone to “ethnic census” elections, during which ethnic demographics closely predict party support (Horowitz 1985). Additionally, Horowitz claims that the formation of one ethnic party is likely to lead to a chain reaction of ethnic party formation. Firstly, once activated, ethnic identity is a potent issue for political competition between groups. Secondly, there is a strong incentive for intra-ethnic elites to outbid each other for group support with ethnic demands. “Moderation in interethnic relations,” writes Horowitz, is often rewarded “with the formation of a competing party that takes a more unyielding position” (Horowitz 1985, 357). Horowitz also writes that multiethnic parties have been unable to compete with ethnic challengers: “Where multiethnic parties have survived, they have done so by outlawing electoral competition, dissolving opposition, and coercively recreating their threatened multiethnic base” (Horowitz 1985, 429).
Institutions and Conflict Management

The ability of institutions to shape human behavior is well established. Douglas North argues that institutions are human-designed rules of the game that structure incentives of exchange, reduce uncertainty, and create formal and informal codes of conduct. An institutional framework in turn affects what organizations come into existence. This symbiotic relationship between institutions and organizations influences the nature and direction of institutional change over time (North 1990; North 1991). Though institutions can evolve, the initial institutional arrangement constrains the scope of future changes through path dependence, which narrows the choice set and links decisionmaking through time (North 1990, 98–99).

“Institutionalist” scholars in comparative politics have used North’s insights to understand various dimensions of political behavior (Dowding 1994; Hall and Taylor 1996; Levi 2000; Thelen 1999). The concept of institutional incentives has been particularly influential on the contemporary literature on electoral systems. Using an institutional analysis, Giovani Sartori claims electoral systems have a “constraining effect” on voters and a “reductive effect” on political parties (Sartori 1997). Similarly, the IDEA Handbook on electoral system design notes the “psychological” and “mechanical” effects of electoral systems (A. Reynolds, Reilly, and Ellis 2005). George Tsebelis uses rational choice institutionalism to explain British labor party activists, French political coalitions, and the incentives of consociationalism (Tsebelis 1991).

Challenging the claim that ethnic conflict and democratic stability are incompatible, many scholars use institutionalist arguments to claim electoral systems can
have a profound effect on inter-ethnic relations in divided societies. In her study of electoral engineering, Pippa Norris argues that an electoral system exerts “an exogenous impact upon parties.” Norris continues:

The central claim in incentive-based theories is not that electoral systems create the social cleavages or their political relevance, but merely that the initial adoption of certain rules (for whatever reason) creates certain incentives to either maintain or reinforce (and possibly exacerbate) one-of-us bonding, or, alternatively, to modify or downplay (and possibly erode) group consciousness in the political arena by encouraging catch-all bridging strategies. (Norris 2004, 124)

Andrew Reynolds et al write, “in divided societies institutional design can systematically favour or disadvantage ethnic, national, and religious groups” (Belmont et al 2002, 3). Horowitz says, “the electoral system is the central feature of the incentives approach to accommodation. Indeed, differing electoral logics can create different ethnic outcomes, reversing even favourable and unfavourable starting points” (Horowitz 2002). Arend Lijphart has also argued extensively for the importance of constitutional design in deeply divided societies (Lijphart 1991; Lijphart 2004).

The options available to electoral-system designers fall into four categories: plurality/majority systems, proportional representation systems, mixed systems, and other systems (A. Reynolds, Reilly, and Ellis 2005). The basic principle of plurality/majority systems is majority rule: the candidate that receives the most votes wins. Variations of this system include first past the post, block vote, party block vote, alternative vote, and the two-round system. Proportional representation systems translate a party’s vote total into a corresponding proportion of the seats in parliament. Variations of PR include List PR and single transferable vote. Mixed systems combine the attributes of plurality/majority and proportional systems. Examples of mixed systems include mixed
member proportional systems and parallel systems. Other electoral system types, such as single non-transferable vote, the limited vote, and the Borda Count, do not adhere to the functions of either plurality/majority or PR systems and are placed in a residual ‘other’ category.

Electoral-system engineers face a series of secondary decisions once a system is chosen. The first option is the number and size of the districts. All electoral systems have districts, which can be a single district or many. Proportional systems face the additional choice of district magnitude: the number of seats elected in each district. The second option is whether to employ a minimum threshold, which forces parties to surpass a minimum level of support to gain a seat. The final option relates to party lists: closed lists make voters selection only a party; open lists provide voters the choice to select a party and/or a candidate; and free lists make voters choose only candidates.

Electoral systems are accompanied by two other elements of institutional design: federalism and party rules. The arrangement of power sharing between the central government and regions has important implications for the political process. The location of control over taxation, budgets, service delivery, security and other issues shapes the foci of political power and competition. Furthermore, electoral system incentives can be reinforced with additional rules on political parties. Some states require parties to have regionally or ethnically inclusive executive councils, open party offices and field candidates in a minimum number of provinces, have nationalist mottos and names, hold regular conventions, and receive a regionally distributed minimum percentage of support (Reilly and Nordlund 2008; Reilly 2006).
Although the institutional options facing constitutional and electoral-system designers are known, there is no consensus on which particular design is most conducive to stability and moderation in deeply divided societies. The most prominent debate on this topic is between Arend Lijphart and Donald Horowitz. Lijphart is a long-time proponent of the consociational model, which ensures two key elements of governance in a divided society: power sharing and group autonomy through “grand coalitions” and mutual veto power (Lijphart 1977). Under this arrangement, ethnic elites compromise with each other in order to stay in a unity cabinet. Juan Linz’s critique of presidentialism in Latin America bolsters Lijphart’s promotion of parliamentary power sharing. Linz argues that presidential systems encourage winner-take-all politics, which produce term-protected leaders with delusions of mass popularity. Conversely, parliamentary systems encourage moderate coalition governments that can remove ineffectual or tyrannical leaders (Linz 1990).

Donald Horowitz criticizes consociationalism, arguing that post-election elite coalitions create deadlock not compromise. He instead advocates an integrative approach, which encourages parties to create pre-election coalitions through federalism, presidentialism, majoritarianism, and vote pooling, which is induced by electoral systems that fragment ethnic group support: for example, single-member districts with multiethnic constituencies (Horowitz 1985; 1990; 1991; 2003a). An electoral system in an ethnically divided society, Horowitz writes, should have five accommodative aims: fragmentation, moderation, coalition, fluidity, and proportionality (Horowitz 1985, 646–650).

See also (Lijphart 1984; Lijphart 1991; Lijphart 1999; Lijphart 2004)
Horowitz’s integrative approach suffers from a series of problems, including a lack of empirical examples and the questionable assumption that elites or voters will respond to incentives for moderation (Sisk 1996).

Building on this debate, Benjamin Reilly argues electoral systems “can influence the trajectory of political competition, exerting a centrist pull upon electoral politics and a moderating, cooperation-inducing influence upon the conduct of politics more generally” (Reilly 2001, 6). Reilly focuses on “centripetal” arrangements, which draw political competition toward the center and away from the extremes. He writes that “preferential” electoral systems, such as the alternative vote, the supplementary vote, and single transferable vote, encourage campaigning politicians to target voters from a range of ethnic groups, foster arenas of bargaining under which politicians from opposing ethnic groups have an incentive to negotiate vote-pooling deals, and create centrist, aggregative political parties or party coalitions. Reilly’s investigation of preferential systems in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Estonia, Australia, and Northern Ireland finds evidence of institutionally nurtured inter-ethnic cooperation and centrism (Reilly 2001; Reilly 2002; Reilly 2011).

While Lijphart, Horowitz, and Reilly examine the effect of specific electoral arrangements on conflict management, Pippa Norris theorizes that the macro-institutional structures, i.e., majoritarian or proportional, will influence the formation of ethnic and multiethnic parties (Norris 2004). Majoritarian systems create high electoral hurdles because parties need at least a simple plurality to win. Under these rules, successful parties adopt “bridging strategies designed to gather votes promiscuously and
indiscriminately.” Parties create diverse coalitions and focus on uncontroversial centrist issues such as economic growth and service delivery. Majoritarian rules produce parties that are “centripetal socially and ideologically, with competition clusters in the middle of the political spectrum” (Norris 2004, 10).

In contrast, PR electoral systems produce bonding parties, which “bring together citizens who are homogenous in certain important respects, whether they share class, faith, or ethnic identities.” These parties develop “tightly knit social networks and clear ‘one-of-us’ boundaries” and “maintain strong ties with social cleavages in the electorate” (Norris 2004, 10–11). Norris also examines the importance of ballot structure for benefit distribution. She argues that candidate ballots (on which citizens vote for an individual) and preference ballots (on which citizens vote for both a candidate and party) create a strong and moderately strong incentive, respectively, for localized benefits. Alternatively, party ballots (on which citizens vote for a party only) encourage programmatic and collective benefits and cohesive and disciplined parties.

Beyond the electoral system debate, the impact of strong federalism in a divided society has caused similar disagreement among scholars. Lijphart argues federalism is a form of segmental autonomy—one of his four principles of consociationalism. When ethnic segments are territorially concentrated, writes Lijphart, federalism allows for the essential allocation of localized decisionmaking (Lijphart 1977, 42). Jeong generalizes, “For overcoming ethnoregional frictions, federalism has been viewed as one of the more common arrangements, since it allows ethnically distinct groups to control their own provinces” (Jeong 2005, 98). Reynolds et al note, “Federalism or decentralization enables
religious, national, and ethnic groups that are a minority at the national level to have significant input or even to govern at the local or State level. For this reason federalism has advantages in divided societies” (Belmont et al 2002, 7).

However, many scholars identify the potential negative consequences of federalism. Eric Nordlinger writes, “The combination of territorially distinctive segments and federalism’s grant of partial autonomy sometimes provides additional impetus to demands for greater autonomy,” which can result in session and civil war (Nordlinger 1972, 32). Using the Nigerian case, Horowitz claims that federalism can either exacerbate or ameliorate conflict depending on the number of states, their boundaries, and their ethnic composition. When states are ethnically heterogeneous, federalism can foster “some reduction in conflict at the center” by creating “political compartments in which ethnically and subethnically differentiated parties can flourish” (Horowitz 1985, 617).

Moreover, federal powers can cultivate positive intra-ethnic competition in homogenous states. Yet Horowitz also identifies potential problems with federalism, including the encouragement of separatism and the exacerbation of discrimination against provincial minorities.

In sum, the presence of conflict-forged ethnic identities is likely to produce unstable democracies dominated by ethnic parties. Once ethnic violence occurs, identity groups take on a primordial character that undermines the potential for cooperative behavior and heightens tension. However, constitutional designers are exploring the possible institutional arrangements that can foster ethnic cooperation through power sharing or multiethnic parties. There is significant debate surrounding the proper
institutional formula of electoral system type, federalism, and party rules, but the basic theoretical premise that institutions can shape and reshape political behavior provides the possibility that peace can be engineered in conflict-prone societies.

Conclusion

Hans-Jurgen Puhle notes, “Given the similarities (if not interchangeability) among the policy positions of the major conservative or social democratic European catch-all parties and the lack of clear alternatives, some critics have asked: ‘do parties matter?’” (Puhle 2002, 72). While the importance of parties in consolidated, Western democracies is legitimately contested, few can question the critical significance of political parties in ethnically divided countries. Their actions can either undergird or undermine democratic peace and stability. Catch-all multiethnic parties foster inter-ethnic cooperation and mitigate ethnic tension. Ethnic parties, as a type of mass party, tend to exacerbate political and social divisions, destabilize democracy, and promote conflict.

The key question for peacebuilders is what institutional options, if any, are available to encourage inter-ethnic political cooperation. Many scholars, such as Alvin Rabushka, Ken Sheplse, and Stephen Van Evera, discount this possibility. This project challenges these perspectives by arguing that electoral system design plays a causal role in fostering and maintaining multiethnic politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa. This argument validates and contributes to the theoretical and empirical debate between Arend Lijphart, Donald Horowitz, Benjamin Reilly and others over which institutional arrangement best serves ethnically divided societies.
CHAPTER THREE: LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, PATH DEPENDENCE, AND PARTY POLITICS IN INDIA, INDONESIA, AND SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

India, Indonesia, and South Africa share long colonial histories. In India, the British East India Company formalized its foreign rule in 1757 after over 100 years of carving out exclusive trading rights in various parts of the country. In 1858, the British crown succeeded the EIC and maintained another 89 years of western domination. In Indonesia, the Dutch East India Company arrived in the early 1600s. After the company was dissolved in 1800, the Netherlands established the Dutch East Indies colony in Indonesia. This lasted until World War Two when the Japanese invaded and controlled the territory until the end of the war when the Dutch attempted to reassert control. In the mid 1600s, the Dutch East India Company also arrived in South Africa along with British colonizers shortly after. British and Dutch settlers went on to form the Union of South Africa in 1910, which instituted increasingly racist laws to ensure “internal colonialism” in the form of permanent minority rule.

These three countries also share similar liberation movements. In India, the Indian National Congress formed in 1885 to fight for independence. It promoted inclusive, multiethnic nationalism and was led charismatic figures, notably Mohandas K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. In Indonesia, Sukarno led a secular nationalist movement that sought to unify Indonesia’s diverse people and disparate geography into a multiethnic
state. In South Africa, the African National Congress was founded in 1912 to agitate for black rights. Its leaders, such as Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo, envisioned a multiethnic state replacing the racial division of apartheid. In sum, each country resisted western imperial powers (and their successors, in the case of South Africa) with a broadly inclusive, multiethnic nationalist movement than joined diverse ethnic groups under the leadership of charismatic and popular figures.

These movement-based political parties entered post-colonial politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa with enormous political momentum. The Indian National Congress won almost 75 percent of the seats in the first parliamentary election in 1951-1952. The African National Congress won 62 percent of the vote in 1994 after the end of apartheid. In Indonesia, Sukarno’s political party was only one of several important parties in post-independence Indonesia, but his secular nationalist ideology was a dominant force. Multiethnic politics appeared strongly embedded in each country and likely to characterize democratic competition for some time. However, the ostensible unity created by these nationalist movements concealed deep-seated political and ethnic divisions.

Each country’s liberation movement battled ethnic competitors: *inter alia*, Hindu fundamentalists and Muslim separatists in India, Islamic fundamentalists and tribal separatists in Indonesia, and black and white nationalists in South Africa. These divisions were subsumed within larger nationalist movements by the time of independence, but they lingered beneath the surface of multiethnic political harmony, often emerging in the form of intermittent ethnic tension and violence. The liberation movements in India,
Indonesia, and South Africa created a soft path dependence for party politics. The presence of colonialism fostered a unifying nationalism that was conducive to multiethnic political parties after independence. These heterogeneous societies were given a common identity through resistance. However, the initial electoral dominance of these movement-based parties did not indicate the complete elimination of sub-national ethnic identity.

**Colonialism, Rebellion, and the Development of Multiethnic Politics in India**

The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 and became the leading organization in India’s independence struggle. It slowly expanded its membership from solely elite, upper-caste Hindus to Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, and Hindus of all castes. Over time, however, the Muslim League and Hindu nationalists emerged to challenge the Congress’s inclusive movement with an ethnic message. Though the INC maintained its multiethnic character, it could not prevent communal violence or Muslim separatism, which culminated in partition in 1947. The INC entered India’s democratic period as a dominant multiethnic party. However, the country’s ethnic tension was only temporarily masked by the early political dominance of the Congress Party.

**Moderation and Early Multiethnic Resistance: 1857-1905**

The beginning of the Indian independence movement is marked by the revolt of 1857. Often called the First War of Independence or the Sepoy Mutiny, the rebellion was led by Indian soldiers commissioned in the East India Company army. The causes of rebellion were manifold and accumulated over time, including caste divisions and pay differentials within the army, a fear of forced conversion to Christianity, and expanded overseas service (Metcalf and Metcalf 2012). However, the rebellion was sparked by a
rumor that new gun cartridges were greased with beef and pig fat, which violated both Hindu and Muslim custom. Although the rebels received sympathy from the public, the country was not fully behind them. Many actively supported the British. Almost half of the Indian soldiers fought on behalf of the British to put down the rebellion (B. Chandra 1989, 38).

The 1857 revolt was defeated with relative ease, but signaled to Britain the necessity of formal control. In August 1858, the British parliament passed the government of India Act, which transferred authority from the East India Company to the British crown. However, the creation of the British Raj did not fully quell resistance to outside rule, which now took on a local and multiethnic character. Colonial economic and land policies put enormous strain on farmers. Peasants in Bengal and elsewhere waged strikes and protests that successfully changed some policies. A unique feature of these revolts was the complete unity between Hindu and Muslim peasants, which contributed to their success (B. Chandra 1989).

Amid this growing unrest, the Indian National Congress was formed in 1885. Its early members were part of an academic and social elite and were often employed as lawyers, journalists, and professors. The early Congress served as a loyal opposition that was mostly disconnected from the mounting social upheaval in India (Metcalf and Metcalf 2012; J. M. Brown 2006). The INC’s demands included freedom of the press, the right to bear arms, a higher expenditure on famine relief, the maintenance of import duties on textiles, and the reduction of military expenditure (B. Chandra 1989, 72).
Though relatively tepid, the Congress’s formation and demands represented a significant first step in the founding of an all-India liberation movement.

The INC emerged in an era of rising communal identity. Events during the decade of the 1880s illuminated the increasingly demarcated boundaries between Hindus and Muslims (Metcalf and Metcalf 2012). The INC attempted to accommodate Muslim concerns into their organizational structure. In 1888, the INC adopted a rule that no resolution would be passed over the disapproval of the majority of either Hindu or Muslim delegates. In 1889, the INC adopted a minority clause calling for legislative councils to include a representative number of Parsis, Christians, Muslims, or Hindus in areas where those groups were the demographic minority (B. Chandra 1989). The Congress was trying to cultivate its inclusive credentials in order to build a multiethnic and national resistance movement.

By 1900, the Congress had become the leading force of resistance to British rule; however, the territorial locus of nationalism was in Bengal. In order to weaken this developing challenge and spur communalism, British viceroy Lord Curzon proposed partitioning Bengal and dividing the movement. When the plan became public, protests spread throughout Bengal. Nationalist leaders, including Aurobindo Ghosh and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, harnessed this discontent into the Swadeshi Movement (S. Sarkar 2011; Keay 2011). The movement generated a boycott of foreign goods, including clothes and food, and advocated the purchase of local produce and material. The Swadeshi Movement represented the beginning of mass politics in India, but it failed to garner large support from Muslims (B. Chandra 1989).
Division and Extremism: 1905-1919

The Swadeshi Movement in 1905 began a new period in the freedom movement. Splits emerged between moderates and extremists as well as between Hindus and Muslims. The moderate leadership still believed in obtaining reforms and concessions from the colonial regime, which now shifted its tacit support to the moderates in the face of growing radicalism. The extremists, on the other hand, believed in direct action. The acrimony came to a raucous climax at a Congress session in 1907, which ended with delegates throwing punches and chairs at each other (B. Chandra 1989). The division remained unresolved among the masses as well. In Bengal, young radicals organized assassinations of British officials rather than supporting compromise.

Simultaneously, the freedom movement began to fracture along communal lines. In 1906, the All India Muslim League was formed as the first Muslim political party in India. Three years later the British parliament passed the Indian Councils Act of 1909, which allowed elections for local council seats that had been previously appointed. The act also created separate electorates, which meant only Muslims could vote for reserved Muslim seats. Many Congress leaders accepted the creation of separate electorates even while advocating national unity. In 1909, Congress leader Gopal Krishna Gokhale declared that though he supported separate electorates, they should only be one part of broader national elections that were “without distinction of race or creed.”

---

6 All quotations in this section without an in-text citation have been taken from historian Ramachandra Guha’s compilation of primary source documents, which include speeches and writings from the Indian independence movement (Guha 2012).
The outbreak of the First World War temporarily united communal groups. Though supporting the British war effort with soldiers, arms, and money, India’s demand for self-rule continued. In 1916, the Home Rule Movement was launched, which demanded that India be afforded dominion status within the British Empire. The movement’s communal unity was aided by the elite-organized Lucknow Pact, which granted separate electorates and recognized the Muslim League’s status (B. Chandra 1989, 166). Congress leader Lokamanya Tilak said at a conference, “When we have to fight against a third party—it is a very important thing that we stand…united in race, united in religion, united as regards all different shades of political creed” (quoted in B. Chandra 1989, 166). Muhammad Ali Jinnah, as president of the Muslim League, negotiated the pact, which earned him the title “the ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity.”

The INC and Multiethnic Resistance in the Gandian Era: 1919-1939

At the conclusion of World War One, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi emerged as the new leader of the freedom struggle. M.K. Gandhi returned to India in 1914 after twenty-one years in South Africa as a lawyer representing South African Indians (many of whom were Muslim). Gandhi was deeply committed to Hindu-Muslim Unity. In a 1919 leaflet, he wrote, “Each must respect the other’s religion, must refrain from even secretly thinking ill of the other…” He argued further, “With God as witness we Hindus and Mahomedans declare that we shall behave towards one another as children of the same parents, that we shall have no differences, that the sorrows of each shall be the sorrows of the other…”

53
In 1919, the British passed the Government of India Act, which created a dual power structure in which Indians were given control over some aspects of provincial government (Keay 2011). However, repression and protest continued. At the Calcutta session in 1920, Gandhi convinced Congress delegates to support a nationwide boycott movement of British goods, schools, courts, and taxes (Metcalf and Metcalf 2012). The movement advocated swaraj or self-rule in coordination with the newly formed Khilafat Movement, which sought to pressure the British to protect the Ottoman Islamic caliphate. With Gandhi’s support, the Khalifat and swaraj movements combined into one non-cooperation movement. The resulting widespread participation of Muslims, who were the majority of those arrested at several demonstrations, gave the movement a multiethnic character (B. Chandra 1989, 196).

However, the Congress stagnated after the end of the non-cooperation movement in 1922. The INC divided among those who wanted to participate in legislative councils and change them from within and those who advocated boycott. Outside of the Congress, Hindu-Muslim tension and violence was escalating. A young Jawaharlal Nehru reiterated the INC’s position on communal unity in 1924. “Recent events in India have made it painfully clear that intolerance of another’s belief and religious observances is widely prevalent,” he wrote. “There must be perfect toleration of other faiths and beliefs and religious practices…There must be no persecution for the holding of any opinions on matters of religion” (Nehru 2003, 138).

Diametrically opposed to Nehru and the Congress was the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The RSS was founded in 1925 by K.B. Hedgewar to
ensure the Hindu character of post-independence India. The organization’s perspective was illuminated in the writings and speeches of M.S. Golwalkar, who took over the RSS in 1940. Golwalkar argued:

[Muslims] have also developed a feeling of identification with the enemies of this land. They look to some foreign lands as their holy places...they have cut off all their ancestral national moorings of this land and mentally merged themselves with the aggressors...So we see that it is not merely a case of change of faith, but a change even in national identity.

Golwalkar claimed Muslims had tried for 1200 years “to convert and enslave the entire country…” Golwalkar, Hedgewar, and the RSS’s militant anti-Muslim sentiment symbolized the ethnic chauvinism that Muslim leaders feared would dominate a Hindu majority state. Though constituting only a small faction of the nationalist movement, the Hindutva politics of the RSS and other related organizations enflamed communal tension.

The political activity of the 1920’s culminated in the Nehru Report in August 1928. Authored principally by Motilal Nehru, the report called for India to be granted dominion status and rejected the prevailing acceptance of separate communal electorates. With this decision the Congress risked alienating Muslim opinion, but it sought to reaffirm the necessity of a united India. Two months prior to the report, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in *The Bombay Chronicle*:

If religion…in India continues to interfere with everything, then it will not be a mere question of divorcing it from politics, but of divorcing it from life itself...The Congress stands for Indian freedom, the freedom of the entire people of India...the right of every man and woman to have the fullest opportunity for development without any restrictions or barriers of religion, caste, custom or economic privilege (Nehru 2003, 140–141).

However, Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Khalifat Committee rejected the report. A year later in March 1929, Jinnah announced a counter proposal that became known as his
“fourteen points.” Among them, he called for separate electorates following the previously negotiated Lucknow Pact. The Congress, now determined to forge a multiethnic freedom movement, rejected the proposal.

Britain’s disregard of the Nehru Report compelled more radical action from the Congress. At the Lahore session in December 1929, the Congress adopted a resolution now calling for *purna swaraj*, complete independence. It also approved a direct action campaign of civil disobedience, which was to be led by M.K. Gandhi. The salt march was his first act of defiance. The East India Company levied high taxes on salt to enhance its own imports. The tax remained after the British took over in 1858. In March 1930, Gandhi trekked to the sea to illegally gather salt, which he continued to do until his arrest in May. Tens of thousands of Indians followed Gandhi’s lead, defying British Raj law to collect salt.

Gandhi was released from prison in January 1931. Three months later he negotiated the Gandhi-Irwin Pact with Viceroy Lord Irwin. The Congress agreed to end its civil disobedience movement and participate in future conferences regarding constitutional reforms. The British agreed to end restrictions on Congress activity, release prisoners arrested during civil disobedience activity, and remove the salt tax (Wolpert 2008; B. Chandra 1989). The Gandhi-Irwin Pact ended the civil disobedience campaign, whose success failed to fully unify the freedom movement. The pact angered hardliners who argued that Gandhi should have secured the release of violent resistance fighters from British jail before signing. Additionally, the movement failed gain significant
support among Muslims, who were restrained by communal leaders advising non-participation (B. Chandra 1989, 281–282; J. M. Brown 2006).

Existing religious divisions were exacerbated by Britain’s issuance of the “Communal Award,” which institutionalized minority representation through assigned seats for Muslims, Sikhs, and other groups. The Congress rejected separate electorates on the belief that it divided the nationalist movement. Gandhi fasted in opposition. However, the INC had previously accepted communal electorates in the Lucknow Pact and lower caste leaders, such as B.R. Ambedkar, supported the idea because it also provided representation to oppressed caste groups. In the end, Congress continued its opposition to separate electorates but refused to fight the Communal Award without the consent of minority groups.

In 1935, the British promulgated their last constitutional attempt to govern India. The Government of India Act of 1935 granted a high degree of autonomy to the provinces, placed the princely states within an Indian federation, introduced direct elections, and expanded membership in provincial councils (Metcalf and Metcalf 2012). Provincial elections were held two years later in 1937. The Congress swept to power. It won full control of eight of the eleven provinces. The Muslim League attempted to form coalition governments with the INC, but demanded that Congress not nominate any Muslim ministers because it, the Muslim League, should be the sole representative of Muslims. The Congress refused (B. Chandra 1989).

In the wake of the 1937 election, Hindu and Muslim communalists escalated their rhetoric. In a speech at the Muslim League session that same year, Jinnah argued, “…The
The present leadership of the Congress...has been responsible for alienating the Musalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy which is exclusively Hindu...the Musalmans cannot expect any justice or fair-play at their hands.” He continued: “the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus...No settlement with [the] majority community is possible...Muslamans are making a great mistake when they preach unconditional surrender.” The Hindu right, particularly RSS officials, was equally apoplectic and uncompromising. In 1937, V.D Savarkar said that Muslims “want to brand the forehead of Hindudom and other non-Muslim sections in Hindustan with a stamp of...Muslim domination.” (quoted in B. Chandra 1989, 437). In 1939, M.S. Golwalker wrote:

The non-Hindu peoples in Hindustan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture...they must cease to be foreigners, or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment—not even citizen’s rights (quoted in B. Chandra 1989, 437).

With division growing, the British viceroy declared India at war with Germany in 1939 without consulting Congress leadership or the Indian people. Congress leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru believed the Nazis should be resisted, but decided to link their support of the war to a demand for independence (Metcalf and Metcalf 2012). Britain rejected the proposal. In response, Congress leaders refused to support the war and resigned their ministry positions won in 1937. The Muslim League, eager to wrest political power from the Congress, supported Britain’s war effort and took over the newly abandoned ministries.
Communalization and The Two-State Solution: 1939-1946

The World War Two period and the post-war years brought an end to both the British Raj and a united India. In the early 1940s, Muhammad Ali Jinnah began to demand more than just separate electorates for Muslims. At a Muslim League meeting in Lahore in 1940, Jinnah said:

…the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into ‘autonomous nation states’…Muslim India cannot accept any constitution which must necessarily result in a Hindu majority government. Hindus and Muslims brought together under a democratic system forced upon minorities can only mean Hindu raj…Musalmans [in India] are not a minority…Musalmans are a nation.

At Aligarh Muslim University in March 1941, Jinnah argued, “Pakistan is not only a practicable goal but the only goal if you want to save Islam from complete annihilation in this country.” 1940 marked a turning point in Muslim politics. Jinnah and the Muslim League were now fully opposed to attempts at communal unity.

Yet the Congress tried to maintain its multiethnic resistance to British rule. In 1942, M.K. Gandhi directly challenged Jinnah’s belief in communal incompatibility at a Congress meeting:

India is without a doubt the homeland of all the Mussalmans inhabiting this country…The country is fighting on behalf of the whole nation, including the minorities…In the coming revolution, Congress men will sacrifice their lives in order to protect the Mussalman against a Hindu’s attack and vice versa.

Gandhi made this speech one day prior to the launch of the Quit India Movement. This was his third civil disobedience campaign. He and the Congress called on Indians to boycott their schools and jobs. The British quickly arrested Gandhi and put down the
protests. The Muslim League, the Communist Party, and the princely states all opposed the Quit India Movement, which ended by 1943.

By the end of the WWII, India was restless and Britain was exhausted. The Labour Party came to power in England and sought to hasten the end of its colonial outpost in the subcontinent. By 1946, Britain’s policy preference shifted to an independent and united India. However, Jinnah and the Muslim League refused to comply. Communal agitation provoked large-scale Hindu-Muslim riots in Calcutta, killing at least 5,000 (B. Chandra 1989). Growing religious tension and violence pushed British opinion back toward partition. In June 1947, the British Governor-General of India, Lord Mountbatten, announced the upcoming partition of India. On August 14th and 15th, Pakistan and India respectively declared independence.

The communal violence in the months before and after partition distressed Congress leaders, who sought to reclaim the organization’s multiethnic character even amid horrific levels of religious violence. In November 1946, Jawaharlal Nehru harangued a crowd in Bihar during the riots:

You should realize that you have by your conduct reached the stage of animality when nothing but the primal instinct of persevering one’s life works to the exclusion of the rest. No, but you are even worse than animals, as animals at least do not attack in a herd. This is not the standard of a civilized nation. (Nehru 2003, 159)

Just after partition in 1947, M.K. Gandhi proclaimed:

Congress is of all Indians, of all those who inhabit this land, whether they are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs or Parsis…We have to recognize that India does not belong to Hindus alone…[Communal riots and sentiment] will degrade the Congress, degrade your religion and degrade the nation.
From Liberation Movement to Party Politics

The Congress emerged from the Indian independence movement as the dominant force in democratic politics. It enjoyed widespread popularity among Hindu voters and its open dedication to a secular and multiethnic state appealed to Muslims who remained in India. But Congress dominance over Indian electoral politics masked significant levels of religious tension and violence. The INC movement never waivered in its multiethnic character, but Hindu and Muslim chauvinists continued to stoke deeply held ethnic animosity before and after independence. As a result, the Congress Party entered India’s first post-colonial election in 1952 with a large and dedicated—but unstable—multiethnic constituency, which could be easily lured by ethnic parties without careful maintenance.

Colonialism, Resistance, and Multiethnic Politics in Indonesia

Indonesia’s approximately 17,000 islands ensured natural regional and cultural divisions. The arrival of Islam in the thirteenth century constituted a potentially unifying force for the sprawling archipelago, yet differences in Islam’s adoption and interpretation across Indonesia only added a new layer of ethnic segmentation. The anti-Dutch colonial movement cultivated multiethnic sentiment among Indonesians, but the independence struggle was divided along ethnic and ideological lines. Indonesia received independence in 1949 and conducted its first election in 1955. Early secular nationalist leaders were dominant but ethnic factions destabilized the democratic process. By 1957, the secular nationalists abandoned democracy and began decades of authoritarian rule, with first Sukarno and then Suharto, that lasted until 1998. Indonesia’s second democratic election brought multiethnic secular nationalists to power again in 1999. However, despite the
nationalist sentiment that had been fostered in Indonesia since 1949, significant ethnic
divisions remained.

Islam, Colonialism, and Early Multiethnic Nationalism

The ethnic heterogeneity of Indonesia was given a potentially unifying religious
dimension in the thirteenth century. Trade routes facilitated Islam’s spread throughout the
Indonesian archipelago over three centuries through both willing and forced conversion.
Yet the process of assimilation was not equal throughout the country. Some areas, such as
Java, had longer periods of Islamic integration than others. This produced varied Islamic
traditions across country (Ricklefs 2008). Portuguese colonialists arrived in the early
1500s. They gave way to Dutch colonialists during the 1600s. In 1602, competing Dutch
shippers were consolidated into the United East India Company (the VOC), which was
the linchpin of the Dutch effort to control the spice trade. At the same time, Islamic states
were emerging in other parts of Indonesia. Johr and Aceh, both Islamic states, were major
powers. Nevertheless, Muslims were not unified against a common colonial enemy. Aceh
and Johr were as much enemies as allies, often cooperating with the Christian colonialists
(Ricklefs 2008).

By 1910, what would become the Republic of Indonesia was under full control of
the Dutch, who began an aggressive modernizing campaign while repressing opposition.
The three-part geographical division of the archipelago allowed the Netherlands to
control approximately 37 million Indonesians with a colonial army and navy numbering
just under 16,000 (Ricklefs 2008, 189). Under colonial policies, the economic and social
conditions in Java diverged from the outer islands, which featured deeper Islamic faith,
less population expansion, more valuable exports, and less entrenched colonial subjuration (Ricklefs 2008, 197).

The consolidation of Dutch control precipitated the emergence of disparate multiethnic nationalist movements and community organizations. Three streams of nationalism took hold: upper class and western oriented, religious, and radical. Islamic, socialist, and communist organizations and parties began to organize Indonesians against colonial rule. By 1920, the term ‘Indonesia’ began to appear in party statements for the first time (Vickers 2005). However, rather than uniting Indonesia under a common identity, the ethnic basis of these new organizations only illuminated the combative diversity of Indonesian politics.

During the late 1920s and 1930s, a truly multiethnic nationalist identity began to form. Cooperation with the Dutch had been exhausted and a new secular elite emerged as the next generation of Indonesian leadership. In 1927, a young activist named Sukarno founded and chaired a political party called the Indonesian Nationalist Party. Sukarno believed deeply that nationalism and independence from colonialism was the ultimate goal and that the competing ideologies of Islam, Marxism, and secular nationalism should be combined into a multiethnic movement (Ricklefs 2008). Sukarno coordinated the Agreement of Indonesian People's Political Associations, which unified secular, Christian, Muslim, and Chinese organizations in the name of Indonesian nationalism. “Muslims must not forget that capitalism, the enemy of Marxism, is also the enemy of Islam,” Sukarno wrote (quoted in Vickers 2005, 80).
In 1928, a nationalist conference brought these diverse political groups together. The future national anthem, “Indonesia the Great,” was first played and Indonesia was declared one land with one people (Vickers 2005). However, divisions continued within the movement. Secular Muslims were inspired by Iran, Turkey, and Egypt, which were countries that the Islamic organizations refused to emulate. Conservative Muslim leaders disapproved of nationalism, which diminished religion in favor of a European-inspired national model (Ricklefs 2008, 230–233). Dutch colonialists also worked to undermine native political activism, passing a law that banned gatherings of more than four people (C. Brown 2004; Vickers 2005).

**World War Two and Independence**

The Japanese invasion and occupation of Indonesia during World War II ended Dutch control over the archipelago. At first glance, Indonesia had been liberated: the Dutch-named city of Batavia was renamed Jakarta and street names were changed into the local language. But Japanese rule was hardly benevolent. Its occupation divided Indonesia into three administrative zones: Sumatra, Java and Madura, and Kalimantan and East Indonesia. Japan’s goal was to reorganize the Indonesian economy to support the war effort and eliminate any existing western influence from the country. In early 1943, Japan began training Indonesian military forces, youth leagues, and teachers as well as suppressing Islamic organizations in order to reshape Indonesian society (Ricklefs 2008). They encouraged multiethnic nationalism by allowing the use of a national anthem and independence flag. But the Japanese began to lose control. Indigenous resistance movements emerged, which brought new youth and military organizations.
In March 1945, with Allied forces bearing down on Japan, the Japanese created the Investigating Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence. Sukarno, a committee member, pushed his vision for a multiethnic, secular Indonesian state through an ideology called *Pancasila*. To become the official philosophy of independent Indonesia, *Pancasila* laid out five principles: belief in god, nationalism, humanitarianism, social justice, and democracy. To appease Islamic conservatives, the committee approved the Jakarta Charter, which obliged adherents of Islam to carry out Islamic law. The committee then drafted Indonesia's first constitution, which created a unitary state with an exceptionally powerful president.

In August 1945, Japan surrendered to the Allies, who had not yet retaken Indonesia. This left the nation temporarily free from foreign control. Nationalist leaders Muhammad Hatta and Sukarno were hesitant to declare independence, but younger activists forced the issue. On August 17, Sukarno read Indonesia’s declaration of independence before a small audience outside his own home: “We the people of Indonesia hereby declare the independence of Indonesia. Matters concerning the transfer of power, etc., will be carried out in a conscientious manner and as speedily as possible. In the name of the people of Indonesia” (quoted in Ricklefs 2008, 260).

The Allies finally arrived in Indonesia to accept Japanese surrender and reinstate the Dutch regime, but the newly self-proclaimed independent Indonesians began a four-year war against the returning colonial powers. The new government in Jakarta quickly formed a leadership structure around Sukarno and Hatta as president and vice president respectively. The Dutch did not have the military forces to control Indonesia, but internal
divisions and ethnic diversity made the independence movement highly fragmented. For the Indonesian masses, the notion of freedom from foreign dominion was appealing, but there was still no substantive political culture or deep understanding of what democracy and independence actually meant (Hellwig and Tagliacozzo 2009).

Intra-nationalist conflict continued into 1948 as pro-Sukarno forces clashed with communist rebels. Sukarno declared, “My brothers, my people, arise! The insurgents, who lack the patience to await the people's decision at a general election, want to overthrow our government, to destroy our state! Let us shoulder to shoulder destroy these rebels” (quoted in Vickers 2005, 109). The conflict ended with communist militants crushed by the government and its leadership dead or in exile. The action garnered international support from the West for Sukarno’s government, which now appeared to be an ally against communist expansion.

In 1948, the Dutch again attacked nationalist forces. The civilian leadership, including Sukarno and Hatta, surrendered to the Dutch, hoping that international opinion would turn against the aggressive colonial power. Amid guerrilla resistance and international outcry, the Dutch eventually accepted a UN ceasefire in December 1948. The United States linked its foreign aid to the Netherlands with Indonesian independence, which brought the two sides to a conference at the Hague from August to November 1949. The conference concluded with a loose union between the Netherlands and Indonesia: the Dutch queen remained its symbolic head, the Dutch retained sovereignty over Irian Jaya until further negotiations, and the Indonesians accepted Dutch East Indies debt.
On December 27, 1949, the Netherlands formally transferred sovereignty to the Republic of Indonesia. However, the country was still not a cohesive nation. Historian Adrian Vickers writes,

[Indonesia] was not yet unified, the nationalists were still a small minority who had to translate their spirit into the form of a state, based on the myth of common struggle against the Dutch. The legacy of division from the Dutch era, the Japanese occupation and the Revolution was too deep to be overcome by this foundational nationalist myth. It was an imperfect new nation that had been born of the fire of occupation and revolution. (Vickers 2005, 112)

Thus, Sukarno’s multiethnic nationalism was layered over a still deeply fractious Indonesian society, which imperiled the long-term inculcation of national unity.

Indonesia’s First Democratic Period and Collapse

Indonesia’s newly democratic politics was dominated by four main parties, which each took approximately 20 percent of the vote in Indonesia’s first election in 1955. The Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI) won the election with 22 percent. Its constituency was primarily white-collar workers, the bureaucracy, and secular Muslims. The second-place party was Masyumi with 20 percent. With its tenuous alliance between modernist and orthodox Muslims, the party claimed to represent Islamic interests in Indonesia. Another Islamic party, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) took in 18 percent of the vote. Finally, the Communist Party (PKI) won 16 percent of the vote (Feith 1964).

However, democratic elections only hardened ethnic and ideological divisions. The 28 different parties and groups that won seats formed themselves into seventeen factions in the assembly. The three top performing parties—PNI, Masyumi, and NU—formed a ruling coalition in order to exclude PKI. The deeply divided cabinet produced only deadlock. Simultaneously, Islamic militants continued their struggle against the
perceived secular proclivities of Jakarta. Joined by the province of North Sumatra in 1950, Aceh separatists began an open rebellion for independence in 1953. The election also exposed a geopolitical divide: there remained a clear division between Java and the outer islands. Masyumi performed exceptionally well in the outer islands, while the three other parties largely split the Java vote.

Amid ethnic separatism and divided central rule, Sukarno began to discuss publically the concept of “guided democracy,” which could replace “western” democratic procedures and parties with elite-driven, consensual governance. This proposed Java-centered power consolidation led to a revolt among army leaders in the outer islands. With local political support, army officers took control of North Sumatra. As political disarray grew, Sukarno dissolved the cabinet and declared martial law in March 1957; thus ending the brief period of post-colonial parliamentary democracy in Indonesia.

Despite the centrifugal pulls that took hold during this period, a multiethnic Indonesian identity had been created. Nationalism was aided by the continued Dutch control of Irian Jaya, which was extremely unpopular, as well as the legacy of Dutch ‘divide and rule’ policies, which discredited separatism and federalism as “western” (Ricklefs 2008). The abandonment of democracy in Indonesia actually solidified—albeit artificially—a unifying multiethnic sentiment. Sukarno believed deeply in a cohesive Indonesian state that combined secular and Islamic values. Hard-line ethnic fundamentalists opposed this vision. Although the next democratic election would not take place until 1999, Indonesia’s failed democratic experiment managed to create a
common multiethnic identity that would tenuously stabilize society through decades of
dictatorship.

Guided Democracy to the New Order: Multiethnic Identity by Force

Political parties were on the defensive during the Guided Democracy period. Though in opposition to Sukarno’s executive power grab, the parties remained too divided to form a unified defense of the parliamentary system. PNI and NU officials comprised the new cabinet. Masyumi rejected the arrangement while PKI and the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) were fully excluded. The failure of United Nations efforts to end contested Dutch control of Irian Jaya precipitated a spasm of anti-Dutch protest, which was encouraged by Sukarno to enhance his domestic standing.

Nevertheless, regional rebellion continued. Leftist movements challenged government authority in Sumatra and Malaya. In Aceh, a shaky ceasefire held but rebels remained armed. In the face of this unrest, Sukarno further consolidated his power by reinstating the 1945 constitution, which enshrined vast powers in the president. The constitution, which lacked any governmental imperative to implement Islamic law, essentially repealed the Jakarta Charter and infuriated conservative Muslims. Sukarno pushed his concept of “NASAKOM,” a national doctrine that combined communism, nationalism, and religion. He also made great efforts to emphasize Indonesia’s ancient and potentially unifying multiethnic history (Vickers 2005).

7 “NASAKOM” is an acronym combining the Indonesian words for nationalism, religion, and communism.
By 1960, economic chaos befell Indonesia. Sukarno presided over the devaluation of the rupiah and a reduction of the money supply. Simultaneously, the United Nations resolved the Irian Jaya controversy, compelling the Dutch to transfer sovereignty to the UN and then to Indonesia. This eliminated a politically useful issue for Sukarno (Ricklefs 2008). In August 1965, Sukarno formally removed Indonesia from the IMF, Interpol, and the World Bank. As inflation skyrocketed, economic and political chaos destabilized his rule.

On September 30, 1965, military officers executed four generals. The rebelling officers claimed to be protecting Sukarno from the generals, who were said to be plotting a coup. Amid the chaos, an Indonesian general named Suharto took control of the non-rebelling troops and put down the internal revolt, which now called itself the “September 30 Movement.” The event signified a deepening political crisis. The army, arguably the powerful political entity in the country, was in direct conflict with Sukarno and the civilian leadership. In response, Sukarno reversed policies that had empowered the military and aligned with the Communist Party in order to countervail army power.

The abortive coup of September-October 1965 hastened the end of Sukarno’s Guided Democracy. During the period of 1950-1965, social divisions reified around communal rather than class boundaries. In East Java, ethnic tension rose as Islamic NU activists slaughtered communists with the help of the military. In Jakarta, pro and anti-Sukarno youths fought in the streets (Ricklefs 2008). Amid continuing unrest, Suharto convened the parliament in the summer of 1966. Under his control, the parliament banned the PKI and Marxism, stripped Sukarno of his status as “President-for-Life”
(conferred in 1963), and forbid Sukarno from issuing presidential decisions. Sukarno was placed under house arrest and the period of Guided Democracy ended. Suharto took over as “Acting President,” having formal power conferred through rigged elections in 1971.

Suharto and the New Order Regime

Like Sukarno, Suharto was a nationalist who believed in a multiethnic unity through authoritarian tactics. A new electoral law allowed the government to appoint a large percentage of the previously elected representatives, effectively giving the state power the block constitutional amendments. In 1970, the government announced that state employees could not join political parties and were pressured to join Golkar, a joint army-civilian coordinating body. Existing political parties were consolidated into approved—and impotent—opposition parties. Islamic parties were forcibly combined into the United Development Party (PPP) and non-Islamic parties were consolidated within the Indonesian Democratic party (PDI). The New Order had effectively eliminated political parties, which blunted the political importance of demographically growing ethnic minority groups.

By the mid-1970s, Suharto had fully consolidated his one-man rule. Military allies helped crush his opponents while Suharto bought support by distributing state funds to his associates and family. Virulent anti-communist propaganda was used to suppress leftist mobilization. During the “Sacred Five Principles Day,” ceremonies celebrated Suharto and the military’s efforts to ‘save’ the nation from communism. The Museum of Communist Treachery displayed evidence of communism’s alleged perfidious influence (Vickers 2005). In the wake of the Iranian Revolution in 1979, the New Order began to
view Islamic organizations with suspicion. The regime moved to create or exacerbate divisions within the already heterogeneous Islamic community. Power became increasingly centralized in the state, which continued to voice slogans of national unity while rigging elections every five years. The annexation of East Timor in 1976, which was enormously popular, further strengthened Suharto’s rule.

The Sudden Fall of the New Order

The peak of the New Order’s power was from 1976 to 1988. Despite student protests and an abysmal human rights record, Indonesia experienced a rise in its standard of living because of oil export windfalls. This success was accompanied by increased efforts to create ideological homogeneity. In the late 1970s, the government began compulsory citizen indoctrination programs in the state ideology of Pancasila. The government also required all organizations to adopt Pancasila as their official ideology. Despite these efforts, ethnic tension continued to rise. Anti-Chinese riots persisted while calls for Muslim resistance to Pancasila escalated violence.

The end of the Cold War unleashed more ethnic conflict. In Aceh, where large-scale separatist violence had been suppressed since 1982, the Independent Aceh Movement (GAM) attacked military outposts and ratcheted up militant activities. In East Timor, economic and political exploitation by the military, long hidden by the Cold War’s shadow, now came under international scrutiny. The province’s large Catholic population (a legacy of Portuguese colonialism) made East Timorese rights a popular cause: Pope John Paul II came to the area in 1989. Suharto’s relationship with the military was also souring. After his election to a sixth term, the military, which had been
designated seats in the parliament, nominated a sympathetic vice president to protect its interests. Suharto responded by appointing a cabinet led by a military adversary. Behind the scenes, the military began to plan for Suharto’s successor.

With social and political conflict growing, the economy also began to falter. By the early 1990s, Indonesian debt was huge, corruption was driving away foreign investment, and interests rates were high. The government’s large role in the economy exacerbated problems, as corruption and ineptitude only lined the pockets of Suharto’s family. The mid-1990s saw more ethnic conflict: riots spread in East Timor, anti-Chinese and anti-Christian sentiment grew, Dayaks and Madurese immigrants were targeted, and independence demonstrations expanded in Irian Jaya.

In 1997, the Asian financial Crisis ravaged Indonesia’s economy. Indonesia accepted a $43 billion loan from the IMF, but public opinion turned against the regime. Suharto, who suffered a minor stroke in 1997, became more isolated. A turning point arrived when military forces violently suppressed protesting students, who only redoubled their agitation in response. Suharto then called for a period of reform and new elections, but these concessions could not sustain his power (Lloyd and Smith 2001). On May 21, 1998, Suharto transferred power to his vice president, Habibie, in a hastily organized ceremony. In 1999, Indonesia’s second democratic election put the party of Megawati Sukarnoputri, Sukarno’s daughter and an ardent secular nationalist, in power in the parliament. The momentum of the multiethnic nationalist movement had continued to carry its political descendants to power.
From Liberation Movement to Party Politics

Distinct from India and South Africa, Indonesia’s post-colonial democratic period was disrupted by four decades of authoritarian rule. Of the three countries, Indonesia’s nationalist movement was the most divided. Ethnic movements that often combined religion, culture, and region challenged Sukarno’s efforts at Indonesian unity. In the end, the secular nationalists won. But Indonesia’s ideological and ethnic divisions pushed Sukarno and then Suharto toward authoritarian rule. Though Indonesia’s autocratic period allowed multiethnic nationalism to incubate free from divisive elections, it could not fully eliminate the country’s ethnic divisions. Indonesia’s second democratic period began with Sukarno’s nationalist successors winning power, but this hid deeply ingrained ethnic sentiment waiting to emerge.

Apartheid, Resistance, and Multiethnic Politics in South Africa

The African National Congress’s multiethnic character emerged over time. It began as a small and elite organization of black South Africans looking to secure their own interests. The formal implementation of apartheid’s brutal polices in the 1940s expanded the ANC’s membership as well as brought support from a small, radical white community. This generated fractious debate within the liberation movement, which divided over the question of non-black participation. However, the ANC’s guiding document, the Freedom Charter, solidified its multiethnic image in 1955 and began a decades-long resistance to South African racism that included blacks, whites, Indians, and coloureds as well as members from across the political and ideological spectrum. The ANC entered the first post-apartheid election strongly associated with the moderate,
inclusive, and multiethnic message of its leader Nelson Mandela. This propelled the party to a landslide victory in 1994 even while significant inter and intra-ethnic divisions lingered.

The Union of South Africa and the African National Congress

Various African tribes inhabited pre-colonial South Africa until the Dutch East India Company established a colonial outpost in 1652 and imposed centuries of racial social stratification. In 1910, the Union of South Africa was achieved in the aftermath of the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), which expanded indirect British dominion over the formerly Boer republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The newly united white regime used racist laws to restrict African land ownership and movement, force African farmers to become wage laborers for white farmers, and cripple black education.

After diplomatic overtures by black leaders in London failed to stop the repression, the South African Native Nationalist Congress was formed in 1912 (later renamed the African National Congress). Its members were primarily from the black elite: Christian converts, oftentimes educated in European and American universities, and with modernizing ambitions (Dubow 2000). The government passed the Natives’ Land Act in 1913, which mandated that the “native” population could only own land in certain parts of the country. Jan Smuts, a Boer political figure at the time, said, "It has been our ideal to make South Africa a white man's country, but it is not a white man's country yet. It is still a black man's country" (quoted in Holland 1990, 42).

During World War I, the ANC offered its support to the Allied war effort but received a stinging response from London: "the present war is one which has its origins
among the white people of Europe, and the government is anxious to avoid the employment of coloured citizens in warfare against whites" (quoted in Holland 1990, 42). The war effort, though, forced the government to allow blacks into the labor force, which exacerbated racial tension. During this period, the Afrikaner Broederbon was formed as a secret society to promote Afrikaner interests. The early ANC, however, remained inexperienced, split internally, and eager to compromise with the white regime (Meli 1989).

Racial segregation was intended to prevent the movement of blacks to urban centers, but this strategy assumed a strict distinction between rural and urban economies that did not exist. Blacks and whites were economically interdependent and the attempt to separate the two groups sparked strikes and increasing race consciousness. But the ANC played a minimal role in the increasingly radical black politics of the period. More militant movements, including the black liberation ideology of Wellington Buthelezi, overshadowed the quiescent ANC (Dubow 2000). Meanwhile, the Industrial and Commercial Workers’ Union, formed in 1919, signaled early cooperation between white and black workers. However, splits slowly emerged because of persistent racial and ideological tension. Despite pressure from the Soviet Comintern to pursue national liberation, the South African Communist Party (formed in 1921) emphasized class struggle and viewed the early ANC as pusillanimous and compromising (Meli 1989).

The economic decline of the 1920s pushed factories to hire more cheap black labor, causing consternation among whites. An early Communist Party slogan read, "Workers of the World, Fight and Unite for a White South Africa" (quoted in Holland 2000).
Though the communist and Africanist sects within the ANC often pulled the organization is opposing directions, they coalesced at key moments to produce a politically powerful African socialist ideology. The Communist Party-ANC alliance, however tenuous, constituted the only significant multiracial political union in South Africa. Yet in the 1930s, the ANC remained weak. It claimed approximately 1,000 members, which was down from 3,000-4,000 in the 1920s (Holland 1990).

The Formalization of Apartheid and the ANC’s Radicalization

In 1940, Alfred Xuma took over as head of ANC and set out to rebuild its organizational structure. Under his leadership, ANC membership swelled to 4,000 in 1945, women were allowed full membership, and a youth wing was established (Dubow 2000, 40). The ANC published a document called *African Claims*, which sought to apply the Atlantic Charter’s broad principles of international freedom and self-determination to South Africa. This new aggressive tone signaled a shift from its previous approach. Simultaneously, blacks were asserting themselves through squatter movements and labor strikes. Illegal encampments were constructed on land designated for whites only and tens of thousands of black workers struck, often suffering violent police crackdowns. The ANC, though, still played little role in these resistance campaigns and showed only tepid support for them (Dubow 2000). It was too ideologically and organizationally split to seize control of the spreading radicalism, which now included growing Indian militancy.

The newly formed ANC Youth League (ANCYL) pushed the ANC to a more radical approach. It proved an incubator for influential young leaders, including Nelson Mandela. Early ANCYL leaders were split on the inclusion of whites in the liberation
movement. This tension is reflected in the first writings and speeches of the Youth League. At the 1951 ANCYL conference, Mandela argued, “the political immorality, cowardice, and vacillations of the so-called progressives among whites render them utterly useless as a force against fascism.”

The ANCYL’s Basic Policy Document in 1948 defined African nationalism as the creation of a united nation out of heterogeneous tribes and called for freeing Africans from foreign domination. The document claims an inherent and primary African right to the land and argues “in the struggle for freedom, the Africans will be wasting their time and deflecting their forces if they look up to the Europeans (whites), either for inspiration or for help in their political struggle” (quoted in Meli 1989, 114–115). However, the Africanist rhetoric was moderated by conditioned calls for compromise with whites if they abandoned their control of South Africa. "We of the Youth League,” the document reads, “take account of the concrete situation in South Africa and realize that the different racial groups have come to stay. But we insist that a condition for inter-racial peace and progress is the abandonment of white domination..." (quoted in Holland 1990, 68).

The Youth League claimed to profess moderate African nationalism, which sought “inter-racial peace and progress” (quoted in Meli 1989, 116). Nevertheless, the Youth League’s aggressive position reshaped the ANC’s orientation toward confrontational emancipation. In 1948, apartheid became the official policy of South Africa. A year later, the Youth League Program of Action marked a militant departure

---

8 All un-cited quotes from ANC officials and documents in this section come from a compilation of primary source ANC documents (Johns and Davis 1991).
from previous ANC documents, committing the organization to the pursuit of national freedom as well as a campaign of boycotts, strikes, and civil disobedience.

The Freedom Charter and Growing Multiethnic Resistance

The government pursued a policy of violent repression toward any acts of resistance and passed further discriminatory legislation. The 1950 Population Registration Act required that each South African be legally classified according to race. That same year, the Group Areas Act assigned different racial groups to specific urban areas, restricting blacks from living in the developed areas reserved for whites. Additionally, the government implemented the Suppression of Communism Act, which criminalized a wide range of resistance activity. These draconian pieces of legislation precipitated a national stay-away-from-work day on May 1, 1950, which led to violent clashes with the police. A diverse coalition of groups organized this day of protest. The ANC aligned with the African Indian Congress, the African Peoples Organization (a Coloured organization), and the Communist Party to form a multi-racial, ideologically diverse, and regionally disparate “Congress Alliance” that together sought to resist apartheid laws (Dubow 2000).

The unrestrained violence of the police coupled with the government’s growing discrimination against coloureds and communists provided cohesion to an ethnically and ideologically diverse resistance movement. In 1951, the government passed the Bantu Authorities Act, which provided the legal basis for putting black citizens into designated “black African homelands.” The next year, the ANC coordinated the Defiance Campaign, which sought to overturn unjust laws with sustained acts of civil disobedience. With over
8,000 resisters arrested and jailed, the campaign successfully challenged the government and expanded ANC membership, which rose to over 100,000 in the early 1950s.

After 1952, increased government repression put the ANC on the defensive, but its multiethnic character continued to develop. In a 1953 article in the magazine *Liberation*, Mendela wrote, “We of the non-European liberation movement are not racialists….we extend the hand of sincere friendship and brotherly alliance” to whites who reject the apartheid regime. At a 1953 ANC conference, Mandela said, “we have consistently fought against the policy of racial discrimination in favour of a policy which accords fundamental human rights to all, irrespective of race, colour, sex, or language.”

In 1955, the ANC and its supporters issued the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People meeting in Johannesburg. The charter would thereafter form the foundation of the ANC’s multiethnic character. The document proclaimed:

> only a democratic state, based on the will of all the people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief; and therefore, we the people of South Africa, black and white together—equals, countrymen and brothers—adopt the Freedom Charter.  

The conference was sponsored by a multiethnic coalition that included the ANC, the Indian Congress, the Coloured People’s Organization, and the Congress of Democrats (a white political organization). In response to the conference, the government arrested anti-regime activists and charged them with treason. Defending himself in court against these charges, which were ultimately dropped, Mandela reiterated the ANC’s multiethnic approach:

We are not anti-white; we are against white supremacy, and in struggling against white supremacy we have the support of some sections of the European population...It is quite clear that the Congress has consistently preached a policy of race harmony, and we have condemned racialism no matter by whom it is professed. (quoted in Holland 1990, 113)

In a 1956 article in Liberation, Mandela celebrated the ANC’s multiracial resistance:

The democratic struggle in South Africa is conducted by an alliance of various classes and political groups amongst the non-European people supported by white democrats. African, Coloured, and Indian workers and peasants, traders and merchants, students and teachers, doctors and lawyers, and various other classes and groupings [participate].

However, radical elements of the Africanist movement claimed the Freedom Charter and the ANC were corrupted by multiracialism. They opposed the charter’s opening declaration that “South African belongs to all who live in it, black and white" (Dubow 2000). In 1959, Robert Sobukwe formed the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC). More militant than the ANC, the PAC would grow to over 20,000 members during the next decade. As an ethnic challenger, the PAC argued the ANC was a “union of exploiters and the exploited;” “lackeys and flunkeys of the white ruling class, and Indian merchant class;” and led by a “white pseudo-leftist directorate” (quoted in Meli 1989, 138–139; Holland 1990, 116).

ANC leader Walter Susulu responded in an article that PAN’s “fanatical African racialism” will appeal to some, but through activists’ “education in Congress and their experience of the genuine comradeship in the struggle of such organizations as the Congress of Democrats…they rise to the broad, non-racial humanism of our Congress
movement" (quoted in Meli 1989, 139). Reflecting on the movement’s multiethnic strategy decades later, ANC official Ahmed Kathrada wrote:

the Congress movement chose to work with democrats from other race groups in the face of a potentially crippling organisational split, in the form of the Pan-Africanist Congress’ breakaway. This was once more a choice in favour of non-racialism rather than a more narrow, exclusionary path. (Kathrada 2012, 2)

Militarism and Repression

As the resistance movement divided, the apartheid state became more repressive.

During a PAC-organized protest in 1960, thousands of activists gathered outside of a police station in the city of Sharpeville. The panicked police opened fire on the crowd, killing 69 and wounding more than 180. As disorder and instability spread throughout the country, the government outlawed the ANC and the PAC and declared a state of emergency. The banned liberation organizations then went underground. After its demands for a new multiracial constitution were rejected, the ANC formed a military wing, “The Spear of Nation,” under the leadership of Nelson Mandela. The group carried out over 200 small-scale attacks on strategic installations such as pylons, railway lines, and government offices (Dubow 2000). The PAC began an assassination campaign against apartheid officials.

In 1964, Mandela was arrested. He and other ANC officials were tried and convicted of treason at the Rivonia trial. In court, Mandela again outlined his commitment to multiethnic harmony:

Above all we want equal political rights because without them our disability will be permanent. I know this sounds revolutionary to whites in the country, because the majority of voters will be Africans. This makes the white man fear democracy. But this fear cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the only solution which will guarantee racial harmony and freedom for all. It is not true
that the enfranchisement of all will result in racial domination. Political division based on colour is entirely artificial and when it disappears, so will the domination of one colour group by another. The ANC has spent half a century fighting against racialism. When it triumphs, it will not change that policy.\textsuperscript{10}

The ANC’s ban and the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela ended almost all of the organization’s domestic activities. As the government continued to pass new apartheid laws, the ANC now operated primarily abroad. Though the USSR was its primary patron, the ANC was centered in London, where it forged links with liberal and anti-imperial supporters in the UK, Scandinavia, and the United Nations (Dubow 2000). During this period, the ANC adopted a multiethnic membership policy. The Morogoro Conference in Tanzania in 1969 established the rights of whites, coloureds, and Indians to join the ANC and its revolutionary council, though not the ANC national executive. In the same year, Mandela, writing from prison, demanded, “a democratic South Africa free from the evils of colour oppression and where all South Africans, regardless of race or belief, would live together in peace and harmony on a basis of equality.”

The early 1970s saw a rise in ethnic political activity. The Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) emerged as a powerful voice for liberation with a hard-line racial message that excluded whites. Amid intra-black division over tactics, South Africa’s UN Ambassador announced the creation of independent Bantustans at a 1974 United Nations’ meeting. On the home font, black schools were forced to introduce compulsory Afrikaans-training. The new policy sparked the Soweto uprisings in 1976 and 1977,

which brought tens of thousands of students and adults into the streets. The protests exceeded the size and intensity of those in 1960.

Consolidating Multiethnic Resistance and the End of Apartheid

Though the ANC played little role in the Soweto uprising, it endured its exile years well. Despite its moderate instincts, the ANC co-opted more radical BCM members and began to build a persuasive liberation model around the multiethnic Freedom Charter and ANC iconography, songs, and symbols (Dubow 2000, 85). Although still in prison, Mandela continued to promote multiracialism. In an interview with the *Mail on Sunday*, Mandela said, “Businessmen and farmers, white or black, can also join our movement to fight against racial discrimination. It would be a blunder to narrow it.” In the *New York Times Magazine*, Mandela said, “Unlike white people anywhere else in Africa, whites in South Africa belong here—this is their home. We want them to live here with us and to share power with us.”

With racial unity growing, the government attempted to isolate blacks by bringing Indians and coloureds into the parliament. The new “multiracial” constitution created a three-part legislature, including a white House of Assembly with 166 members, a colored House of Representatives with 85 members, and an Indian House of Delegates with 45 members. Many coloured and Indian voters refused to register; of those that did, only 30 percent voted (DeFronzo 2007, 371). Meanwhile, the ANC continued to advocate a multiracial South Africa. Oliver Tambo said in newspaper interview, “We have asked whites to join us in the struggle to get rid of the tensions that come with the apartheid system. We have hoped that we could together build the future nonracial South Africa.”
In 1985, an unprecedented spike in violent protest spread through the country. A state of emergency was declared as inter-racial and intra-black violence escalated. The Zulu-nationalist Inkatha movement fought ANC-backed United Democratic Front supporters in street warfare, killing thousands. The Inkatha claimed 1.7 million members by 1990 and received regime support for its denunciation of the ANC’s violence and socialist ties (DeFronzo 2007, 382). Yet by the late 1980s, the ANC and the Communist Party were enormously popular among the masses. Internationally, South Africa had become a pariah state. Erstwhile supporters in America and Britain—along with the United Nations—increasingly criticized apartheid policies.

Consequently, the regime moved to loosen restrictions. In 1986, the Pass Laws were repealed. Movie theaters, sporting events, restaurants, and hospitals were opened to all races. Speaking at Georgetown University in 1987, Oliver Tambo reiterated the ANC’s multiracialism: “We seek to create a united, democratic, and nonracial society. We have a vision of South Africa in which black and white shall live and work together as equals in conditions of people and prosperity.” At the Commonwealth meeting in Zimbabwe in 1989, ANC leaders renewed their call for a “united, democratic, and nonracial state” in South Africa.

Finally, as pressure mounted, South African President F.W. de Klerk unbanned the ANC, PAC, and SACP and released hundreds of prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, on February 2, 1990. Upon his release from prison, Mandela again declared his inclusive vision for South Africa:

Negotiations on the dismantling of apartheid will have to address the overwhelming demand of our people for a democratic nonracial and unitary South
Africa. We call on our white compatriots to join us in the shaping of a new South Africa. The freedom movement is the political home for you, too.

From Liberation Movement to Party Politics

The ANC entered negotiations with the ruling National Party as a political association with a vibrant organizational network that included widespread multiracial support. Though South Africa’s liberation movement began with essentially exclusively black participation, the ANC shifted to explicitly multiracial appeals after the Freedom Charter in 1955. As David Everatt argues in his study of non-racialism in South Africa: one of “the most consistent threads in the discourse of liberation in South Africa was a commitment to non-racialism” (Everatt 2009, 1). Yet the ANC’s multiethnic character was challenged by racial and tribal national organizations, such as the Pan-Africanist Congress and the Inkatha Movement. These divisions persisted into the post-apartheid period beginning in 1990, but were minimized by the ANC’s dominant position. The ANC easily won election in 1994 behind the charismatic and unifying leadership of Nelson Mandela, whose unimpeachable multiethnic credentials shaped the ANC’s transition from liberation movement to political party. Nevertheless, deep inter and intra-ethnic divisions remained beneath the surface of the newly formed “rainbow nation.”

Conclusion

Liberation from colonialism constitutes a critical juncture in the political history of India, Indonesia, and South Africa. These events provided social unity to countries comprised of disparate and often unconnected ethnic groups and therefore profoundly shaped each country’s politics. Yet ethnic identity was not eliminated. Black and white nationalists in South Africa, Islamic fundamentalists and regional separatists in
Indonesia, and Hindu and Islamic fundamentalists in India continued to operate inside and outside the political sphere: engaging in ethnic conflict with other groups as well as trying to change the multiethnic character of the state. Colonialism and liberation had created a soft path dependence for party politics. Movement-based multiethnic parties entered post-colonial elections with a clear political advantage due to their popularity and organizational strength, but ethnic parties retained a base of electoral support that represented a latent challenge to multiethnic politics.
CHAPTER FOUR: INDIA: THE CONGRESS PARTY AND STRONG MULTINETIC POLITICS

Introduction

India’s post-independence party politics began with the cataclysmic event of partition. The multiethnic character of India’s liberation movement fractured with the separatist demands of Jinnah and the Muslim League and fully broke down with the British decision to divide the subcontinent into two nations: one explicitly Muslim, one implicitly Hindu. Though leaders from the Indian National Congress (INC) remained committed to multi-religious state, communal violence in 1946-1947 spiraled out of control and ultimately killed at least one million people. The implosion of M.K. Gandhi’s dream of a non-violent and unified India portended the rise of communal politics. There were more Muslims in India after partition than were in the newly created Islamic state of Pakistan. This substantial Muslim minority had little reason to trust the goodwill of Indian leaders who, despite their rhetoric, had been unable or unwilling to prevent the slaughter that accompanied partition.

As decades progressed, ethnic riots continued to scar Indian society. Explosions of Hindu rage targeted Sikhs and Muslims, particularly in 1984, 1992, and 2002. On these occasions, a comparatively small spark precipitated a conflagration of violence that engulfed entire cities and killed thousands—oftentimes through extraordinarily brutal means. Islamist militants and terrorists have countered this violence with attacks on
Hindus, Christians, and non-Muslims in Kashmir, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Delhi, and elsewhere. This reciprocal violence works to reify religious divisions in Indian society, which in turn present an opportunity for political actors to mobilize voters with chauvinistic communal appeals.

However, the multi-religious Congress Party has dominated India’s political system. The INC has won ten of the India’s fifteen post-independence national elections, including the last two elections after faltering in the mid-1990s. The party’s election manifests and election rhetoric are secular and inclusive. Though the percentage of Muslims among INC members of parliament has been less than the overall population, it includes more Muslims than any other national party. Even the traditionally Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is the primary opposition party in parliament, has begun to emulate the Congress’s multiethnic appeals. The BJP’s core platform no longer emphasizes religiously polarizing issues.

The Indian case is a remarkably successful example of peacebuilding. Given the persistence of communal conflict, one would expect the political system to be deeply divided along religious lines, with militantly Hindu and Muslim political parties emerging to represent and protect the interests of their communities. Yet the two major parties—the INC and the BJP—largely compete on policy issues during elections. Furthermore, post-election surveys indicate that no religious group gives more than half of its vote to any one political party. Religion is thus strikingly absent from national-level politics despite the constant polarizing simmer of Hindu-Muslim tension that occasionally erupts into widespread violence.
This chapter will empirically demonstrate the multiethnic dimensions of India’s national-level party politics, particularly the multi-religious character of the ruling Congress Party. It will first provide the background of contemporary Indian party politics and relevant political parties. Second, it will outline India’s numerous axes of ethnic identity while also demonstrating the primacy of religious identity. Third, it will use the most recent Indian elections to show the multiethnic character of election manifestos, election rhetoric, candidate selection, and voting behavior.

**Background of Party Politics**

Indian party politics can be divided into three distinct periods. The first period, from 1952-1967, was typified by Congress dominance. The second period, from 1967-1989, saw the steady decline of Congress power, particularly at the state level. The third period, from 1989-present, brought the rise of communal politics as well as the reconsolidation of Congress power in the last two elections (Hasan 2012; Sridharan 2011; Yadav 1999; Dutta 2009). This section provides a brief narrative of post-independence party politics and short introductions to four major political parties.

Indian independence ushered the beginning of the “Congress System,” in which one-party dominance allowed for the pursuit of the Congress’s “goals of secularism and economic development, assuring citizens of equal rights regardless of their caste and religion, and working to end poverty” (Hasan 2012, 2). During this period, the Congress possessed hegemonic power in the party system. It won over 73 percent of the seats in the first three elections (1952, 1957, and 1962) with 45 percent, 47.8 percent, and 44.7 percent of the popular vote respectively. Although failing to achieve 50 percent of the
national vote, the Congress was dominant. In 1952, only five other parties received over 2 percent of the vote: the Socialist Party (10.59), Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (5.79), Communist Party of India (3.29), Bharatiya Jana Sangh (3.06), and the Scheduled Caste Federation (2.38). The 1957 and 1962 elections were similarly lopsided, with Congress outpacing its nearest opponent by 37 percent and 36 percent of the vote respectively.

The second period of Indian party politics began in 1967, which marked a precipitous decline in Congress support at the national and state level. The party lost 78 parliamentary seats in 1967, dropping its total to 283, and its vote share declined to 40.8 percent. Moreover, the Congress lost eight of sixteen state elections. Two years later, the Congress split in half. Indira Gandhi—Jawaharlal Nehru’s daughter—formed Congress(I) after accusing the party of opposing her progressive policies. Morarji Desai led the rump faction of the party, now called Congress(O). Indira Gandhi renewed the party, leading Congress(I) to a landslide win in the 1971 election. However, Indira Gandhi’s authoritarian instincts—displayed in her increasingly domineering role within the party—spilled over into governance. In 1975, she declared a state of emergency after a state court accused her of election fraud and nullified her 1971 election victory.

The Emergency lasted until 1977 and culminated in the Congress’s first national electoral loss. Emergency rule included draconian policies, such as slum clearing, forced sterilization, abuse of political prisoners, and cooptation of media outlets. In 1977, however, Emergency rule ended abruptly.\(^{11}\) The subsequent election was a major turning

\(^{11}\) It is speculated that emergency rule ended because Indira Gandhi’s security services assured her she would win. She also allegedly did not want to let autocratic Pakistan hold
point in Indian history. The Congress lost 198 seats, a decline of 39 percent of its seat share from 1971, and its popular vote dropped 9.2 percent to 34.5 percent. The Janata Party (JP), which was an amalgamation of four opposition parties (the Jana Sangh, Bhartiya Lok Dal, Congress(O), and the Socialist Party), won 41.3 percent of the vote and a majority of the seats. Less than a full term later, the Congress restored itself to power following the disintegration of the fractious JP. The next election in 1984 gave the Congress an emotional landslide victory after Indira Gandhi’s assassination that same year.

The third period of Indian politics, which is ongoing, began with the Congress Party’s second national-level loss in 1989. E. Sridharan argues that the election “signified…a far reaching and seismic shift in the party system, rooted in the shifts in party organizational strength and support bases at the state level in an increasing number of states…” (Sridharan 2011, 123). The 1989 election was the culmination of a decade of rising state-based and communal politics. The “unraveling of the secular fabric” in India began with Sikh separatism in Punjab, which had been facilitated by Indira Gandhi in order to stoke Hindu anger and thus garner Hindu support in north India (Hasan 2012, 11). Years later, fearing a loss of Muslim support, Rajiv Gandhi’s Congress government reversed a supreme court decision that had afforded a Muslim woman divorce payment from her husband, which had enraged conservative Muslims. The 1986 Shah Bano court case in turn alienated hard-line Hindus, who believed the government had placated Muslim social demands. When the BJP led a march to the Uttar Pradesh town of

its scheduled election in 1977 while “democratic” India stayed in emergency rule (Guha 2008, 520)
Ayodhya in 1989 to demand the construction of a Hindu temple in place of a long-existing mosque, the Congress government sat silent. Zoya Hasan writes that the Congress “could not afford to lose the initiative and the Hindu support it was aiming for” and was eager “to harness the political advantages opened by the Ayodhya controversy even if that meant brushing aside secular principles” (Hasan 2012, 20–21).

The 1989 election produced the first of a series of weak governments. The 9th Lok Sabha dissolved 16 months after its formation, bringing the Congress back to power in 1991 as the head of a minority coalition. Outside parliament, the BJP’s religious mobilization finally succeeded in destroying the Ayodhya mosque in 1992, which precipitated mass riots as well as increased support for the BJP. In 1996, the BJP became the largest party in parliament, but could not gather enough partners to hold together a governing coalition. Two years later, the BJP moderated its Hindu nationalist agenda and formed pre-election alliances with state-based parties (Sridharan 2011). This approach gave the BJP victories in 1998 and 1999, and pushed the Congress out of power for a full term for the first time in Indian history.

In 2004, the incumbent National Democratic Alliance, led by the BJP, faced a Congress-led coalition (later named the United Progressive Alliance). The election saw a shift in the Congress’s approach to politics. The party had previously neglected coalition building under the stubborn belief in its national character. This failure to adapt to the centrifugal nature of the Indian party system left the Congress vulnerable to unwieldy—

12 The mosque, called the Babri Masjid, is said to lie over the birthplace of the Hindu avatar Rama. Hindu extremists advocate a temple to be built in its place.
though effective—pre-election coalitions led by the BJP (Sridharan 2011, 127). However, in 2004, the Congress amassed a 19-party coalition against the BJP’s 13-party alliance. Its 2004 win was replicated in 2009, when the UPA again achieved victory with 36.87 percent of the vote.

The electoral recrudescence of the Congress under Sonia Gandhi is attributed to a shift in party strategy. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Congress attempted to champion the Muslim minority while mollifying Hindu chauvinism. But, as Zoya Hasan notes, the Congress efforts “to manipulate the religious sentiments of both communities did not go down well with voters.” In the end, it only helped the BJP, which was better positioned to harness Hindu sentiment during elections (Hasan 2012). The flailing Congress shifted strategies during its victories in 2004 and 2009. The party reasserted its secular credentials, pursued regional alliance partners, and reached out to the Left parties (Hasan 2012, 225).

National-Level Parties

In the 2009 election, the Election Commission of India identified seven “national parties.” However, only two—the Congress and the BJP—have the actual potential to lead coalition governments. The following briefly introduces the history, agenda, and recent electoral performance of the Congress and the BJP as well as two other small national parties: the Communist Party of India and the Bahujan Samaj Party. It also includes the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which is a powerful political organization but not a formal political party.
*Indian National Congress (INC)* – The INC (or the Congress) was formed in 1885 and became an integral part of the Indian independence movement. The party’s platform is center-left and is known for its broadly secular agenda. It dominated early Indian politics, but struggled in the 1990s. It currently leads the incumbent government under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. The party has become increasingly centralized under the leadership of successive descendants of Nehru, whose family has controlled the INC virtually without pause since 1947.

*Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)* – The BJP was the first non-Congress party to lead India for a full term (1999-2004) and remains the leading opposition party in parliament. Its agenda is generally characterized as Hindu nationalist and conservative. It is associated with controversial religious issues, including the Ram Temple and common personal status laws for all religious communities. Its *Hindutva*, or Hindu nationalist, agenda is closely aligned with the conservative Hindu organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The BJP is a descendant of the right-wing Bharatiya Jana Sangh party, which formed in 1951.

*Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)* – The RSS was founded in 1925 to counter both British colonialism and Muslim separatism. Since its founding, the RSS has violently promoted religious nationalism. Its members have been responsible for various violent acts, including the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi and continuing anti-Christian and anti-Muslim riots and terrorist attacks. The RSS and its affiliate, the World Hindu Council (VHP), are closely associated with the BJP though not formally linked.
**Communist Party of India (CPI)** – Established in 1925, the CPI is one of the oldest parties in India. Despite its lengthy history, its highest vote share was only 9.9 percent in the 1962 election. It has not won over 2.8 percent of the vote since 1977. In 2004 and 2009, it achieved 1.3 percent and 1.4 percent of the vote respectively. The CPI fractured in 1964, producing the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)]. The CPI(M)’s hard-left politics have strong support in Kerala, West Bengal, and Tripura. The CPI(M) leads the Left Front coalition in parliament, but itself has received less than 6 percent of the vote since 1998.

**Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)** – The BSP primarily represents Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Castes (OBC), which collectively constitute the lowest rank in India’s socio-economic hierarchy. The party’s stronghold is Uttar Pradesh, which is India’s most populous state. The BSP’s leader, Mayawati, has been chief minister of UP four times in the 1990s and 2000s. Her proclivity for erecting statues in her honor throughout in the state’s capital earned her fame and controversy. In 2004 and 2009, the BSP won 5.3 percent and 6.2 percent of the national vote respectively.

**Ethnic Cleavage Structure and Ethnic Violence**

India’s large Hindu majority constitutes a dominant-majority ethnic structure. However, there is also a high degree of ethnic fractionalization that exists within and outside the Hindu majority. These other axes of ethnic identity include religion, language, state, and caste. India’s diverse social mosaic is rife with violence, but religion is the country’s primary conflict cleavage. For reasons both social and historical, religion has
continuously produced sizeable spasms of communal violence, which are often fomented for political purposes.

Ethnic Cleavages

Religion is the most homogenous ethnic category in India. Approximately 80 percent of the population is Hindu, which, despite varying regional customs, has no major internal schisms. Approximately 13 percent of Indians are Muslim. India’s approximately 177 million Muslims make it the third largest Muslim country in the world (trailing Pakistan by less than one million adherents as of 2013). Though no official demographic data exists, it is estimated that around one-third of India’s Muslims are Shia and two-thirds are Sunni. Christians constitute 2.34 percent of the population and are predominately in south India, particularly in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Sikhs are 1.87 percent of the population, but comprise approximately 60 percent of their historical homeland, Punjab. Approximately 2 percent of Indians belong to some other religion, including Parsis, Buddhists, and Jains.
Figure 2: Population by Religion

Source: (Ministry of Home Affairs 2001); Figure constructed by author.

Given their large majority of the overall population, Hindus constitute the majority in twenty-seven of India’s thirty-six states and union territories. Muslims are larger than their national population percentage in Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, and Assam. They constitute majorities in Jammu and Kashmir and in the tiny island of Lakshadweep. The largest concentrations of Muslims live in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Maharashtra (Sachar Committee 2006, 29).

Language is another major ethnic category in India. Hindi and English are India’s official languages, but each state is afforded the right to adopt its own state-level official language. For example, Tamil, Punjabi, and Marathi are the official languages of the states of Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and Maharashtra. Approximately 42 percent of Indians speak Hindi or its closely linked languages, such as Rajasthani. Approximately 8 percent of the population speaks Bengali, 6 percent speaks Tamil, and 5 percent speaks Urdu. India’s linguistic heterogeneity fractures the subcontinent into strongly held sub-
identities. In early post-independence India, the national leadership placated language-based political movements by reorganizing states along linguistic lines.

Figure 3: Languages Spoken

Source: (Ministry of Home Affairs 2001); Figure constructed by author. *Hindi is a composite category that combines several other languages similar to Hindi, which could be included in the ‘other’ category.

States and union territories represent another important type of ethnic cleavage in India because territorial identity oftentimes overlaps with language and cultural traditions (as well as religion in some cases; for example, Punjab, Punjabi, and Sikhism). The population of India is dispersed widely across the states. The state of Uttar Pradesh has the country’s largest population: at almost 200 million people it holds approximately 16 percent of the population. None of India’s other thirty-four states and union territories possesses over 10 percent of the overall population. Over half of India’s states and union territories hold less than 2 percent of the population each.

Figure 4: National Population Percentage by State
Caste (which in inextricably bound with class) is an omnipresent ethnic cleavage in Indian society, but its impact on social and political behavior is difficult to measure and has decreased over time, particularly in urban areas (Verma 2009; Yadav and Palshikar 2009; Rudolph and Rudolph 1987; Mendelsohn and Vicziany 1998). The Hindu caste system stratifies society around a rigid religio-economic hierarchy. Some scholars argue that the contemporary salience of caste is due to British colonial practices, which used caste categories to understand and organize Indian society (Jodhka 2011). Regardless of its current status, the caste system is derived from ancient Brahminical texts that long pre-date European rule.

There are four caste categories, or *varnas*: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras, as well as the “untouchables” (now called Dalits), who exist outside of the caste system in the lowest position. Within these four categories there are thousands of *jatis*, or
sub-castes. Each varna and jati has an accepted hereditary occupation and intermarriage between castes is traditionally prohibited. However, such caste customs have broken down in many parts of India even while remaining an important identity category.

Counting caste groups in India is complicated. Various sources estimate that Brahmins are approximately 7 percent of the population; Dalits are 20 percent; and Other Backward Castes (economically discriminated castes above the Dalit category) are 50 percent (Guha 2011). Caste divisions also permeate non-Hindu communities, including Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains.

Cleavage Structure

Survey data indicate that crosscutting cleavages divide India’s dominant-majority ethnic structure. In 2004, the national survey asked Indians their level of agreement with the statement: “One should be loyal to our own region first and then to the country.” When broken down by caste, a majority of general caste groups—Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backwards Castes, and Others—“Fully Agree” with the comment. When combined with a category of lesser agreement, over 60 percent of the members of each caste group have greater loyal to their region than to the country.

Similarly, when this question is cross-tabulated with religious groups, over 60 of each Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs more strongly identity with their region than with the country.
Table 2: Agree or disagree, loyal to region first then to the country?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Fully Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Fully Agree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Castes</td>
<td>13.40%</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
<td>12.80%</td>
<td>51.60%</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
<td>5.40%</td>
<td>13.20%</td>
<td>53.30%</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Backward Castes</td>
<td>12.40%</td>
<td>5.20%</td>
<td>13.20%</td>
<td>53.30%</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>19.10%</td>
<td>5.30%</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
<td>52.30%</td>
<td>12.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>13.90%</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
<td>12.20%</td>
<td>54.10%</td>
<td>14.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>16.80%</td>
<td>6.10%</td>
<td>11.40%</td>
<td>50.20%</td>
<td>15.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>13.70%</td>
<td>6.20%</td>
<td>11.60%</td>
<td>57.10%</td>
<td>11.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>21.00%</td>
<td>7.40%</td>
<td>12.70%</td>
<td>47.30%</td>
<td>11.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (CSDS 2004); Table constructed by author.

These data imply strongly held sub-identities. Within the concept of “Indian” there exists numerous potential identities, including caste, religion, language, region, or other categories. These data show that half of all Indians, regardless of caste or religion, strongly identify with their region. Given the social heterogeneity of different regions in India, this suggests that Indians’ identity is multiple and dynamic rather than singular and static.

Ethnic Violence

Despite crosscutting cleavages and multiple identities, which should theoretically mitigate ethnic tension, ethnic conflict is pervasive in India. Caste violence is widespread, but religion is the most violent, divisive, and politically potent cleavage in post-independence India. Large-scale inter-communal violence accompanied Indian independence in 1947 and continues to simmer—occasionally boiling over into ferocious communal riots. India scholar Paul Brass writes:

Hindu-Muslim riots and anti-Muslim pogroms have been endemic in India since Independence. They have occurred and recurred in many cities and towns throughout the country… Their frequency and intensity have fluctuated from time
to time and place to place, but hardly a month passes in India in which a Hindu-Muslim riot does not occur… Indeed, it is likely that not a day passes without many instances of quarrels, fights, and fracases between Hindus and Muslims in different places in India, many of which carry the potential for conversion into large-scale riots in which arson, looting, and killing may take place. (Brass 2003, 6)

Unlike other smaller scale ethnic violence in India, communal riots can kill thousands at a time and often utilize extraordinarily brutal tactics. According to Steven Wilkinson, Hindu-Muslim riots killed approximately 40,000 people between 1950 and 1995 (Wilkinson 2005). The place of Hinduism and Islam in India is intimately tied to the character and identity of the nation. Therefore, the battles between the two communities take on a symbolic significance beyond mere economic or political rivalry. The rest of this section briefly narrates major incidents of communal violence since partition.

Partition

India and Pakistan declared independence on August 15th and 14th respectively, which formalized the British partition of the Indian subcontinent. Widespread communal violence preceded and followed the division of the land. The first major religious riot of the period was the Great Calcutta Killings. In August 1946, the Congress rejected a proposed Muslim state. The Muslim League called for a general strike in protest of the Congress’s action. The strike precipitated a weeklong riot during which at least 4,000 Indians were killed in the streets of Calcutta. By August 1947, one year later, Hindu-Muslim violence exploded with partition. The resulting violence killed an estimated one million people while approximately 15 million Hindus and Muslims migrated across the border, often being attacked and massacred along the way.

1984 Anti-Sikh Riots
The state of Punjab is approximately 60 percent Sikh, who have long chafed under central government control, particularly during the emergency rule of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (1975-1977). In the 1980s, a militant Sikh political movement led by Jarnail Bhindranwale clashed with police and assassinated local officials. Amid the violence, Bhindranwale took refuge in the Golden Temple in Amritsar, which is the holiest site in Sikhism. In June 1984, Indira Gandhi ordered Operation Blue Star, during which the Indian army stormed the temple, killed Bhindranwale as well as hundreds of civilians, and severely damaged the structure. Several months later, two Sikh bodyguards assassinated Indira Gandhi in retaliation for the Amritsar operation. The murder sparked an anti-Sikh pogrom in Delhi, which was aided and coordinated by the police and the ruling Congress Party. An estimated 3,000-10,000 Sikhs were murdered during the four-day riot, often burned alive. Mrs. Gandhi’s son and Congress official, Rajiv Gandhi, said dismissively of the rampage, “When a big tree falls, the earth is bound to shake.”

Babri Masjid Demolition, 1992

The Babri mosque (masjid in Hindi) is located in the city of Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh. Some Hindus believed the four-century old mosque sat on top of the birthplace of the Hindu deity Rama. During the 1989 election, the BJP successfully used the mosque controversy during the campaign, winning its largest-ever vote share. In December 1992, L.K. Advani and other BJP officials again raised the issue, leading a procession of supporters to the mosque in a car fashioned to look like Rama’s mythological chariot. The crowd ultimately descended on the mosque and destroyed it. The mosque’s demolition invoked Muslim outrage and precipitated widespread communal violence.
between Hindus and Muslims. Approximately 2,000 people were killed over several months of sporadic riots in Bombay (now called Mumbai), Ahmadabad, Delhi, and other cities.

Gujarat Riots, 2002

In February 2002, a train fire at the Godhra railway station in Gujarat killed 58 Hindus. Despite numerous commission inquiries, the cause of the fire remains contested (Spodek 2010, 351). Some claim it was a coordinated Muslim attack on the train; others contend the fire started by accident within the train car. At the time, Muslims were blamed. In retaliation, Hindu mobs killed approximately 2,000 Muslims, 13 who were burned, raped, and tortured (T. Sarkar 2002). The attacks spread throughout Gujarat, but were particularly widespread in the city of Ahmedabad. Tens of the thousands of Muslims fled their homes. The complicity of the BJP-controlled state government and its leader, Narendra Modi, in the attacks is contested. However, the National Human Rights Commission surmised that there was “comprehensive failure of the State to protect the Constitutional Rights of the people of Gujarat” (Spodek 2010, 357). Paul Brass bluntly claims that Gujarat was a “systematic pogrom, enacted with precision and extreme brutality” by the RSS and the BJP (Brass 2003, 389).

Other Communal Violence

Post-partition violence has also targeted Christians and Hindus. Christian churches, schools, and cemetaries have been attacked by Hindu nationalist and Muslim

13 The total of number of Muslims killed is contested. Estimates range from as low as 790 to as high as 2,500.
extremist groups. A 1999 Human Rights Watch report describes Hindu nationalist violence against Christians:

Attacks on Christians have ranged from violence against the leadership of the church, including the killing of priests and the raping of nuns, to the physical destruction of Christian institutions, including schools, churches, colleges, and cemeteries. Thousands of Christians have also been forced to convert to Hinduism. (Human Rights Watch 1999)

More recently, Muslims extremists attacked Christian schools in Jammu and Kashmir.\textsuperscript{14} Muslim extremists have also targeted Hindu worshipers and temples. In 2002, suicide bombers twice attacked the Raghunath temple in Jammu and Kashmir, killing and injuring dozens. In 2006, a series of bombings targeted a Hindu temple and other sites in the city. This attack was connected to a Pakistan-based Islamic militant organization also implicated in the Mumbai attack (in 2008) and the Delhi parliament attack (in 2001).

India’s communal violence is closely linked to Partition, which indelibly scarred the nation and created a core religious schism that continues to plague Indian society. Communal animosity and violence appears at different times both primordial and constructed. The violence spans religious cleavages, but the most brutal and common incidents are between Hindus and Muslims. Paul Brass argues religious violence began at “a terrifyingly precise moment in modern Indian history, that is, the partition, which stands for most…Hindus…as the historical scar that not only divided the subcontinent but defied the truth they had fought for as their rightful heritage: the unity of India”

(Brass 2003, 383). He concludes that Partition is “the first catastrophe of the historical consciousness in modern South Asia” and that many Hindus see the Muslim population in India as a symbol of future partitions (Brass 2003, 383–384).

Ragini Sen and Wolfgang Wagner argue that for “Hindus and Muslims in India, historical events and derivative interpretations” are validated by and depend on “the respective antagonistic representation of the other group” (Sen and Wagner 2009, 302). They argue further that religion has become an ideology rather than a faith system in India. When this shift occurs, “issues related to identity and selfhood become so fissile that, if torched, they subsume individual rationality” (Sen and Wagner 2009, 320).

The long history of religious violence makes the Hindu-Muslim divide India’s primary conflict cleavage. This schism between the dominant majority and minority creates the strong potential for ethnic parties and ethnic outbidding strategies. However, as the following section shows, Indian party politics remains strongly secular and multiethnic. This is true of not only the ruling Congress Party, but also of the BJP, which has significantly moderated its public image since its early campaigns.

**Religion and Party Politics**

India scholars have extensively studied the connection between politics and religion, in particular the connection between elections, riots, and political mobilization. This section briefly summarizes several studies that illuminate the importance of religion, identity, and history to India’s contemporary political processes.

Paul Brass argues that the persistence of communal riots is deeply intertwined with the democratic political process. The extreme heterogeneity of India presents a
unique challenge to nation-level parties, which need a plurality of the vote in any given district to win. One route to a plurality is to emphasize India’s largest common identity: religion. This can be achieved by fomenting communal violence. Brass claims that in order to simplify India’s “unparalleled heterogeneity” and “to create solid voting blocs in succeeding elections” political parties consolidate and mobilize religious groups into conflict (Brass 2003, 43). Riots are effective political tools because they foster increased communal solidarity and polarization, which in turn are promoted by political parties and/or individual candidates who stand to benefit from such solidarity and polarization. The resultant communalization and polarization in turn reduce the electoral prospects of parties and candidates who stand for secular political practices, intercommunal cooperation, and class or caste/baradari mobilization rather than communal mobilization (Brass 2003, 220).

Brass generalizes succinctly that in India "riots are a continuation of politics by other means" (Brass 1974, 265). In his in-depth study of the Indian city Aligarh, Brass finds that religious riots are “implicated deeply in the political process, including both electoral politics and the politics of mass mobilization” (Brass 2003, 231).

Brass’s analysis is confirmed by another fine-grained study of a city in Uttar Pradesh called Bijnor, which experienced intense communal riots in 1990 that killed approximately 300 people. Amrita Basu finds that anti-Muslim sentiment spiked amid the first phrase of the Babri Masjid campaign. Hindu groups attacked Muslims on the street and chanted, “There are two places where Muslims belong: Pakistan and the graveyard” (Basu 1994, 2610). Basu argues that the BJP plays a “double game” during which it seeks to demonstrate its moderation by distancing itself from militant Hindu groups while simultaneously relying on these groups “to cultivate the anti-Muslim fervour which is critical to building a Hindu electoral constituency.” Basu concludes that the BJP tries to
channel the Indian public’s general ambivalence toward the state into alienation toward the government’s supposed appeasement of Muslims (Basu 1994, 2616).

Christophe Jaffrelot (Jaffrelot 2011) also analyzes the nexus between religious processions, riots, and electoral politics. He argues that processions become more violent when linked with local power politics. Jaffrelot identifies a pattern of procession-based riots that have emerged for electoral reasons, which date back to at least the 1920s. However, these riots have become more important since the 1970s as communal tension grew alongside a decline in Congress power, which opened up contested political space. The BJP’s electoral success following the Babri Masjid demolition confirmed the party’s belief “that communal riots tend to polarize the electorate in such a way that the Hindu majority, feeling 'more Hindu', would be more inclined to vote for the BJP” (Jaffrelot 2011, 361).

The rise of the BJP cannot be disconnected from the power of the Hindu social organizations that support the party, particularly the RSS and the World Hindu Organization (VHP). Thomas Hansen (Hansen 1999) writes that the BJP borrows its ideology from the Sangh Parivar (the conglomerate of Hindu nationalist organizations, which includes the RSS and VHP), which stopped the party’s early efforts to reach out to Muslims. The BJP’s rhetoric began to parrot long-standing Hindu nationalist attacks on Muslims and the Congress Party, using language such as pseudo-secular, pampering and appeasing minorities, and foreign infiltration. This anti-Muslim ideology is deeply linked, argues Hansen, to cultural insecurity among Hindu nationalists who believe Hinduism has been historically weak, humiliated, and decentralized. The Babri Masjid campaign
was thus an effort to foment a political and cultural movement around the Hindu deity Ram, which would provide strength through centralized unity.

Martha Nussbaum’s study of Hindu nationalism comes to a similar conclusion. She explains the Hindu Right’s promotion of violence as “people who see themselves as having been humiliated and emasculated by conquest are inclined to turn to thoughts of purity and a cleansing by violence to wipe away the stain” (Nussbaum 2007, 6). This violence in turn feeds religious divides that aid the BJP. Nussbaum writes:

The Hindu right has succeeded all too well in getting many lower-caste Hindus to put religion ahead of caste and class, and to fear as their enemies not the wealthy and upper-caste Hindus who have long oppressed them, but the Muslims who in most cases share their impoverished lifestyle. (Nussbaum 2007, 21)

Employing a social-psychological lens, Ragini Sen and Wolfgang Wagner argue that since independence/Partition, the Hindu right wing, including the RSS, VHP, and BJP, has engaged in a concerted effort to diminish the influence of Gandhian non-violent philosophy in politics. “In contemporary India,” they write, “due to an upsurge in Hindu fundamentalism, the image of Gandhi has undergone a radical transformation among a growing number of Hindus” (Sen and Wagner 2009, 308). By recasting Gandhi as effete and effeminate, Hindu fundamentalists claim that India is a Hindu nation and that Hinduism is superior to all other faiths (Sen and Wagner 2009, 309). Sen and Wagner argue that fundamentalists have successfully redefined what constitutes religion and nationalism. They conclude:

through the manipulation of cultural symbolism, collective controversy and group-related feelings of impunity, violence is allowed to be committed without feelings of personal guilt. Once identity shifts have taken place and ideology replaces faith, a new ethnic order may emerge. (Sen and Wagner 2009, 322)
In his analysis of the 2002 riots in Gujarat, historian Howard Spodek argues the BJP’s leadership made “strategic decisions on the value of violence in its election campaigning, sometimes finding violence useful in building majorities…” He argues that the “BJP leadership felt that the charge of Muslim terrorism, followed by ‘teaching them a lesson’, would inflame the Hindu masses and lead them to vote for the BJP as the party that could protect them” (Spodek 2010, 359). Indeed, the BJP called for early elections shortly after the worst of the riots and won a large victory. Spodek concludes that Modi “accepted the use of violence for its electoral value” and “the BJP leadership knew this and approved” (Spodek 2010, 363). This corresponds with Steven Wilkinson’s theory of violence and voting in India, which shows that when the party in power does not rely on minority votes, it has little incentive to stop ethnic violence—indeed, it has incentive to cultivate it (Wilkinson 2004).

The BJP’s election strategy harnessed primordial canards linked to Partition mythology. Historian Tanika Sarkar summarizes the BJP’s public explanation of the riots: “[the train burning] led to a spontaneous outburst from all Hindus, [and] Muslims have never lived in peace with non-Muslims anywhere in the world” (T. Sarkar 2002, 2873). Framing the violence and subsequent election around historically and biologically rooted antagonism attempted to organize the electorate around communal poles, which is to the BJP’s clear advantage. Ward Berenschot’s study of the Gujarat riot finds it was a planned and organized event, which indicates that there were politicians who perceived “communal conflict to be advantageous” (Berenschot 2012, 8).
It is clear that at the state and local level religion can play an important role in mobilization and voting behavior. Paul Brass describes Indian politics as, in part, “the capture of power through scapegoating and intimidation of others, rather than persuasion of voters on issues of public policy.” The strategy, he concludes, is “to consolidate the votes of one ethnic/religious group by portraying another as a dangerous threat and...by blaming the violence upon the victimized group” (Brass 2003, 231). Human Rights Watch identifies a similar trend in Indian politics: There is “a concerted campaign of right-wing Hindu organizations...to promote and exploit communal tensions to stay in power—a movement that is supported at the local level by militant groups who operate with impunity” (Human Rights Watch 1999).

Religion in the 2009 Election

Despite the close interconnection between religion, riots, and politics in specific instances, its impact on national-level elections remains isolated and weak. Using the most recent Lok Sabha elections in 2004 and 2009, this section analyzes the manifestos of the BJP and the INC, the rhetoric used during campaigns, and patterns in religious-group voting. It finds that although the BJP used more ethnic language than the Congress, both parties employed broadly inclusive, multiethnic rhetoric during election campaigns. Additionally, there was no connection between religious identity and voting behavior among Indians. This section also examines the religious composition of each Lok Sabha since its first democratic election in 1952. This original dataset shows that although Muslims have been consistently underrepresented in the parliament, the Congress Party includes more Muslims MPs than any other party.
The 2009 election featured the incumbent Congress Party alliance against the Bharatiya Janata Party alliance, which the Congress had displaced in 2004. Both election manifestos are dense with policy proposals and include forceful attacks against the other party. These two “All-India” parties recognize that, despite the importance of regional and state political alliances, national-level politics remains a two-player contest. In 2009, the INC presented an agenda that was typical of its history: emphasizing secularism and state-led development (INC 2009). Interestingly, the BJP largely mimicked the INC’s platform. Its more controversial positions, such as building the Ram Temple, were tempered with equivocal language and buried deep into its long manifesto (BJP 2009).

The INC’s 2009 election manifesto was expansive in scope. The preface begins with a pledge “to continue our work to ensure a life of SECURITY, DIGNITY AND PROSPERITY” (emphasis in original). It lays out the party’s core values of “secularism, nationalism, social justice, and economic growth for all, especially for the aam admi (common man).” It asserts that the INC is the “only party” that believes economic growth, communal harmony, and social justice “must always go hand-in-hand.” It then lauds the contributions of past INC leaders M.K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru for freeing India from colonialism and establishing the modern Indian nation-state respectively. Acknowledging the fractionalized nature of India’s party politics, the manifesto claims that the INC is the only party with an “All-India perspective” and “All-India presence.”

The document then directly addressed the INC’s principal rival, the BJP. The INC “has always been in the forefront of the battle against those forces that seek to divide and
fragment our society,” it reads. The INC, its drafters wrote, is a “bulwark” against communalism, linguistic chauvinism, regional parochialism, and casteism. The INC promotes “secular and liberal nationalism,” celebrates “India’s many diversities,” and practices “the politics of consensus and cooperation.” The manifesto contrasts this approach with the BJP, which, it argues, promotes “narrow and communal nationalism,” seeks “to impose an artificial uniformity on our people,” and practices the “politics of divisiveness and discord.” The Third Front’s Leftist parties are also tarred for having “actively aligned with the BJP in the past.” The INC’s “middle path” to social, economic, and foreign policy is superior to the “religious polarization that is intrinsic to the BJP.”

The INC’s manifesto also trumpeted the accomplishments of the party’s previous term in office from 2004-2009. Its economic achievements included the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which guaranteed employment to every rural household through public works projects; strengthening infrastructure in rural and urban India; increasing loan waivers and reducing interest rates for farmers; expanding economic growth; and ensuring the transfer of adequate central funds to state-run development programs and projects. The party’s social achievements included improving the quality and accessibility of healthcare in villages; giving Scheduled Tribes (ST) land to cultivate; providing reservations for Other Backward Caste (OBC) students in professional institutions; and implementing a meal program for poor school children. The manifesto also cited The Right to Information Act, which enabled citizens “to demand responsiveness and accountability from public officials.” Finally, it extolled India’s “new
respect and stature internationally,” stemming from the US-India nuclear deal, as well as the party’s effort to combat foreign terrorism and internal strife.

The INC’s agenda for the future depended mostly on expanding and strengthening the policies of the previous term within three core areas: security, prosperity, and dignity. Within the theme of security, the INC promised zero tolerance for terrorism, high levels of defense preparedness, police reforms, and human security measures including guaranteed access to healthcare, social security, and food security. The prosperity agenda featured improved education, skill-development, rural welfare, and employment opportunities. Finally, within the theme of dignity, the manifesto calls for the empowerment of women, Other Backward Castes, scheduled castes and tribes, and minorities as well as a special focus on the girl child. The manifesto also declares the party’s intent to improve “the social, economic and educational status of the Muslim community” and “combat communalism of all kinds.”

The BJP’s 2009 manifesto, titled “Good Governance, Development, Security,” was more than twice as long as the INC’s. It begins with a five-page narration of India’s historic greatness and the perfidy of the West. “Indian civilization,” it starts, “is perhaps the most ancient and continuing civilization of the world,” but it has lost its pride because of “continued foreign attacks and alien rule for centuries.” India’s “civilizational consciousness” was abandoned by the independence movement, which “tried to emulate whatever was being practiced” in the West. This resulted in a “fractured society, vast economic disparities, terrorism and communal conflict, insecurity, moral, psychological and spiritual degradation, and a state apparatus unable to handle any of these problems.”
The manifesto claims that India’s civilization is founded in a “Hindu world view,” which is “holistic,” “inclusive,” and “seeks unity in diversity” because “Hindus are well known for their belief in harmony of religions.” Because of this, the document argues, India should not “blindly copy this or that model of development,” but should rather seek a model suited to “its genius and resources.” It concludes, “the BJP is committed to work for creating a modern, powerful, prosperous, progressive and secure India.”

The manifesto next outlined a strong critique of Congress leadership. It argues that the “weakest Prime Minister the country has ever had” reversed (BJP-led) National Democratic Alliance polices, which led to “repeated terrorist attacks, Maoist insurgency and separatist violence…inflation, job losses and lockouts…[and] corruption.” The National Rural Employment Guarantee Program has failed, it states, because 55 million new people live below the poverty line. Additionally, thousands of farmers committed suicide to escape their debt burdens. L.K. Advani, the BJP’s prime ministerial candidate, can solve this leadership crisis, the document claims, because he is “one of the chief crusaders for democracy during the Emergency” and led the Ayodhya movement, which “initiated a powerful debate on cultural nationalism and the true meaning of secularism.”

The 49-page manifesto laid out an extensive policy agenda. It begins by blaming the “effete UPA government” for dismantling existing anti-terrorism laws and thus perpetuating terrorism. Additionally, the armed forces must be “strengthened” after being ignored by the Congress government. In social policy, the BJP proposed to expand food provision to the poor, improve urban infrastructure, lower interest rates on farmer loans, and ensure education for all. In order to revive the national economy, the BJP promised
to lower taxes and interest rates, make large public sector investments, enhance the manufacturing sector, and boost tourism. The BJP also declared its commitment to “empower women” through representation quotas and provide tangible development to OBCs and Dalits.

The party’s more controversial agenda was left for the last 10 pages. In the section titled “Minority Communities: Healthy Diet of Development,” it states, “The BJP repudiates the division of Indian society along communal lines which has been fostered by the Congress and the Left in pursuit of their vote-bank politics.” This “perpetuates notions of imagined discrimination and victimhood” and impedes “a common Indian identity that transcends community, caste and gender.” Muslims remain underprivileged, it argues, because the Congress has “secured minority support through the politics of fear.” Instead, the BJP proposes education and development programs targeted specifically at girls. The final sections argue that the status of Jammu and Kashmir is “non-negotiable,” that Article 370, which grants autonomous status to Jammu and Kashmir, should be abrogated; that the “possibility” of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya should be “explored;” and a legal framework for cow protection should be created.

The summaries above exclude myriad issues addressed in the respective election manifests, but they present the core agenda of each party in 2009. On economic, social, and foreign policy, the BJP and the Congress were broadly similar. Although specifics varied, both parties identified similar problems and advocated similar prescriptions. Neither was hesitant to promote state-led development and anti-poverty programs, which dominated both parties’ agenda. The Congress aggressively framed the BJP as
communal; a charge met with counter-claims of ‘vote-bank politics’. Interestingly, the BJP appeared to downplay its controversial positions while making explicitly inclusive statements. CP Thakur, a BJP member of the Rajya Sabha, rejects the INC’s criticisms. He argues his party “looks after the interests of everyone: Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, and Hindus.” Given the BJP’s rise to prominence and power on a Hindutva agenda, its now stridently non-ideological platform is striking.

2009 Campaign Rhetoric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral

In order to assess the ethnic rhetoric of India’s party politics during the 2009 election, focusing in particular on the INC and the BJP, 440 campaign statements were drawn from The Hindu (215 statements) and The Indian Express (225 statements). Following Kanchan Chandra’s content analysis of Indian elections (K. Chandra 2007), these two newspapers were chosen both for their quality of reporting as well as geographical dispersion: The Hindu is headquartered in the southern city of Chennai, Tamil Nadu; The Indian Express is headquartered in the northern capital city of New Delhi. Although both papers cover national politics, their coverage often focuses on their respective regions. Using these papers together provided a high-quality overview of the campaign throughout the country.

The analysis collected statements from twenty-six parties in twenty-one states and union territories. The statements were made between April 10 and April 15 prior to

---

first phase of the election on April 16 and between April 25 and April 28 before the third phase of the election on April 30. India holds its elections over four phases to better manage electioneering. Each phase includes districts in most states. Two non-consecutive phases were chosen to account for any potential change in a party’s rhetorical strategy after the first round of elections were held.

In order to assess bridging, bonding, and neutral rhetoric in the Indian setting, the traditional religious constituency of each party—in particular the INC and the BJP—had to be determined. This analysis treats Hindus as the traditional constituency of the INC, the BJP, and all other national-level parties. No party at the national-level is explicitly or historically tied to the Muslim community. The INC led the liberation movement that culminated in the creation of Muslim Pakistan and multi-religious—though implicitly Hindu—India. The BJP has strong connections to Hindu nationalist organizations, such as the RSS and VHP, and is historically associated with anti-Muslim policies and actions. Therefore, it is logical to identify Hindus as the traditional constituency for both parties and, by extension, to call any rhetoric by either party designed to mobilize Hindu voters as “bonding” and rhetoric to mobilize Muslims as “bridging.”


17 Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal
For example, INC and the BJP’s bonding rhetoric could include references to the constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir (article 370), construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the religious civil code, or accusations of religious favoritism.

Bridging rhetoric includes references to inclusion, secularism, specific religious minority issues, or the religious exclusivity of another party. Neutral rhetoric focuses on non-religious issues such as development, employment, corruption, or economic policy. Caste issues and terrorism are both considered neutral. Caste, though inherently Hindu, is in fact cross-communal and is discussed in an economic not theological context during elections. Similarly, terrorism is discussed from a security perspective and includes Naxalite and separatist attacks not just Islamic militant groups. The following case-specific rubric was used for this content analysis:

Table 3: Coding Rubric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to religious groups</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Inclusion</td>
<td>-Unity between religions</td>
<td>-Division/Separation -Us versus Them</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to party or other parties</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-We are multi-religious/they are not multi-religious</td>
<td>-We represent interests of the traditional religious base -Other party can’t/doesn’t represent our traditional religious base</td>
<td>Other party bad on service delivery or governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to specific policy issue</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive reference to a policy issue that is uniquely important to a non-traditional religious base</td>
<td>Positive reference to a policy that is uniquely important to party’s traditional religious base/Only benefits religious base</td>
<td>Reference to policy that is relevant across religious groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The content analysis shows the language of Indian politics is strongly policy oriented and thus implicitly multi-religious. Among the twenty-six parties included in the sample, 4.10 percent of the rhetoric is bonding, 9.60 percent is bridging, and 86.30 percent is neutral. BJP statements constituted 95 percent of the bonding rhetoric. However, of the 132 BJP statements coded, only 12.9 percent were bonding. Its rhetoric broadly matches the tenor of party politics in general: 81.8 percent of the BJP’s statements were neutral and 5.30 percent were bridging. Of the 161 INC statements coded, none were bonding, 12.4 percent were bridging, and 87.6 percent were neutral.

Figure 5: Religious Party Rhetoric, Election 2009

Indian National Congress – Over 85 percent of the INC’s rhetoric in 2009 focused on neutral policy issues. A large portion of these issues surrounded the topic of development and economic policy. The INC emphasized that states failed to distribute or embezzled centrally provided development funds. In Kerala, Congress General Secretary Rahul Gandhi accused the Left Democratic Front government of delaying various center-
sponsored schemes, including a pollution abatement plan, calling the Left’s rule “anti-
people.” At a rally in Madhya Pradesh, INC President Sonia Gandhi accused BJP state
governments of not using the central funds allocated to them. In Uttar Pradesh, Rahul
Gandhi told a rally, “we sent Rs 165 crore to the state Government but nothing reached
the poor and Dalits. There is a big elephant in Lucknow which eats up everything,”
referring to then-Chief Minister Mayawati of the BSP. Mocking the BJP’s 2004 “India
Shining” slogan, INC minister Anand Sharma summed up the party’s development
approach: it is “clear that India was shining only for a selected few under the NDA
regime. We wish to take development to the poor.” More broadly, campaigners praised
Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the UPA government’s economic policies for
limiting the harm of the global recession and fostering distributive growth.

Issues of poverty, unemployment, and service delivery also dominated the INC’s
neutral rhetoric. In Kerala, Rahul Gandhi trumpeted the National Rural Employment
Guarantee Programme (NREGA), which he called “the most progressive programme
implemented by the UPA,” which “guaranteed employment to one person from each

18 “State ignoring repatriates: Rahul,” The Hindu, April 14, 2009
19 “Sonia questions BJP’s ‘nation first’ claim,” The Hindu, April 15, 2009
20 Maulshree Seth, “Visit to Dalit homes: Rahul counters BSP,” The Indian Express,
April 28, 2009
21 “There is no entity as the Third Front: Congress,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.
22 “Rahul harps on Centre’s pro-poor policies,” The Hindu, April 14, 2009; Ravish Tiwari
and Amitabh Sinha, “Regional parties are a reality, PM never discounted their
relevance,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.
family for 100 days a year.” Targeting farmers, the INC promised loan waivers for rice, and expanded electricity. The INC also used these issues to critique state governments. In West Bengal, Rahul Gandhi argued that poor educational and health facilities symbolized the failure of the Left government. The “UPA government was the government of poor, downtrodden and Dalits,” Rahul Gandhi told one rally. At a different public event, he criticized the BJP’s close ties to business: “The BJP-led Gujarat Government has given financial assistance to Tata for its Nano car project, while they have not provided any aid to the tribals, farmers or poor people.”

Terrorism and security is another neutral issue that received much attention from the Congress Party. Deflecting BJP attacks, the INC criticized the BJP government’s choice to negotiate with terrorists during its 1999-2004 term. In Arunachal Pradesh, Sonia Gandhi questioned the BJP/NDA government’s decision to allow a terrorist to be “released and escorted as a guest to Afghanistan” from where “he went to Pakistan and

23 “UPA has kept its promise: Rahul Gandhi,” *The Hindu*, April 14, 2009


25 “Old party, old views: Rahul on Left,” *The Indian Express*, April 25, 2009


27 “Congress is for poor, BJP for rich: Rahul,” *The Indian Express*, April 28, 2009.
planned attacks against India, including attacks on the Indian Parliament.”

Questioning L.K. Advani’s role in the terrorist release, Rahul Gandhi asked:

Was it a fact that Mr. Advani did not know about the plan to release three hardcore terrorists who were to be escorted to Kandahar by the then External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh or did the former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee not take him into confidence?

In Chandigarh, INC candidate Pawan Kumar Bansal unfavorably compared the BJP’s record on terrorism with that of Congress, saying that the Congress-led UPA government was “alert enough to nab the Mumbai attack accused alive” and then “to pressurize Pakistan into admitting that the terrorist is a Pakistan citizen.”

The content analysis found that 12.4 percent of the INC’s rhetoric was bridging. The party’s bridging statements called the BJP a communal party, which appeals in part (if not mostly) to Muslim voters, and promoted secularism and inclusion. Sonia Gandhi, at a rally in Meghalaya, said the politics of the BJP “is based on the policy of purely creating hatred among people of different faiths and communities; they are controlled by fundamentalist and communal forces.” She claimed later that the BJP was “remote controlled” by the extremist RSS. At a press conference, Rahul Gandhi proclaimed that


30 “Gurdwara committees express solidarity with Cong,” The Indian Express, April 27, 2009.


32 “PM debate roiling BJP now, Cong calls Advani Modi’s mask,” The Indian Express, April 28, 2009.
the “Babri Masjid was broken by the politics of BJP and politics of division.”

Also invoking the Babri mosque demolition, Prime Minister Singh, at a rally in Gujarat, said, “Whatever had happened in 2002 in the state was the handiwork of a handful of persons and against the proud traditions of Gujarat.”

Campaigning for the INC, Sharad Pawar said the "BJP remembers Lord Ram only during elections and sends him on "vanvas" (exile) after that.”

The INC also promoted a vision of inclusive government for all Indians. “Internal unity is a must,” said Congress minister Anand Sharma, “which only the Congress—as the only pan-Indian party—can provide.”

At a rally in Arunachal Pradesh, Sonia Gandhi claimed the Congress was the only party that could provide a strong, stable, and secure government and protect the democratic and secular values in the country.

In Gujarat, Prime Minister Singh said, “parties that promote communalism are actually doing a disservice to the Father of the Nation.”

At the same rally, Prime Minister Singh linked the economy with inclusion: “no alternative other than secularism for the growth

Sources:

33 “I’m not ready to be PM: Rahul Gandhi,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.

34 “PM debate roiling BJP now, Cong calls Advani Modi’s mask,” The Indian Express, April 28, 2009.

35 “BJP remembers Ram only during elections: Pawar,” The Indian Express, April 28, 2009.

36 “There is no entity as the Third Front: Congress,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.


and development of the nation,” he said. Appealing to Sikhs in Punjab, Rahul Gandhi called Prime Minister Singh the “lion of Punjab” and said the prime minister was the pride of Sikhs, Punjab, and the nation. 39

The BJP – The BJP’s rhetoric was similarly policy focused. In fact, the BJP and INC largely mimicked each other’s policy positions. The party’s neutral rhetoric in 2009 constituted over 80 percent of its election appeals, which was approximately 5 percent lower than all parties combined and 6 percent lower than the INC. Much of the BJP’s neutral rhetoric emphasized issues of development and economic policy. BJP campaigners presented the BJP-led state of Gujarat as exemplary of the party’s economic policy. “Gujarat is the model state where development has taken place,” said MP candidate Arun Jaitley. BJP leaders used Gujarat’s success to predict a better development future for other states, if elected. Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi said a BJP-led government would focus on the comprehensive development of Karnataka. 40 At a rally in Buxar, BJP leader L.K. Advani said, “We will ensure giving special status to Bihar for further pacing up the development works.” 41 In West Bengal, BJP official Jaswant Singh argued that the Left Front government “has so crippling undermined the development of Darjeeling.” 42 Leveling a broader economic critique, a


40 Karnataka Bureau, “Have same party rule at Centre, State,” The Hindu, April 10, 2009

41 “Nitish backs Advani,” The Hindu, April 11, 2009

42 Marcus Dam, “Jaswant promises to take up Gorkhaland with Centre,” The Hindu, April 11, 2009
BJP spokesperson stated, "Congress and the Prime Minister must first explain why it allowed the economy to deteriorate for 1,826 days (during UPA rule)". The BJP also emphasized terrorism and domestic security on the campaign trail.

In Gujarat, Narendra Modi declared, “Terrorism and Modi cannot coexist in the country. There will be either terrorism or Modi.” The BJP candidate in Delhi, Jagdish Mukhi, said he would ensure terrorism and internal security “get top priority.” In Uttar Pradesh, Modi said the UPA had failed to stamp out the menace of terrorism. The BJP’s criticism of the UPA’s handling of terrorism was done in conjunction with a defense of its own past actions. Yashwant Sinha, a former minister in the NDA government, said the BJP’s decision to exchange terrorists for hostages was done under tremendous pressure and was “a lesser evil on the basis of national consensus.” The issue of terrorism was closely linked to the Prime Minister Singh’s supposed weakness as leader: “It is shameful that a spineless leadership runs the country,” said BJP candidate Varun Gandhi.

43 “PM admits failure by promising to revive economy: BJP,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.

44 “There will be either terrorism or me: Modi,” The Indian Express, April 28, 2009.

45 “After Assembly hattrick, Mukhi sure of repeat win,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.

46 “After ‘budia,’ it is now ‘gudia’,” The Hindu, April 13, 2009.


Other neutral statements addressed a wide range of domestic policy issues and included attacks on the Congress. At a rally in Karnataka, Narendra Modi lamented that the majority of the Indian population still lacks access to good education, good and affordable health services, employment opportunities, and a decent living. At the same rally, he said that the economic condition of farmers in Gujarat were better than in Congress-run states like Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh, where farmers committed suicide. In Assam, Modi promoted Gujarat’s food subsidy program, which provided wheat to the poor at a cheaper price than the Congress was promising. The BJP also attacked the INC reliance on the Gandhi-Nehru family. A BJP national spokesperson claimed, “Congress is just involved in politics of inheritance. The party is a political soap opera and nothing else.” The BJP called the INC dynastic, dying, and under “family rule.”

Bonding rhetoric constituted the second largest percentage of the BJP’s election language (12.9 percent). Common among these statements were charges of vote-bank


51 “BJP rallies behind Varun, raps Centre for NSA ‘inaction’,” *The Indian Express*, April 27, 2009.

52 “UPA lacks will to tackle terrorism, says Advani,” *The Hindu*, April 12, 2009.

53 “NSA-shy Varun drops no bombs, thin crowd makes it a dud show,” *The Indian Express*, April 28, 2009.

politics against the Congress, which is code for favoring Muslims. Arun Jaitley argued that Prime Minister Singh “did not want to take any decision because he thought it would hurt his vote bank.” At a rally in Assam, Narendra Modi said that Bangladeshis—who are mostly Muslim—were permitted to take jobs in the state because of vote-bank politics. In Uttar Pradesh, Modi claimed, “The Prime Minister has said Muslims have the first right to property of the country…Is this an attempt to appease Muslims?” A BJP candidate in Delhi said his top priorities included repealing article 370 in Kashmir, building the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, and enforcing a uniform civil code. In Mumbai, Maharashtra, a BJP senior leader declared, "We are proud of our association with the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh."

Despite the bonding rhetoric above, the BJP also reached across the communal divide with a variety of bridging statements (5.3 percent). The BJP rebutted INC attacks by explicitly rejecting communalism. “If these parties keep on accusing the BJP as being communal,” said BJP Chief Minister B.Y. Raghavendra in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, “it is

55 Sushanta Talukdar, “PM not a good politician, lacks leadership skills: BJP,” The Indian Express, April 26, 2009.
57 “After ‘budia,’ it is now ‘gudia’,” The Hindu, April 13, 2009.
58 “After Assembly hattrick, Mukhi sure of repeat win,” The Indian Express, April 25, 2009.
59 “PM debate roiling BJP now, Cong calls Advani Modi’s mask,” The Indian Express, April 28, 2009.
nothing but an insult to the people who have elected it to form the Government.”  

BJP official B.S. Yeddyurappa claimed that a large number of Muslims attended BJP rallies and denied INC and Janata Dal (S) claims that the BJP was a communal party.  

In Karnataka, Narendra Modi said, “I assure you all that the BJP, if voted to power, will ensure that the poor, irrespective of their religion and caste, will get the privilege [of sharing the country’s wealth].”  

In Uttar Pradesh, BJP candidate Varun Gandhi claimed, “I am not against any religion and nationalism can be spread by followers of any religion.”  

During the campaign, INC General Secretary Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP of culpability in the destruction of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya. However, the BJP deflected responsibility for the demolition, which its core base had supported.  

Responding to Rahul Gandhi, BJP candidate Arun Jaitley told the press: “He should talk about development. He should not start his career with political negativism.”  

Other Parties – The rhetoric of other parties included in the content analysis largely corresponded to that of the INC and BJP. Bridging rhetoric focused on inclusion, secularism, and the BJP’s communalism. Communist Party of India (Marxist) General  

60 “Terming BJP communal is an insult to Kannadigas,” The Hindu, April 10, 2009.  

61 “Performance should be basis for assessing a government,” The Hindu, April 11, 2009.  

62 “Have same party rule at Centre, State,” The Hindu, April 10, 2009.  

63 “NSA-shy Varun drops no bombs, thin crowd makes it a dud show,” The Indian Express, April 28, 2009.  

64 “Jaitley joins ‘Modi as PM’ chorus with Shourie,” The Indian Express, April 26, 2009.
Secretary Prakash Karat described his party as the “non-Congress secular alternative.”

In Rajasthan, BSP Chief Minister Mayawati said her party worked to promote “harmony among all faiths, castes and creeds.” At rally in Kerala, a Communist Party of India official criticized the BJP for trying to divide people along religious lines. In Karnataka, the president of Janata Dal (S) told a crowd, “We are hard at work to devise a strategy to arrest the growth of Hindutva.” The only non-BJP bonding statement included in the sample was from an independent Muslim candidate in Delhi who claimed local authorities raided a wedding hall when Muslims cooked beef.

Similar to the INC and the BJP, neutral statements dominated the rhetoric of other parties, which generally emphasized issues of development and poverty. In Gujarat, BKS leader Kanu Patel said farmers receive “inadequate and erratic power supply.” Mayawati told a rally that the BSP would eradicate poverty and extend reservations to the poor among the higher castes. DMDK leader Vijayakant told a rally in Tamil Nadu, “Growing unemployment, price rise, recession, power crisis and economic scenario that

65 “BJP, Congress are jittery: Karat,” The Hindu, April 12, 2009.

66 “BSP to move court against MLAs who joined Congress,” The Hindu, April 15, 2009.


68 “BJP, Congress are jittery: Karat,” The Hindu, April 12, 2009.

69 “Independent from Chandni Chowk looks to address Muslim concerns,” The India Express, April 28, 2009.

70 Bashir Pathan, “Disillusioned’ farmers may leave BJP high and dry,” The Indian Express, April 27, 2009.

71 “BSP to move court against MLAs who joined Congress,” The Hindu April 15, 2009.
made the poor poorer and the rich richer were due to anti-people policies and mismanagement of State and Central governments.”

Mulayam Singh, president of the Samajwadi Party described his party’s agenda to a crowd in Uttar Pradesh: we “struggle for the farmers, labourers, minorities, Dalits, Backward Classes and other deprived sections of society.”

Overall, this content analysis of the 2009 election shows the strong multiethnic character of India’s party politics. This analysis focused specifically on religion, but if other ethnic dimensions were included—for example, caste, language, or state—the picture of India’s political competition would not change. Divisive identity-based politics plays a comparatively minor role in electioneering at the national-level. Policy-based (neutral) and inclusive (bridging) appeals are more prevalent. When combined with the parties’ manifestos, this analysis shows that political parties aiming for inclusion as major players in parliamentary coalitions utilize broad-based and catch-all language on the campaign trail.


The communal composition of parliament provides further insight into party strategy. The religious identity of candidates can be tailored to the demographics of specific districts, e.g., running Muslim candidates in Muslim majority districts. However, the data available through the electoral commission only provides the names of winning candidates, which is obviously only a partial accounting of all the competing candidates.


Nevertheless, one can assume that the religious composition of members of parliament is reasonably reflective of the broader set of candidates. Therefore, the religious break down of a party’s parliamentary members can illuminate the extent to which it reaches out to specific communities.

In order assess the communal composition of the Indian parliament, membership reports from each Lok Sabha were gathered from the Election Commission of India website. The reports provide the name, state, constituency, and party for the members of each Lok Sabha, starting with 1952. Each candidate’s name was used to determine his or her religion. Given the distinctive names of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs, this is a highly accurate technique. Additional Internet searches were conducted to confirm the identities of problematic names. Only the categories Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Sikh were coded.

Overall, there are have been 7,889 members of parliament elected since 1952. Of those, 90.75 percent are Hindu (7,148), 5.13 percent are Muslim (406), 2.17 percent are Christian (177), and 1.95 percent are Sikh (158). According to census data, India’s demographics have shifted minimally since 1961: Hindus have declined approximately 3


75 A research assistant of Indian origin was employed for this task.

76 Buddhists, Jains, Bantoists, and Parsees were coded as Hindu. Their names are often difficult to distinguish. They are also treated as Hindu under India’s legal system, which provides Muslims and Christians autonomous courts. Regardless, these communities are minimally represented in the parliament and so their designation as “Hindu” does not alter the final results.
percent (to 80.46 percent), Muslims have risen approximately 3 percent (to 13.43 percent), and Christians and Sikhs have remained the same. Therefore, since 1952, the Indian parliament has overrepresented Hindus by approximately 10 percent and underrepresented Muslims by approximately 5-6 percent. In 2009, the 15th Lok Sabha matched this historical demographic trend within 1 percentage point: 90.63 percent Hindu, 4.60 percent Muslim, 2.94 percent Christian, and 1.84 percent Sikh.

Figure 6: Religious Composition of the Lok Sabha Compared with Population

An analysis of each Lok Sabha over time shows minimal variation in the religious composition of parliament. The first Lok Sabha in 1952 was 89.30 percent Hindu and 3.91 percent Muslim. The fifteenth Lok Sabha in 2009 is 90.63 percent Hindu and 4.60 percent Muslim. The split between Hindus and Muslims in the Lok Sabha has been as
high as 88.46 percent (in 1962) and as low as 78.68 (in 1980). The highest and lowest Hindu percentage in parliament was 92.18 percent (in 1998) and 86.98 percent (in 1980) respectively. The highest and lowest Muslim percentage in parliament was 8.30 percent (in 1980) and 3.64 percent (in 1962) respectively. The best performance for Sikhs was in 1952 (4.12 percent). Christians won their highest seat share in 1989 (3.04 percent)

Figure 7: Religious Composition of Lok Sabha Terms by Year, 1952-2009

The Congress Party has elected over 3,800 members of parliament across fifteen Lok Sabha elections. Of those, 90.08 percent are Hindu, 5.39 percent are Muslim, 2.49 percent are Christian, and 2.05 percent are Sikh. The religious identity of INC MPs has been steady since 1952. Even as the INC’s vote total has fluctuated dramatically, there has been virtually no correlation between its seats won and the party’s Lok Sabha religious composition: There is a .20 correlation coefficient (weakly positive) between the INC’s seat total and its percent of Hindu MPs and a .03 correlation coefficient between the INC’s seat total and its percent of Muslim MPs. Hindus constituted the
lowest share of the INC MPs in 1989 (86.73 percent) and the highest in 1962 (93.11 percent). Muslims were the lowest share of the INC MPs in 1962 (3.58 percent) and the highest share in 1980 (7.61 percent). Christians have constituted between .35 percent (in 1967) and 7.14 percent (in 1989) of the INC MPs. The highest Sikh share of INC MPs was 4.62 percent in 1999. In 2009, the INC MPs were 87.44 percent Hindu, 4.83 percent Muslim, 5.31 percent Christian, and 2.42 percent Sikh. Compared to the general population, this overrepresented Hindus by approximately 7 percent and underrepresented Muslims by approximately 9 percent.

Figure 8: Religious Composition of INC MPs with INC Seat Totals, 1952-2009

Though the Congress Party under-represents Muslims among its MPs, there is no evidence that this is part of an active mobilization strategy targeting Hindus. Two elections elucidate this claim. If one argues that the INC over-represents Hindus among its MPs in order to mobilize Hindu voters, then elections following major episodes of
communal violence should produce an increase in Hindu candidates and elected MPs. Religious conflict should strengthen the salience of Hindu identity and in turn enhance its political usefulness. However, when we examine the 1996 and 2004 elections, which occurred after the communal riots in Ayodhya and Gujarat, the Congress’s MPs included a higher percentage of Muslims than in the previous election. This suggests the opposite strategy: as the political salience of the Hindu-Muslim divide increases, the Congress Party becomes more multiethnic.

Since its formation in 1980, the BJP has elected nearly 1,000 MPs. Of those, 98.57 percent are Hindu, 1.13 percent are Muslim, and .41 percent are Christians and Sikhs combined. Similar to the Congress, the religious identity of BJP MPs has been consistent. As the BJP steadily increased its vote, its share of Muslim MPs has not increased. The correlation coefficient between BJP seat total and its Muslim MPs is .25. Its MPs have been over 95 percent Hindu is every year. The party’s highest percent of Muslim MPs was in 1999 when its six Muslim members constituted 3.57 percent of its seat share. The BJP has only elected two Christian MPs, both in 1999. It has elected three Sikhs, one in 1999, 2004, and 2009.
As the most numerically substantial and politically important demographic minority, Muslims have been consistently under-represented. As noted above, Muslims have constituted only 4.60 percent of the total MPs from all fifteen parliamentary sessions. The highest percentage of Muslim MPs was 8.39 percent in 1980 (44 seats). Of all Muslim MPs, 51.23 percent have been elected as members of the Congress Party. Approximately 8 percent have been elected as members of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The rest have been elected with other parties.
Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh are interesting case studies through which to examine the religious composition of elected MPs. Both states underwent large-scale religious riots in the last two decades and, as such, present difficult states for the multiethnic Congress Party to succeed in. Indeed, Gujarat has been dominated by the BJP since 1989. Though the INC’s standing has improved in the last two elections, its success has not meant more Muslim representation in the state. Not a single Muslim MP has been elected in Gujarat since 1977.
The INC has experienced an even larger vote collapse in Uttar Pradesh. Following the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the INC won eighty-three of eighty-five seats in the state. Merely four years later, the party won only fifteen seats and finally won no seats in 1998. The BJP, after winning only eight seats in 1989, won over fifty seats in 1996, 1998, and 1999. In the 2000s, the BJP’s seat share has declined and the INC’s has increased; however, it is the BSP and other parties that now dominate the state.
The rise of the Hindu-dominated BJP and the decline of the Congress, which includes the highest number of Muslims among its elected members, have meant the steady decline of Muslims elected in Uttar Pradesh. At the highest point, Muslims were elected to seventeen seats in UP in 1980. By 1991 that total was two. In 2009, five Muslims were elected in the state.
In sum, this analysis of the Lok Sabha membership from 1952-2009 provides little evidence that either the Congress Party or the BJP uses the religious identity of its candidates to appeal to the national electorate. Though individual candidates in any given district might be chosen for their religious identity, there is no systemic effort by either party to use candidates to shape the communal image of the party. Both the INC and the BJP under-represent Muslims among their candidates, but this does not change based on the performance of the party. The INC’s multiethnic rhetoric is not matched by its candidate selection; however, it is the most diverse of the major parties and has been home to over 50 percent of Muslim MPs since the first Lok Sabha term in 1952. Similarly, the BJP’s increased multiethnic rhetoric has not translated into candidate selection: the number of Muslims it has elected remains miniscule—just one in 2009.

The above analysis of manifestos, campaign rhetoric, and parliamentary composition suggests that the Congress Party, the BJP, and other parties use electoral mobilization strategies that pursue a multiethnic group of voters. Election outcomes have been similarly multiethnic. When voting behavior is sorted by religious group, no clear pattern emerges. The major political parties have diverse religious constituencies. The following analysis uses election data from the 2004 and 2009 elections.

In 2004, religious groups split their vote between political parties. The Congress Party alone received 24.8 percent of the Hindu vote. When combined with its allies, the INC received 34.2 percent of Hindu voters. The traditionally Hindu nationalist BJP won a minimally larger share of Hindu voters. It alone received 25.4 percent of the Hindu vote—less than one percent higher than the INC. When combined with its allies, the BJP won 4.9 percent more Hindu voters than the INC’s coalition. However, BJP and INC coalition partners do not necessarily espouse the same ideology as the leading party, thus, coalitional vote gains cannot be definitively attributed to either party’s agenda.

Among minority religious groups, the INC outperformed other parties with Christians, Muslims, and Sikhs, winning 35.6 percent, 39.4 percent, and 25.2 percent of their votes respectively. Christians and Muslims preferred the INC to the BJP by over 28 percent and 33 percent respectively. The BJP was stronger among Sikhs, but still trailed the INC by 7.6 percent of the vote.
Overall, the data show that within-group voting patterns vary significantly. Barely half of Hindu voters voted for either the BJP or INC, instead preferring some other party. Although Muslim voters clearly rejected the BJP, only 50 percent of Muslims voted for the Congress or one of its allies. Similarly, the BJP lost dramatically among Christians, but the INC and its allies only won only 54 percent of this group. Sikh voters preferred BJP allies to either the Congress or the BJP.

A similar story emerges when each party’s constituency is itself analyzed. No party’s voter base in 2004 skewed significantly beyond what would be expected given the basic demographics of India. The chart below compares the religious composition of India with the religious composition of BJP and INC voters. Despite winning an almost identical percentage of Hindu voters, the BJP’s constituency is 16 percent more Hindu than the INC (91.6 percent versus 74.9 percent) and approximately 11 percent more Hindu than the Indian population. INC voters are religiously more diverse than India: its
constituency is 14.6 percent Muslim, 5.1 percent Christian, and 2.4 percent Sikh. BJP voters are less diverse than Indian society: its constituency is 3.4 percent Muslim, 0.9 percent Christian, and 2 percent Sikh.

Figure 15: Within-Party Support by Religious Group with Total Population, 2004

![Figure 15](image)

Source: (CSDS 2004); Figure constructed by author.

The data indicate that religion cannot explain voting behavior in 2004. Though the BJP drew heavily from Hindu voters, no more than one-quarter of Hindus chose any one political party. Similarly, although the Congress won a plurality of Muslim, Sikh, and Christian voters, a majority of these religious communities voted for a different party. This result is striking. Only two years after communal riots in Gujarat featured some of the most widespread and brutal Hindu-Muslim violence since Partition—which could have deeply polarized the electorate—religious solidarity was virtually nonexistent at the voting booth.
The 2009 election was similarly depolarized. Using data from the CSDS National Election Survey 2009,\textsuperscript{77} Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Palshikar conclude that although social identity, including religion, “continues to be the primary building bloc of political affiliation at the micro level, the politics of building a macro political coalition based on these blocs has suffered a setback.” Additionally, the limits of identity politics has opened up space “for cross-sectional mobilization and thus helped the Congress” (Yadav and Palshikar 2009, 38). Among Muslim voters in 2009, 38 percent voted for the INC, 9 percent for INC allies, 4 percent for the BJP, and 2 percent for BJP allies. Among Christian voters, 38 percent voted for the INC, 9 percent for INC allies, 6 percent for the BJP, and 4 percent for BJP allies. The BJP still won a plurality of upper caste Hindus: 38 percent to the INC’s 26 percent (Yadav and Palshikar 2009, 41).

The absence of communal polarization in 2009 is particularly notable with respect to Muslims, who stand to lose the most by splitting their vote and potentially bringing the BJP to power. Mohd Sanjeer Alam of CSDS writes, “while the Congress has been getting more Muslim votes than other parties, the support of the community has been in a flux.” He concludes that despite conventional wisdom, “evidence suggests that there was no such wave of support for the Congress among Muslims, at least at the national level, for a majority of Muslim votes went to other parties” (Alam 2009, 93).

The complete lack of religious polarization during elections is surprising given Indians’ mixed attitudes towards identity voting. A survey asked Indians their level of agreement with the statement: “One should vote in the same way one’s caste/community

\textsuperscript{77} CSDS has not yet made the data from this survey available to researchers for analysis.
votes.” Although a plurality of each religious group “fully disagrees” with the statement, only a little less than half of Hindus and Muslims and a slight majority of Christians and Sikhs disagree (when combining the two negative-response categories). Put another way, almost half of the members of each religious group agree with—or have no opinion on—pure identity-based voting. While the term “caste/community” leaves unknown whether respondents were considering caste or religion when answering the question,\(^78\) the result indicates an openness to religious voting that is not represented in voting behavior or utilized by political parties.

Figure 16: Agree or disagree, should you vote the same as your caste/community?

![Graph showing voting preferences by religious group.](image)

Source: (CSDS 2004); Figure constructed by author.

**Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrates the core of India’s political puzzle: that multiethnic political parties succeed despite conditions conducive to ethnic outbidding. The potential

\(^{78}\) A similar result emerges when the answers are cross-tabulated by caste group.
for strong identity-based politics in India is clear. The country’s formative moment is deeply connected to religious identity and communal violence continues to kill thousands during sporadic riots. Moreover, the persistent deprivation experienced by Muslims in India adds to their cohesive identity and political potential. In 2005, the Sachar Committee was commissioned to investigate the social and economic conditions of India’s Muslim community. The committee’s report concludes that Muslims suffer “deficits and deprivation in practically all dimensions of development” (Sachar Committee 2006, 237). Furthermore, Muslims do not believe this inequality is random rather “the perception among Muslims that they are discriminated against and excluded is widespread” (Sachar Committee 2006, 237). This awareness of purposeful social exclusion can only enhance Muslim solidarity, which in turn could give Hindu nationalists a fear-based mechanism of political mobilization among Hindus.

However, as shown above, Indian politics is strongly multiethnic. Despite mass-level communal violence and isolated local communal mobilization, national-level politics has become increasingly inclusive and moderate. All major national parties target a multi-religious constituency with policy-focused manifests and campaign rhetoric. Nor do parties use ethnicity-based candidate selection to respond to fluctuations in support. Moreover, recent evidence suggests that Indian voters are becoming progressively more depolarized. One BJP official proudly claimed that Muslims are increasingly voting for the traditionally Hindu nationalist party.79

79 Interview, 12/13/12, CP Thakur, BJP MP (Bihar) in the Rajya Sabha and former union minister (1999-2004)
India’s democracy and stability are far from flawless. However, from the perspective of peacebuilding in conflict-prone, deeply divided countries, India is an outstanding success. Rather than particularistic parties representing the interests of specific groups, multiethnic parties have dominated Indian politics since independence. Even the ethnic-based BJP governed from the political center during its time in power and has significantly moderated its tone in recent elections. The strongly inclusive character of the Congress Party has stabilized India’s tumultuous society and politics throughout its history. Observers of Indian politics have long predicted its implosion amid myriad fissiparous and centrifugal elements; nevertheless, India remains a potential model for other deeply divided countries struggling to maintain democracy and stability. This raises the obvious question: Why have multiethnic parties, and not ethnic parties, dominated India’s democracy?
CHAPTER FIVE: INDONESIA: DOMINANT PARTIES AND STRONG MULTIETHNIC POLITICS

Introduction

Indonesia has had two democratic periods. The first was after independence, which began informally in 1945 following the surrender of Japan. Sukarno’s declaration of Indonesian independence in August was followed by a protracted conflict with the Dutch, which hoped to regain their control over the archipelago. In 1949, Sukarno’s nationalist forces won out and Indonesia was granted formal independence. Despite ostensible unity within the independence movement, an intra-Muslim rift remained between those dedicated to secular governance and those who sought an Islamic state. This division temporarily dissipated with the consolidation of secular authoritarianism under Sukarno and then Suharto. However, other ethnic divisions persisted, including conflict between Dayaks, Mudarese, ethnic Chinese, and other tribal groups.

The fall of Suharto in 1998 brought the second democratic period, which continues to this day. The sudden end of decades of authoritarian rule prompted large-scale ethnic violence between tribal and religious groups. Observers made “apocalyptic predictions” that foresaw Indonesia following the violent path of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia (Mietzner and Aspinall 2010, 2). Indeed, between 1997 and 2005 nearly 20,000 Indonesians were killed in ethnic violence throughout the country. Dayaks murdered Madurese; indigenous Indonesians murdered ethnic Chinese; Acehnese,
Papuans, and East Timorese waged identity-based separatist movements; and fundamentalist Muslims murdered foreigners and secular Muslims in terrorist attacks. This violence not only tested Indonesia’s new and fragile democratic state, but also rigidified conflict-forged ethnic divisions through “nasty forms of ‘identity politics’” (Sidel 2006, 2).

However, multiethnic political parties have thrived in Indonesia’s post-Suharto democracy. The strongest ethnic party, the Islamic Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), won only 7.88 percent of the vote in the last legislative election in 2009. Unlike in India, no multiethnic party has dominated Indonesian party politics; yet inclusive and moderate parties have won each of the three legislative elections and two direct presidential elections held since 1999. These parties use multiethnic rhetoric during campaigns, run demographically representative candidates, and contact a diverse array of voters during elections. Their success has prompted Islamic parties to moderate their message in order to compete. Although low-scale conflict persists, Indonesia’s social stabilization and political democratization led the democracy institute Freedom House to upgrade the country’s ranking to “fully free,” which it has maintained since 2007 (Freedom House 2013).

Like India, Indonesia is a remarkable example of peacebuilding in a conflict-prone society. The country’s history of ethnic violence created conditions hostile to cooperative and multiethnic politics. Yet the main parties, both historically multiethnic and ethnic, eschew divisive identity appeals. Furthermore, post-election surveys show that Indonesia’s main ethnic groups split their votes between parties. Religious and tribal
appeals are thus conspicuously missing from national-level politics despite the continued presence of ethnic tension and violence.

This chapter will empirically demonstrate the multiethnic dimensions of Indonesia’s national-level party politics, which match the tone and tenor of India’s political competition. The chapter will first provide an introduction to Indonesian party politics and several important political parties. Second, it will outline Indonesia’s numerous axes of ethnic identity while demonstrating the primacy of religious and tribal identities. Finally, it will use the most recent Indonesian elections to show the multiethnic character of election debates, election rhetoric, voter contacts, candidate selection, and voting behavior.

**Background of Party Politics**

Indonesia’s first democratic election to its parliament, the People’s Representative Council (DPR), occurred in 1955. After two years of parliamentary disorder, the country’s experiment with democracy ended with the one-man rule of Sukarno, who believed Western democracy was poorly suited for Indonesia. A little over a decade later, in 1967, Sukarno was overthrown in a bloodless military coup. The new president, Suharto, would rule the country through rigged elections and authoritarianism until his overthrow and the reinstatement of democracy in 1998. Indonesia has since held three free and fair elections.

Indonesia’s party politics cannot be disconnected from the ideological roots of society. The main political parties are historically linked to the concept of *aliran* or “streams,” which represent competing traditions of religious orthodoxy and syncretism in
Indonesia (Geertz 1976). *Aliran*, it is often argued, form the foundation of Indonesia’s three party types: secular nationalist, moderate Islamic, and Islamist. Secular-nationalist parties are associated with *abangan* or nominal Muslims, who constitute the majority of Javanese as well as non-Muslim religious minorities such as Christians, Hindus, and Buddhists (Sherlock 2004b, 18). The *santri* or orthodox Muslims are traditionally divided between modernist and traditionalist Islam. Adherents of modernist Islam reject the mystic and syncretic practices of traditionalists.

At the core of the contemporary manifestation of *abangan* politics is the national ideology of *Pancasila*, which, as noted in chapter two, lay at the heart of Sukarno’s PNI as well as its secular-nationalist successors. In pursuit of a unifying national ideology to bring together the ethnically diverse, geographically dispersed, and colonially dominated archipelago, Sukarno promulgated a set of guiding principles for the nation in June 1945. The five principles of Pancasila synthesized religious, secular, and nationalist thought. Muslim groups wanted Islam as the sole foundation of the state, but Sukarno resisted. The final wording was a compromise for both sides. The five principles were then codified in the 1945 constitution.

The two largest Islamic socio-political organizations in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), are closely associated with *santri* Muslims. Muhammadiyah was founded in 1912 to represent the interests of conservative, modernist Sunni Muslims and aims to promote a purified version of Islam. In contrast, NU was formed in 1926 to represent traditionalist Muslims who wanted to continue some of the pre-Islamic Javanese traditions rejected by Muhammadiyah members. Though
rivals, both organizations cater to orthodox Muslims and together participated in the brutal cleansing of Indonesian communists in 1965-1966, which killed an estimated 500,000 and destroyed the Indonesian Communist Party.

These *aliran* influenced Indonesia’s first democratic election in 1955, five years after receiving formal independence. The election pitted twenty-nine parties and candidates against each other for seats in the DPR. The four best performing parties were nationalist hero Sukarno’s Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI), the Islamic-based Masymui and NU, and the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) (Feith 1964). The tumultuous parliament was rife with divisions and ineptitude, causing President Sukarno to implement Guided Democracy in 1957, which effectively ended parliamentary democracy in Indonesia. Ten years later, Suharto deposed Sukarno in the chaos that ensued after a failed military coup. His New Order regime retained periodic elections, but rigged the outcomes. Tiring of continued party competition, Suharto forced the consolidation of all opposition parties into two amalgamated political entities: the United Development Party (PPP), which consisted of NU and other Islamic parties, and the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), which consisted of PNI and other nationalist and non-Islamic parties. Between 1971 and 1997, Suharto and his regime party, Golkar, won six pre-determined elections with over 60 percent of the vote in each.

Suharto’s sudden fall after the 1997 Asian financial crisis shocked political observers. Suharto had remained popular during his authoritarian rule, but fervent domestic unrest followed the regional economic collapse and Suharto’s heavy-handed response only enflamed tensions. Suharto finally resigned in May 1998 after 30 years of
one-man rule. His vice president, Jusuf Habibie, took over until June 7, 1999, when the first post-New Order democratic elections were held. This election largely continued the election rules in place since 1955, but unbound those parties previously locked into artificial alliances to compete on their own.

The contest produced a plurality victory for Megawati Sukarnoputri (Sukarno’s daughter, known as Megawati) and her party the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P). However, she failed to form a governing coalition. Abdurrahman Wahid of the National Awakening Party (PKB) eventually emerged as the first indirectly elected president of Indonesia’s second democratic era, with Megawati as the vice president. President Wahid’s National Unity Cabinet included members of all major political parties, but his strained relationship with the military and opposition parties led to his impeachment in July 2001. Megawati served out the remainder of the term, but lost reelection in 2004 to the Democrat Party’s Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (known as SBY) during Indonesia’s first direct presidential election. The enormously popular former general won reelection in a landslide in 2009. In legislative elections, Golkar returned to power 2004 but lost to SBY’s Democrat Party in 2009.

National-Level Parties

Across three parliamentary elections and two direct presidential elections, six core national-level parties have emerged in Indonesian politics: PDI-P, PD, Golkar, PAN, PKB, and PKS. Each of these parties holds a distinct identity with respect to Indonesian history and politics. PD, Golkar, and PDI-P are abangan secular-nationalist parties that laud the legacy of Sukarno, promote the state’s founding ideology of Pancacila, and
uphold Islamic syncretism. PAN and PKB are moderate Islamic parties linked to the country’s largest Islamic organizations, Muhammadiyah and NU. PKS is an insurgent conservative, Islamist party. These three Islamic parties are linked to santri Islam. Below will briefly introduce each party.\textsuperscript{80}

\textit{PDI-P} – The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle was formed in 1973 as a forced amalgamation of non-Islamic parties by the Suharto regime. Initially called the Indonesian Democratic Party, its internal politics were chaotic and its leadership pliant to the regime. The rise of Suharto-critic Megawati Sukarnoputri within the party forced the government to intervene in its affairs. This caused mass protests and ultimately the formation of a new party, called PDI-P, under Megawati’s control. PDI-P is known for its populism and aggressively secular policies. PDI-P won the parliament in 1999, but Megawati was outmaneuvered for the presidency. Megawati lost her bids for president in 2004 and 2009 and the party’s support has declined from approximately 33 percent of the vote in 1999 to 14 percent in 2009.

\textit{Democrat Party} – Formed in 2001, the PD is the political vehicle of current president SBY, who founded the party in order to comply with election rules that force presidential candidates to belong to a party (the party’s foundation day is SBY’s birthday). The party is considered part of the secular-nationalist camp, but its policy agenda and ideological orientation are ambiguous. Though it has won support across the country, its internal operations and campaign structure are considered disorganized. PD

\textsuperscript{80} This party summary is drawn from interviews, publically available information, and academic sources (Sherlock 2004b; Sherlock 2009).
won just over 7 percent of the vote in the 2004 DPR election (putting it in fifth place), but
SBY won in the second round of the presidential contest. In 2009, the PD won the DPR
with approximately 20 percent of the vote and incumbent president SBY won in a first-
round landslide. However, SBY is term limited and there is concern for the future of the
party without his personal popularity.

Golkar – An acronym for “Party of the Functional Groups,” Golkar was created in
1964 but morphed into Suharto’s authoritarian regime party with close ties to the
military. Its purpose was to promote state policy, distribute patronage, and ensure
political loyalty, particularly among the expansive government bureaucracy. Suharto’s
fall in 1998 created an identity crisis that many believed would destroy the party. Yet its
extensive organizational apparatus gave it impressive electoral strength: Golkar won an
unlikely second place in the 1999 legislative election with 22 percent of the vote and won
back the parliament in 2004 with 21 percent of the vote. However, its popularity dipped
dramatically in the 2009 DPR election and its presidential candidates have failed to draw
wide support. Golkar’s ideology is generally considered secular, but it has retained at
times close ties with prominent Islamic figures.

PAN – The National Mandate Party was formed in 1998 by Amien Rais, who was
head of the modernist Islamic organization Muhammadiyah. Rais was a leader in the
student pro-democracy movement that helped topple Suharto. PAN is associated with
moderate Islamic politics exemplified by its endorsement of Pancasila and political
reform in conjunction with Islamic values. Despite its close links to Indonesia’s second
largest Islamic organization, PAN has failed to gain electoral traction. It has not earned greater than 7 percent of the vote in any DPR election.

**PKB** – The National Awakening Party was formed in 1998 under the leadership of Abdurrahman Wahid (known as Gus Dur). It is linked to traditionalist Islam through its ties to NU, the largest Islamic organization in the country. NU was forced into the government-created PPP in 1973, but split from the party and remained outside of politics until Suharto’s fall. Wahid’s attempts to rekindle partisanship within the NU have been undermined by PPP’s continuation as a party after Suharto, which divides organizational support and weakens PKB. As a moderate Islamic party, PKB has tried to promote the importance of Islamic values in politics but also cultivate ties with secular organizations. Though initially more popular than its political rival PAN, PKB’s support has dropped from 12 percent to 4 percent between the 1999 and 2009 DPR elections.

**PKS** – The Prosperous Justice Party was formed in 1998 as The Justice Party. Indonesian party law had required each party to surpass a minimum threshold in 1999 in order to compete in 2004. The party’s 1.7 percent of the vote failed to meet this requirement, so it changed its name to PKS. Activists from Islamic student organizations lead the party, which adheres to a conservative, modernist brand of Islam. In 1999, the party appealed directly to conservative Muslims and mosque groups, but its 2004 campaign was strikingly more moderate in an attempt to appeal to a broader audience. This new strategy garnered 7.3 percent of the vote and enhanced its reputation as the premier Islamic party. However, the party stagnated in 2009, adding only .5 percent to its vote total.
Though Indonesia’s current political parties are historically linked with competing aliran, they are becoming more pluralistic over time. Parties nominally associated with santri Muslims, such as PKS, PKB, and PAN, are increasingly framing themselves as moderate and secular whereas abangan parties, such as PD, PDI-P, and Golkar, all have Islamic party wings and some have supported conservative legislation. While this does indicate the use of identity-based politics by secular parties, as is shown below, Indonesia’s main political parties are orienting themselves toward a version of moderate religious nationalism that has broad appeal.

**Ethnic Cleavage Structure and Ethnic Violence**

Indonesia’s large Muslim majority constitutes a dominant-majority ethnic structure. However, there is also a high degree of ethnic fractionalization that exists within and outside the Muslim majority. Other axes of ethnic identity include tribe, religion, and region. Tribal groups are dispersed across the archipelago; however, there remain provincial and regional concentrations of specific tribes that have influenced politics and internal conflict in Indonesia. Indonesia’s ethnic violence has centered on tribal and religious differences, which together constitute the country’s primary conflict cleavages. This violence both reinforced and spanned inter-tribal, communal, ethno-separatist, and Islamist ethnic divisions.

**Ethnic Cleavages**

Indonesia is composed of an extraordinary multitude of tribal groups. Over one thousand tribal and sub-tribal segments make Indonesia one of the most ethnically
diverse countries in the world. However, only fifteen of these groups have over one 
million members (Suryadinata, Arifin, and Ananta 2003). The largest tribal group in 
Indonesia is Javanese, who total over 83 million and constitute 41.71 percent of the 
population. The next largest group, the Sundanese, total almost 31 million and constitute 
15.41 percent of the population. The next thirteen largest groups range from 
approximately 1.7 million to 6.9 million and constitute between .86 percent and 3.45 
percent of the population. The remaining 75 tribal groups outlined by Suryadinata et al as 
well as the hundreds more left unidentified total 15 percent of the population.

Figure 17: Five Largest Tribal Groups in Indonesia, 2000

Indonesia’s tribal groups are mostly dispersed across the archipelago. The 
Javanese, who are a plurality nationally, only constitute a majority or plurality in four

---

81 Scholars generally refer to Indonesian tribal groups, such as Javanese, as “ethnic 
groups.” However, an ethnic group is a category that cannot be occupied by any one 
group, such as Javanese, which is a “type” of ethnic group. Thus, this analysis uses the 
term “tribe” to refer to specific groups and “ethnic” to refer to all or any identity groups 
including both tribe and religion.

82 This study, though a decade old, remains the most authoritative account of Indonesia’s 
ethnic and religious demographics. It is based on the 2000 Population Census, which was 
the first to include ethnic background.
provinces: Central Java, Yogyakarta, East Java, and Lampung. Indonesia’s remaining provinces are a majority or plurality non-Javane se (a category divided into hundreds of other groups).

Figure 18: Tribal Group Composition by Province, 2000

Adding to Indonesia’s tribal mosaic are the “ethnic Chinese,” a group that includes those Chinese who migrated to, were born in, or grew up in Indonesia regardless of whether they are Indonesian citizens (Suryadinata, Arifin, and Ananta 2003, 73). Though constituting a small percentage of the population, their political and economic power outweighs their demographic size. The Indonesian census counts Chinese by self-identification. However, this measurement is complicated by social pressure to assimilate as well as historic violence against the ethnic Chinese, which could make some of the population wary of openly identifying themselves. Using census data and estimates of purposeful non-identification, the population of ethnic Chinese (including noncitizens,
who constitute a small percentage of Chinese in Indonesia) is estimated at approximately 2 percent (approximately 2.9 million).

Overlaying Indonesia’s extreme tribal diversity is relative religious homogeneity. Indonesia is the world’s most populous Muslim country. Of approximately 240 million residents, 88.22 percent are Muslim, 8.92 percent are Christian, 1.81 percent are Hindu, and 0.84 percent are Buddhist. Muslims are the majority in most provinces. Christians constitute the majority in four provinces, with East Nusa Tenggara representing the largest concentration (87.67 percent). Hindus are the majority only in Bali (87.44 percent). Buddhists are less than 1 percent of the population in most provinces; West Kalimantan has the highest concentration of Buddhists (6.41 percent).

Figure 19: Religious Population by Province

Source: (Suryadinata, Arifin, and Ananta 2003); Figure constructed by author.

An intra-Islamic cleavage of particular importance to Indonesian politics are the aliran (streams) within Muslim social thought. The santri are conservative and often support a more prominent role for Islam in governing the state, including shariah law.
The *abangan* are syncretic and secular. The demographics of these groups are unclear, but since *abangan* are traditionally associated with Javanese, they probably represent a plurality of the society. This intra-Muslim distinction is not addressed in surveys of Indonesians, which makes measurement of the divide difficult. Nevertheless, it remains an important ethnic cleavage.

Territory is an additional cleavage in Indonesia, which includes province and region. If counted by province, Indonesia’s population is highly dispersed. West Java holds the highest population concentration, which is only 18 percent. East Java and West Java are the only other provinces that have over 10 percent of the population. The remaining 31 provinces each have less than 6 percent of the population. However, Indonesia’s population is in fact highly concentrated on the island of Java, which holds the capital Jakarta. The six provinces of Java house approximately 60 percent of the country’s population. This regional population concentration has had social and political implications. The region outside of Java is called the “outer islands,” with the “inner islands” referring to Java and some combination of Bali, Madura, and Sumatra. Though the terms are imprecise, it often implies a backwardness of those outside the “inner islands.”
Cleavage Structure

Survey data indicate that crosscutting cleavages split Indonesia’s dominant-majority ethnic structure. Using the tribal group categories surveyed by the 2004 Comparative National Elections Project, there are large Islamic majorities within each group, except Batak, which is split evenly between Muslim and Christian identities. Javanese, Sundanese, Malay and Madurese are each over 97 percent Muslim.
Additionally, when asked to identify with either their tribal group or citizenship, 83.8 percent of Indonesians considered themselves first and foremost Indonesian citizens while 13.1 percent identified with their tribal group. When broken down by tribe, over 87 percent of Javanese, Malay, Madurese and Batak reported a nationalist identity. Sundanese have the highest in-group association, with 23.20 percent. Nevertheless, over three-quarters of this group prioritized nationality over ethnicity. This is largely consistent with an IFES survey conducted five years later, which asked Indonesians to indicate the group they identified with most strongly: 81.6 percent said “citizenship,” while only 3.9 percent said “ethnicity” and 13.2 percent said “equally important” (IFES 2009).
Indonesia’s crosscutting cleavages fracture distinct social and administrative units into various parts with multiple identities. Indonesia’s 90 percent Muslim majority is divided into hundreds of tribal groups, but each major tribal group shares an Islamic identity. Though many tribal groups are relatively well dispersed across provinces, there are several important examples of regional-tribal identities. Javanese are heavily concentrated on the island of Java, which has the largest proportion of the country’s population. This regional and tribal overlap creates reinforcing identity cleavages, which have influenced Indonesian politics. Most major political parties have strong Javanese tribal roots and are based out of Java. Every Indonesian president has been Javanese. Additionally, past and present separatist movements in Aceh and Papua have emerged around tribal group identities reinforced by geographic concentration.
Ethnic Violence

Similar to India, Indonesia’s crosscutting cleavages could not prevent ethnic violence in the post-Suharto era. Immediately following the fall of authoritarian rule, deadly tribal, communal, and separatist violence exploded. David Kingsbury and Harry Aveling write, "From the centre in Jakarta to the far reaches of the archipelago, the state convulsed in the throes of ethnic violence” (Aveling and Kingsbury 2002, 1). Between 1997 and 2005, at least 19,000 people were killed in ethnic violence and 1.3 million were displaced (Aspinall 2008, 559). The outbreak of violence was swift and unexpected. Indonesia scholar Edward Aspinall explains, “Indonesia was for many years a testing ground of theories that strove to explain the basis and durability of authoritarian rule…it unfortunately turned into a laboratory in which we can now devise and test theories about ethnic and religious violence” (Aspinall 2008, 559).

Suharto’s sudden fall and Indonesia’s subsequent democratic transition marked a critical juncture in inter-ethnic relations (Bertrand 2004). The governing model that had dominated Indonesia for decades was being redesigned. This new political space encouraged some groups to push violently to change the terms of their incorporation to their advantage, resolve long-standing grievances, get better access to natural or state resources, and so on. Most did so by peaceful political mobilization; some did so violently. (Aspinall 2008, 560)

However, the violence itself was not directly related to the transition. “Most of those who were killed were not fighting to make the political system more democratic or to defend autocracy,” writes Aspinall. “Instead, the vast majority of those who died did so in violence perpetrated in the name of ethnic, religious or national identities…” (Aspinall 2008, 559).
Indonesia’s ethnic tensions—tribal and communal—which had been subdued by heavy-handed authoritarian rule, flared after the fall of Suharto, who himself had turned to identity politics to maintain power near the end of his regime (Horowitz 2013; Sidel 2006). The now growing violence crossed ethnic divisions: between tribal groups of Dayaks and Madurese and indigenous Indonesians and ethnic Chinese; between communal groups of Muslims and Christians; and between Islamic militants and the state. In his study of transition violence, Gerry van Klinken argues that religious and tribal groups “claimed by far the largest number of any type of collective violence” (Klinken 2009, 13). The rest of this section briefly narrates incidents of post-Suharto ethnic violence.83

Inter-Tribal Violence

Between 1996 and 1997 in West Kalimantan, large-scale riots erupted between members of the indigenous tribal group, Dayaks, and Madurese immigrants from the island of Madura. The underlying cause of this riot is unknown, but in the aftermath of a fight during which two Dayak youths were stabbed, Dayaks “waged what appeared to be a ritual war against Madurese communities, burning houses, killing inhabitants, and in some cases severing the heads and eating the livers of those killed” (Human Rights Watch 1997). The violence killed approximately 500 (mostly Madurese) and displaced 20,000 Madurese.

---

83 For other discussions of Indonesia’s transitional ethnic violence, see (B. R. O. Anderson 2001; Colombijn and Linblad 2002).
Ethnic Chinese have also long suffered from inter-tribal violence. A persistent issue in post-colonial Indonesia has been the national loyalty of ethnic Chinese, who have economic and political power beyond their small percentage of the population. Ethnic Chinese are also aligned with secular politics, which draws the animosity of conservative, santri Muslims. The first major killing of Chinese Indonesians occurred during the anti-communist purge of 1965, during which an estimated 500,000 people were murdered. Two years later, with the aid of the military, Dayaks killed 300 Chinese and 55,000 were displaced (Human Rights Watch 1997, 11–12). However, Chinese Indonesians continued to play an important role in business and economic policy, which caused tension with mostly poor indigenous Indonesians. After Suharto took office in 1998 for his seventh straight rigged election, riots ensued, which targeted, among other things, Chinese businesses and civilians. Approximately 1,000 people were killed and dozens of women raped in Jakarta.

Communal Violence

Christian-Muslim violence escalated after the fall of Suharto. The Maluku archipelago was home to a mostly Christian separatist movement shortly after independence, but communal conflict had been dormant until January 1999. A minor fight between Muslims and Christians sparked a three-year civil war that killed 5,000 people by the time it concluded in 2002. In the late 1990s in both Muluku and Poso, Christians and Muslims “engaged in violent pogromlike attacks on entire neighborhoods and villages populated by residents identified as believers in the opposing religious faith” (Sidel 2006, 155). Muslim-Christian violence again erupted in April 2004 and December
2008, but not with the same magnitude (International Crisis Group 2010). Central Sulawesi was also the site of communal violence in 1999 when conflict-prone Muslim and Christian gangs began a full-fledged street war. The conflict peaked in mid-2000 when Christians massacred of over 100 Muslims (International Crisis Group 2010).

Ethno-National Separatism

The province of Papua had initially remained a Dutch territory after Indonesian independence in 1949. Preparation for Papuan independence began in the 1950s, but Indonesia opposed the process because it believed the Dutch would continue to control the independent state. Indonesian and Dutch forces began low-level conflict over Papua, which ended with an international agreement that granted Indonesia control over the territory. Since it became an Indonesian province in 1969, a small-scale armed insurgency has fought for Papuan independence. The Indonesian military has responded “with militarization of the region and often harsh and disproportionate responses to dissent or criticism” (Human Rights Watch 2007, 11). In October 2001, the Indonesian government granted partial autonomy to Papua.

Aceh, like most Indonesian provinces, is heavily Muslim (97 percent). However, its inhabitant’s unique cultural solidarity and conservative religiosity (santri identity) has produced a strong separatist movement. Acehnese leaders rebelled after independence when Aceh was denied special political status. Decades of guerilla warfare and counterinsurgency peaked after the fall of Suharto. Human Rights Watch describes 1998 as a “paroxysm of violence,” which included reciprocal brutality between separatist fighters and the military (Human Rights Watch 2001, 9). Between 1998 and 2005, over
7,000 people died (Aspinall 2008, 559). In August 2005, the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian government reached a peace agreement, which allowed local parties to contest provincial elections. Aceh is the only province given this right.

The East Timorese ethno-national struggle resulted in its independence from Indonesia in 2002 after twenty-seven years of occupation. East Timor had remained under Portuguese control until 1975 when Portugal’s political tumult precipitated rapid decolonization. East Timor’s sudden independence was followed with Indonesia’s immediate invasion, which aimed to annex the territory as a new province (Rolls 2004). After the fall of Suharto, international pressure forced President Habibie to fulfill his promise of an independence referendum in East Timor. In the period just before, during, and after the August 1999 referendum, the Indonesian military and allied militias waged a campaign of “mass murder, torture, assault, forced disappearance, mass forcible deportations, the destruction of property, and rape and other sexual violence against women and children,” which killed an estimated 2,000 people (Human Rights Watch 2002). East Timorese independence was formalized in May 2002.

Islamic Militancy

Distinct from other examples of communal violence in Indonesia, Islamic militancy, associated with a radical santri identity, seeks to overturn Indonesia’s secular and pluralist foundation. The most powerful militant group is Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), which has cells throughout Southeast Asia and suspected ties to al-Qaeda. The organization has its roots in Darul Islam, a radical movement from the 1950s, which advocated Islamic law in Indonesia (International Crisis Group 2010). JI’s terrorist
activities increased in the political and social disorder of post-Suharto Indonesia. The organization is implicated in several terrorist attacks, including a December 2000 series of bombings in Manila that killed twenty-two people; a December 2000 wave of church bombings in Indonesia that killed eighteen; a 2002 nightclub bombing in Bali that killed 202; a 2003 car bombing of a Marriott hotel in Jakarta that killed twelve people; a 2003 suicide car bombing outside the Australian Embassy that killed three; and a series of suicide bombings in October 2005 that killed twenty people in Bali (Council on Foreign Relations 2009).

The outbreak of large-scale ethnic riots just as Indonesia transitioned from authoritarianism to multi-party democracy portended the rise of ethnic politics. The volume and deadliness of collective violence peaked in 1999 and 2000 (Varshney, Tadjoeddin, and Panggabean 2013). Crosscutting cleavages were unable to prevent ethnic conflict and were thus unlikely to forestall the formation of particularistic parties. Donald Horowitz notes that despite Indonesia’s multipolar and crosscutting ethnic cleavages, “at rare and dangerous moments they could also split the country down the middle.” This is especially true, he continues, with Indonesia’s two most salient divides: Javanese versus non-Javanese and Muslim versus non-Muslim/secular nationalist (Horowitz 2013, 46). Yet despite this combustible ethnic structure, broad-based, multiethnic political parties have dominated Indonesia’s new democratic era. Tribal parties are non-existent and Islamic parties are in a steady decline. The following sections will survey the existing literature on ethnicity and political behavior and then will demonstrate Indonesia’s
surprisingly multiethnic party system through an extensive empirical analysis of the country’s two most recent national elections.

**Religion, Tribe, and Party Politics**

The role of ethnicity in Indonesian politics has received much attention in the post-Suharto era. Long suppressed by rigid and rigged election rules during decades of authoritarianism, santri-based Islamic parties have proliferated since 1998. However, their actual influence in Indonesian politics is contested. The 2009 parliamentary election gave seats to four Islamic parties in the DPR: the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the National Mandate Party (PAN), the United Development Party (PPP), and the National Awakening Party (PKB). Yet these parties won only 24.1 percent of the vote combined and none gained more than 7.9 percent (Sukma 2010, 56). Moreover, the 2009 results showed a steady decline in support for Islamic parties across elections. In 1955, Islamic parties received 44 percent of the vote. By 1999, their support was down to 36.3 percent. After a small increase in 2004, the overall support for Islamic parties, including those that did not win parliamentary seats, was down to 29.2 percent in 2009.

Dovetailing this decline in support is the apparent rationalization of Indonesian voters. Questioning the importance of identity-based politics in Indonesia, Saiful Mujani and R. William Liddle write that “the democracy that is being consolidated in Indonesia is a secular democracy in which Muslim parties of all kinds…have lost support to fully secular parties” (Mujani and Liddle 2009, 577). They explain that voters now use economic concerns and party platforms rather than religious identity to decide between candidates. "Most Indonesian voters do not give high priority to the demands of religious
and ethnic groups and are therefore not attracted to parties based on religious and ethnic identities” (Mujani and Liddle 2010, 95). This combines with a syncretic Muslim identity in Indonesia that is incompatible with strict Islamic tenets, they argue. Mujani and Liddle find that 57 percent of Indonesian voters are secular, concluding that “secular political parties and secular politicians now dominate Indonesian politics and look set to do so for the foreseeable future” (Mujani and Liddle 2009, 590). Thus, in the battle between santri Islamism and abangan secularism in Indonesia, secular politics has won.

However, some Indonesia scholars reject this secular versus Islamic dichotomy in Indonesian politics as well as the apparent decline in Islam’s political salience. Anies Rasyid Baswedan claims that mainstream Indonesian parties do not fall easily into this two-part typology. He argues for a multifaceted party typology that includes secular-exclusive, secular-inclusive, Islam-exclusive, and Islamist (Baswedan 2004). This is necessary, he contends, because parties often present a mixed religious image. Nominally Islamic parties, such as PAN and PKB, oppose hard-line Islamic positions even while catering to Muslim voters and organizations. Conversely, Golkar—generally considered a secular-nationalist party—has taken Islam-friendly positions on controversial issues, such as the 2003 education bill that effectively mandated Islamic instruction in Christian schools (Baswedan 2004, 677).

Furthermore, Sunny Tanuwidijaja argues that “the so-called nationalist parties, or parties proclaiming Pancasila as their party’s foundation, also support an Islamic agenda” (Tanuwidjaja 2010, 40). Indeed, the supposedly secular Democrat Party supported the conservative anti-pornography law. Many mainstream parties have also
responded to the persecution of the “heretical” Ahmadiyah sect with virtual silence. This evidence combines with surveys showing strong support for Shariah among Indonesians (Baswedan 2004, 683). This school of scholars rejects the “rational voter” thesis of Mujani and Liddle, arguing that Islam and identity are still important in Indonesian politics.

While the role of Islam in Indonesian politics is debated, there is little attention given to the political importance of tribal groups. This is because there are no political parties explicitly formed around tribal identity outside of Aceh. As will be discussed in a later chapter, Indonesian party rules prohibit local political parties in all provinces except Aceh. However, this does not preclude the use of tribal appeals during elections by otherwise national parties. Additionally, Javanese dominance of Indonesian politics remains a contentious issue. Given the rise of violence around ethnic identities after Suharto, there is a strong a priori reason to expect both tribal and religious appeals to play an important role in Indonesian elections.

Religion and Tribe in the 2004 and 2009 Elections

In order to assess the ethnic and multiethnic dynamics of Indonesian elections, data from the 2004 and 2009 elections were collected and analyzed. This section examines presidential and vice-presidential debates, campaign rhetoric during rallies and election events, the ethnic composition of party outreach, and the communal composition of parliament. Finally, this section analyzes election results sorted by ethnic group, which

84 However, the specific tenets of Shariah receive much less support than Shariah in general.
differentiates election process (the campaign) from election outcome (voting patterns). In sum, Indonesia’s main political parties all mobilize voters with almost exclusively multiethnic appeals, which produces elections in which ethnic groups divide their votes between parties.

Debate and Platform Analysis, Election 2009

The presidential and vice-presidential candidates held a series of debates in the weeks prior to the 2009 election. Presidential candidates Megawati Sukarnoputri, Jusuf Kalla, and incumbent president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono held three debates on separate topics: 1) good government, legal enforcement, and human rights; 2) poverty and unemployment; and 3) democracy, regional autonomy, and the unitary state. Vice-presidential candidates Boediono, Wiranto, and Prabowo Subianto debated two topics: 1) building a national character; and 2) raising Indonesia’s standard of living. The opening statements made during these debates constitute the clearest annunciation of the parties’ ideological and policy platform. Within each debate theme, the candidates first outlined their party’s core objectives and orientation toward issues. Next, they were questioned on sub-issues within the theme, allowing each candidate to advocate his or her specific approach. This section first analyzes the candidates’ opening statements, which represented the party’s general policy agenda toward each theme; then it analyzes the exchange between candidates on each sub-issue, during which each party’s position could be clearly differentiated. As will be shown, there was little substantive difference
between the candidates during their opening statements or direct exchanges, and almost no mention of ethnic issues.\textsuperscript{85}

During the course of the debates’ opening statements, each set of candidates laid out their party’s platform for the campaign. Megawati and Prabowo, representing PDI-P, emphasized Indonesia’s nationalist leaders and the 1945 Constitution. “We have to realize our founding fathers goal of building the country with good governance and law enforcement,” Megawati implored during the first debate. Good governance, she claimed, has five aspects: serving the people, protecting the people, reforming the bureaucracy, raising civil servant salaries to prevent corruption, and improving the capability of civil servants. In a later debate, Megawati extolled Sukarno, Muhammad Hatta, and the founding ideology of \textit{Pancasila}. The PDI-P team often espoused economic populism. On the topics of national character and living standards, Prabowo emphasized the party’s “people’s economy programs” designed to ensure a more equal distribution of wealth and “return the power of the economy to the hands of the Indonesian people.” Megawati also called for the stoppage of sugar and rice imports to increase domestic agricultural and fishing productivity. In the second vice-presidential debate, Prabowo called for an

increased governmental role in poverty alleviation, including the provision of food, clothing, shelter, health services, clean water, and free education to Indonesians.

SBY and Boediono, representing the ruling Democrat Party, praised the preceding five years of government performance while also acknowledging the need for reform during their opening statements. “We must continue to reform our bureaucracy” to build good governance, SBY claimed, without which corruption, collusion, nepotism, and poor service delivery will expand and the business climate and national pride will suffer. During the first debate, SBY recognized the need to “uphold human rights” and bolster law enforcement, but “at present,” he claimed, “we don’t yet have a culture to respect the law.” In the first vice-presidential debate, Boediono argued that “clean government is the key to build the nation’s character,” which he defined as national culture, politics, economy, and law. SBY praised his administration’s stewardship of the Indonesian economy during the global economic crisis as well as government intervention programs, such as direct cash aid and rice distribution, which had reduced poverty. In order to raise Indonesia’s standard of living, Boediono called for an expansion of free education and healthcare and called upon families to have less children. On the topic of democracy and the state, SBY praised the role of Pancasila and the reformasi movement, but admitted the need for changes to the administration of regional autonomy.

Representing Golkar, Yusuf Kalla and Wiranto emphasized themes similar to the other candidates during their opening statements. Kalla called for a salary increase for civil servants, improved service delivery, and a strong role for government in social issues. The government, he argued, was the “motor” of programs designed to create a
“prosperous and just country.” Wiranto claimed that Indonesia “did not know” itself and needed to build its “soul” and “body” to strengthen its national character. Kalla argued he would defend national unity and emphasized his role in negotiating the end of regional conflicts in Aceh and Ambon. On economic suffering, Kalla argued that poverty was due to a lack of education and access to financing. He called for better infrastructure, the development of agriculture, and the pursuit of 8 percent economic growth. Kalla supported regional autonomy, but argued that “there are still many weaknesses, and we have to ensure that each region can take care of itself.” Wiranto summed up the pair’s mission “to establish a country of equality, competitiveness, independence, and dignity.”

During the actual debates, the candidates did little to distinguish their policy positions from each other. In five televised interactions, the candidates often agreed with each other’s analysis and positions. Even when not explicitly agreeing with one another, there was little substantive difference between most of their answers, which were often nearly identical. Of the thirty questions asked during the debates, twenty-three of the candidates’ answers were either the same or variations of the same answer. There was general agreement on a broad array of issues, including expanding the military budget, addressing corruption, protecting migrant workers, aiding flood victims, preserving human rights, reducing conflict, preventing future transit accidents, strengthening education, reinforcing Pancasila, helping farmers, expanding fuel subsidies, improving election administration, promoting regional autonomy, and enhancing national unity.

When the candidates disagreed, it was more a matter of degree than of substance. On the issue of encouraging investment in labor-intensive businesses, they disagreed
whether it was the investment law or the labor law that needed reform. In addressing the budget deficit, Megawati emphasized economic independence, Kalla sought to make the state more efficient, and SBY wanted to delay privatization. Both Kalla and Megawati advocated reform of the outsourcing law, while SBY believed “we should not be in a hurry to revise the law.” There was modest disagreement over the feasibility of universal healthcare (though not regarding its necessity), the balance between funding vocational versus general schools, and the effectiveness of family planning regulations (though not regarding the need to curb population growth).

The vice-presidential candidates demonstrated a subtle difference in their views on the role of religion and the state. Boediono argued, “Religion is so noble; it should not be used as a political element.” Prabowo, agreeing with Boediono, said, “religion must be placed above politics and the state must ensure freedom to embrace religion.” However, Wiranto, chastising Boediono directly, contended, “religious values should be implemented to build political ethics. We must have morality in politics.” The paucity of direct references to religion or tribe during these debates is striking. Boediono briefly mentioned the importance of Islamic schools during the second vice-presidential debate. Additionally, Kalla claimed in his final statement of the last debate that if he lost, he would return home to “take care of the mosque” (among other things).

As the only presidential candidate not in the administration, Megawati was able to criticize the government most forcefully. Regarding the Lapindo mud disaster, she argued, “the government should have taken over the case.” She also said, “the current government lacks the political will to run a fair election.” The most forceful (and
unprompted) criticism of one candidate toward another came from Kalla, who said in his opening statement to the third debate that SBY’s campaign ad, which claimed that a one-round election would save taxpayer money, was inappropriate and anti-democratic. He wondered sarcastically whether SBY would next argue that the elimination of elections altogether would save the voters much more money.

In sum, the debates’ appeals did little to clarify each party’s platform or distinguish the political choices available to voters. Press coverage of the debates emphasized this point. One political observer described the first debate as “mediocre,” during which “the three candidates did their best to agree and when it came to areas where the three had differences, they did their best to gloss over them with banalities.”

Moreover, candidates preferred “to agree with their rivals' remarks rather than propose concrete solutions.” Where there was disagreement, it was described as “warm” and ultimately “timid.”

86 Wimar Witoelar, “Mediocre in content, the presidential debate is historic,” *The Jakarta Post*, June 19, 2009


89 Meidyatama Suryodiningrat, “A speech, a lecture, and a song from all the president’s men,” *The Jakarta Post*, June 24, 2009
agendas for the future of the country. Some of their policies also contradicted previous statements.90

While the debates did represent the clearest exposition of each party’s platform, these turned out to be mostly indistinguishable and equally platitudinous. Additionally, ethnicity was minimally discussed. The role of Islam and the state was treated in abstract terms, but no candidate directly addressed issues of Shariah law or the status of the Ahmadiyah sect, both controversial topics. Tribal appeals played a similarly negligible role. Beyond calls for national unity, the issues of tribal violence or separatism were unimportant. The candidates emphasized policy issues, such as service delivery, unemployment, and education.

Campaign 2009 Rhetoric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral

Televised debates are tailored to a national audience, whereas campaigns are tailored to the local audience. This creates the possibility that ethnic rhetoric is more prominent during rallies and election events than during debates. In order to analyze the ethnic rhetoric of Indonesia’s 2009 parliamentary and presidential election campaigns, 390 issue statements (217 from the presidential campaign and 173 from the parliamentary campaign) were drawn from The Jakarta Post, an English-language newspaper published in Jakarta. Using only The Jakarta Post created three methodological problems. First, using one newspaper could potentially skew the geographic representativeness of the statements collected if the paper’s coverage is tilted to its publishing area. Second, if there is systematic bias in the paper’s coverage toward particular parties or figures, then

90 “Candidates sidestep tough questions,” The Jakarta Post, June 27, 2009
the sample of statements collected will be similarly biased. Third, by using an English-
language newspaper in a country where few people actually speak English, this analysis
thus relies on news coverage that caters to a small, English-speaking elite and might
misrepresent political reality.

However, there is good reason to believe that the sample of issue statements
collected from *The Jakarta Post* is representative and reliable. First, *The Jakarta Post* is
widely regarded as the best newspaper in Indonesia. Its political coverage is considered
extensive and fair and its editorial page features prominent local and international
academics and public intellectuals. Though published in Jakarta, its coverage of the 2009
campaign included rallies from across the country (as will shown below). Furthermore,
any political bias in the paper’s coverage is indecipherable. In sum, though it is not ideal
to rely on a single, English-language source, *The Jakarta Post* unequivocally provides the
most thorough political coverage of any newspaper. In fact, using other vernacular
newspapers would doubtless produce a more partial and biased picture of Indonesian
elections.

For the parliamentary election, the period of March 13, 2009 through April 5,
2009 was analyzed. This includes the full open-campaign period as well as several days
of the closed-campaign period. For the presidential campaign, the period June 2, 2009
through July 4, 2009 was analyzed, which again includes the full open-campaign period
and part of the closed period.91 The coverage included statements made in twenty-five of
Indonesia’s (then) thirty-three provinces (from as far west as Aceh to as far east as Papua), which represents a reasonably inclusive geographical distribution.\(^92\) The coding included statements from twenty-eight parties during the parliamentary election and all three competing tickets during the presidential election.

In order to assess bridging, bonding, and neutral rhetoric in the Indonesian setting, the traditional tribal and religious constituency of the main parties had to be determined. The project follows the conventional categorization of Indonesian parties, which considers Golkar, PDIP, and the Democratic Party (as well as newcomers Hanura and Gerindra) to be *abangan*, secular-nationalist parties and PKS, PAN, PPP, PKB (and others) to be *santri*, Islamic parties. For example, a Golkar candidate emphasizing the importance of Islamic schools (appealing to *santri* Muslims) or a PKS candidate emphasizing pluralism (appealing to *abangan* Muslims or other religious minorities) was coded as bridging; a PDI-P candidate reaffirming opposition to the pornography law or an Aceh-based candidate supporting *Shariah* law was considered bonding; and statements regarding issues of service delivery, the economy, education, etc., which could not be considered explicitly secular or Islamic, were coded as neutral. Tribal issues emerged minimally during the campaign, but this analysis considered each of the main presidential

---

\(^{91}\) Indonesia’s election period is divided into a closed period, during which the party can distribute material and hold invitation-only meetings. During the open, or public, period, parties can hold mass rallies.

\(^{92}\) No campaign statements were coded from Bangka-Belitung, Bengkulu, Gorontalo, Maluku, North Sulawesi, Riau Islands, West Kalimantan, and West Nussa Tenggara. Indonesia now has 34 provinces.
contenders as part of Java-based parties and coded ethnic rhetoric using the same logic as outlined above. The following case-specific rubric was used:

Table 4: Bridging, Bonding, Neutral Coding Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to ethnic groups</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Pluralism, tolerance</td>
<td>- Tribal or religious superiority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Unity between tribal or religious groups</td>
<td>- Tribal or religious unity</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to party or other parties</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- We are inclusive or all religions and tribes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Need for cooperation across party lines</td>
<td>- We represent interests religious or tribal community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Other party can’t/doesn’t represent religious or tribal community</td>
<td>Other party bad on service delivery or governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to specific policy issue</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive reference to a policy issue that is uniquely important to non-traditional tribal or religious base</td>
<td>Positive reference to a policy that is uniquely important to traditional base/Only benefits traditional base</td>
<td>Reference to policy that is relevant across groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rhetorical content of the parliamentary and presidential campaigns in 2009 was remarkably similar. Eighty-eight percent of the total rhetoric—including 88 percent of the presidential rhetoric and 87 percent the parliamentary rhetoric—focused on neutral policy statements. Bridging and bonding rhetoric, or statements that directly targeted one particular constituency, constituted barely more than 10 percent of the rhetoric. Nine percent of the total campaign rhetoric (11 percent of the presidential statements and 6.5 percent of the parliamentary statements) was bridging. Bonding statements comprised only 3 percent of the total rhetoric, but did represent the largest distinction between the two campaign periods. A little over six percent of the parliamentary rhetoric, which included regional parties in the heavily Islamic Aceh, was bonding, while only 1 percent of presidential rhetoric targeted the party’s traditional constituency.
The Parliamentary Campaign

Of the few bonding statements coded (6.5 percent) during the parliamentary campaign, half discussed Shariah law and most were made by Aceh-based parties. The Independent Acehnese People’s Voice called for “the enforcement of Islamic law.” The Acehnese People’s Independent Aspiration Party promoted the adoption of Islamic teaching in all areas. Both of these statements targeted santri Islamic voters in the province. The small Christian-based Prosperous Peace Party (PDS) was the only party to openly oppose Shariah, calling on the parliament to reject Islamic jurisprudence, which

---

93 “SIRA Party vows to maintain peace in Aceh province,” *The Jakarta Post*, March 30, 2009

as an attempt to bond with its traditional constituency.\(^9\) PDS also promoted the strict separation of church and state.\(^9\) Additional bonding statements included Gerinda’s stated opposition to the anti-pornography law in Bali,\(^9\) the United Development Party’s (PPP) argument to ban *Ahmadiyah* (the only mention of this topic found in either campaign sample),\(^9\) and the Prosperous Justice Party’s (PKS) call on supporters to demonstrate the importance of an Islamic party during the election.

The parliamentary campaign featured as much bridging as bonding rhetoric, which included mostly generic promotion of pluralism. A party official from the traditionally Islamic National Mandate Party (PAN) proclaimed, “We vow to restore our founding principles as a pluralist and open party, rather than a party with an Islamic nuance.”\(^9\) The oftentimes hard-line PPP claimed it was “committed to a pluralist Indonesia” and did not oppose a female leader.\(^10\) A PKS spokesperson said his party was committed to the conservative Jakarta Charter as well as “accommodating pluralism to

\(^9\) “Christian PDS party fights to strengthen country's pluralism,” *The Jakarta Post*, March 25, 2009

\(^9\) “Christian PDS party fights to strengthen country's pluralism,” *The Jakarta Post*, March 25, 2009

\(^9\) “Gerinda promises special status for Bali,” *The Jakarta Post*, April 6, 2009

\(^9\) “Supporting a green party,” *The Jakarta Post*, March 29, 2009

\(^9\) “PAN vows to step out from Muhammadiyah's shadow,” *The Jakarta Post*, March 13, 2009

allow all social elements with different ethnics and religions to live peacefully.”

The small Sovereign Party claimed it was a “party for all people, regardless of political, ethnic, educational or religious background.” PDS also supported “pluralism and religious freedom” and claimed it had no problem aligning with the more Islamic PKS. Additionally, PKS claimed publically that its constituents “prefer an alliance with the Demokrats.”

Neutral rhetoric constituted 87 percent of the parliamentary rhetoric. Of these statements, the topic of economy and development was most common. Campaigning on behalf of the Democrat Party in Jakarta, SBY said Indonesia was improving economically under his leadership because of programs that favor the people. In West Java, SBY claimed that direct-assistance programs “are not corrupt” and are given only to those most deserving. In Yogyakarta, SBY emphasized the party’s “pro-people development programs” including cash aid and unemployment alleviation. A PAN official promised to “give every village in Indonesia a Rp 1.5 billion annual budget to

101 “PKS puts off Islamic face to lure secular voters,” The Jakarta Post, March 24, 2009
102 “Sovereignty Party 'born' to uphold Constitution,” The Jakarta Post, April 1, 2009
103 “Christian PDS party fights to strengthen country's pluralism,” The Jakarta Post, March 25, 2009
104 “True alliances yet to be seen as parties close ranks,” The Jakarta Post, March 30, 2009
105 “SBY joins campaign fray in capital,” The Jakarta Post, March 21, 2009
106 “SBY strikes back at rivals over programs,” The Jakarta Post, March 28, 2009
107 “Campaign season to wrap up today,” The Jakarta Post, April 5, 2009
support development projects.”

Gerindra candidates promised to enhance the people’s access to natural resources and create economic empowerment through regional autonomy. Prabowo Subianto, Gerindra’s presidential candidate, claimed the party was “determined to develop a people-oriented economy to empower low-income people, mainly farmers, fishermen and teachers.” Speaking on behalf of PDI-P, Megawati said that under SBY’s leadership unemployment and poverty had increased and economic development had stagnated. Other parties, including Hanura, the Sovereign Party, the Labor Party, and Aceh-based parties (among others) called for more jobs and critiqued the foreign domination of resources.

Among other neutral issues, corruption, women’s rights, and education were common. Virtually all parties made some claim to transparent leadership. Rama Pratama of PKS claimed the party was “clean” and free of corruption. Prabowo said there was

108 “PKS has Jakarta seeing white, as others pile on the promises,” The Jakarta Post, March 31, 2009

109 “Parties lack commitment to environmental protection,” The Jakarta Post, April 4, 2009

110 “Election frenzy hits ethnic Papuan elites,” The Jakarta Post, March 20, 2009

111 Ultimately, Gerindra joined forces with PDIP and Prabowo teamed with Megawati during the presidential election.

112 “PKB mass gathers support for Gerindra, Prabowo,” The Jakarta Post, March 16, 2009

113 “Campaign season to wrap up today,” The Jakarta Post, April 5, 2009

114 “PKS has Jakarta seeing white, as others pile on the promises,” The Jakarta Post, March 31, 2009
no “corruption, collusion, or nepotism” in Gerindra.\(^\text{115}\) Megawati critiqued the Democrat Party’s cash-aid program as an abuse of state resources.\(^\text{116}\) During a campaign stop in East Java, local candidates competed over the women’s vote: a Golkar candidate said she would “ensure pro-women budgeting;” a PD candidate called for gender equality in the economy; and a PKS candidate promoted greater social justice for women.\(^\text{117}\) In Bali, a Gerindra candidate said Indonesians needed to “fight discrimination against women.”\(^\text{118}\) Golkar,\(^\text{119}\) PPP,\(^\text{120}\) and the Aceh People’s Party\(^\text{121}\) all called for free education. Parties also often emphasized increased access to education and higher pay for teachers. Other neutral topics included domestic stability, environmental protection, aid specifically to farmers and fishermen, foreign investment, migrant workers, and human rights.

In sum, parties used mostly policy-based rhetoric during the parliamentary campaign. Bonding and bridging rhetoric was used minimally and almost exclusively by small and peripheral parties. Candidates and spokespersons from the main contenders—PDI-P, Golkar, and PD—all overwhelmingly emphasized neutral policy rhetoric,

\(^\text{115}\) “Students rejects Prabowo’s presence in South Sumatra,” The Jakarta Post, April 2, 2009

\(^\text{116}\) “SBY counters Megawati’s criticisms of cash aid,” The Jakarta Post, March 29, 2009

\(^\text{117}\) “The unexpected face of Indonesian politics,” The Jakarta Post, March 30, 2009

\(^\text{118}\) “Gerindra promises special status for Bali,” The Jakarta Post, April 6, 2009

\(^\text{119}\) “Kalla: Golkar to continue Soeharto’s ideals,” The Jakarta Post, April 4, 2009

\(^\text{120}\) “SBY pledges peace in Aceh, Mega calls for ballot punch,” The Jakarta Post, March 30, 2009

\(^\text{121}\) Education, employment major issues for PRA,” The Jakarta Post, April 3, 2009
avoiding altogether any controversial issues, such as the *Ahmadiyah* sect or the pornography law, which could have alienated voters. Even on policy issues, the parties, both major and minor, promoted virtually identical and unobjectionable positions: for example, free education, national unity, ending corruption, or helping farmers. In describing his party’s ideological agenda, one official admitted “we are not campaigning on issues…ambiguity is the best policy.”

Even Islam-based parties positioned themselves as moderate and secular. In an interview discussing the 2009 campaign, a PKB member of parliament insisted “Our political platform is much more democratic than Islamist…We want to build a democratic state where Islamic values shape the life of politics…but not the institutions.” He added “the foundation of this party is *Pancasila* just like the secular parties.” A PKS official described his party’s platform as “more or less similar to other political parties.” Similarly, PAN Deputy Chairman described his party as “open, reform, and pluralist” and “moving toward the so-called secular nationalist camp.” The recasting of *santri* political parties as secular and inclusive indicates a strategic abandonment of

---

122 Interview, Zulkieflimansyah, November 6, 2011, party strategist and former MP, PKS

123 Interview, Hanif Dakiri, November 28, 2011, Secretary General of PKB

124 Interview, Zulkieflimansyah, November 6, 2011, party strategist and former parliamentarian, PKS

125 Interview, Bima Arya, November 4, 2011, Deputy Chairman of PAN
identity-based appeals. As Yenny Wahid, the daughter of former Indonesian president, said “People do not want to vote for an outright Islamic agenda anymore.”

*The Presidential Campaign*

The presidential campaign in 2009 featured pairs of candidates aligned across traditional party divisions. Megawati teamed with New Order official and Gerindra candidate, Prabowo Subianto, to lead PDI-P. Jusuf Kalla (then SBY’s vice president) challenged the sitting president with Wiranto on the Golkar ticket. SBY chose banker Boediono as his new vice presidential candidate for the PD. The ties across partisan lines between the main contenders made vibrant debate improbable. Moreover, the formation of broader coalitions around each candidacy further blurred ideological distinctions. Golkar formed a coalition with ten other parties, including PDI-P, Hanura, Gerindra, the Islamic PBR, and Christian PDS. PDI-P, in conjunction with its Golkar coalition, nominated its own candidate. This effectively gave the coalition two candidates with which to challenge SBY—Megawati and Kalla—both of whom agreed to support the other in the case of a second-round runoff against the PD. These two supposedly competing candidates were unlikely to level harsh criticism toward one another, but neither could Kalla—SBY’s sitting vice president—heavily criticize the polices for which he was partly responsible. SBY’s countervailing coalition included four Islamic parties: PAN, PKB, PPP, and PKS. The openly secular PD had thus aligned with several hard-line Islamic parties.

---

126 Interview, Yenny Wahid, November 17, 2011, PKB official
It would have been difficult for these ideologically diverse coalitions to sustain themselves should the candidates have targeted traditional constituencies. Indeed, bonding rhetoric constituted only 1 percent of the presidential rhetoric. Megawati, representing the traditionally aggressively secular PDI-P, promoted her party’s opposition to the anti-pornography law while campaigning.\(^{127}\) Tribal groups were briefly raised on the campaign trail when a PD spokesperson claimed that no one from South Sulawesi could be president—a reference Jusuf Kalla. The statement precipitated a strong response and a quick renunciation from SBY and Boediono themselves.\(^{128}\)

Given the inclusive image of the main competing parties and the coalitions they formed with religious parties, it is unsurprising that bridging rhetoric—defined as outreach to \textit{santri} Muslims for these particular parties—increased during the presidential campaign (from 6.5 percent to 11 percent). Kalla and Wiranto made several trips to Islamic schools, extolling their importance in Indonesia. In East Java, Kalla proclaimed, “That’s why I always appreciate kyai [Islamic clerics], founders, managers and the next generation of pesantrens who have long been serving [Indonesia].”\(^{129}\) In Central Java, Kalla said, “Islamic boarding schools…are a vital element of strengthening social movements and reforms.”\(^ {130}\) In West Java, SBY promised to modernize Islamic schools

\(^{127}\) “Warung’ and weaving this weekend,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 28, 2009

\(^{128}\) “Prabowo says no to imported milk,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, July 7, 2009

\(^{129}\) “Show time for vice presidential candidates,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 2, 2009

\(^{130}\) “Kalla heads back to school, Prabowo meets local leaders,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 20, 2009
across the country. All the candidates also praised Indonesia’s pluralistic nature. Kalla said, “pluralism should be the basis for building the nation.” SBY said, “our democracy and politics will encounter setbacks if we involve ethnic, religious and racial issues in political competitions.” Megawati emphasized the diversity in her own family. The targeting of Muslim voters became briefly heated when a leaflet distributed at a Kalla event asked, “Doesn't PKS know Boediono's wife is a Catholic?” Boediono responded forcefully, calling the claim “slanderous” and untrue.

Despite this increase in bridging rhetoric toward santri Muslims, the issues raised were either bland (funding for Islamic schools) or petty (the religious identity of Boediono’s wife). Substantive issues regarding Islamic law, Ahmadiyah, or the pornography law were again avoided. Just as in the parliamentary campaign, the vast majority of the issues were related to neutral policies. The language regarding the economy and development was more nationalistic and populist in tone than during the parliamentary campaign. Throughout the election, Megawati emphasized a “people’s economy” that would empower local business and restrict outsourcing and foreign exploitation. She accused SBY of supporting “neoliberalist economic policies that

131 “Kalla, Mega go to markets, SBY dresses up,” The Jakarta Post, June 18, 2009

132 “Citizens have an equal right to lead the country: Kalla,” The Jakarta Post, July 3, 2009

133 “Candidates pay lip service to pluralism,” The Jakarta Post, June 13, 2009

134 “SBY-Boediono protest smear campaign at Kalla rally,” The Jakarta Post, June 24, 2009

135 “Candidates focus on debate preparations,” The Jakarta Post, June 26, 2009
prioritized the welfare of the rich rather than the poor.”\textsuperscript{136} In response, SBY called for a “pro-people” development policy that provided cash assistance to the poor and rejected neoliberalism. Kalla and Wiranto promised more money for the poor, less energy exports, and better conditions for local business. All three candidates also promised more fertilizer to farmers and more fuel to fisherman.

While many of the same parliamentary issues were raised during the presidential campaign, the candidates emphasized two new issues: military spending and foreign policy. However, their positions on these issues were identical. Kalla promised to double the defense budget.\textsuperscript{137} Megawati said she would make defense spending 20 percent of the budget in order to modernize military equipment.\textsuperscript{138} SBY followed with general calls to increase the defense budget. On foreign policy issues, all three candidates emphasized a strong and independent Indonesia. A spokesman for Kalla said the candidate was committed to “rebuilding Indonesia’s leadership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations” and making Indonesia the foremost nation in the region.\textsuperscript{139} The Megawati campaign said it would “proactively safeguard the country’s sovereignty” and was against all neocolonialism.\textsuperscript{140} SBY’s team stressed the pursuit of a “free and active” foreign policy and emphasized that SBY was “established and fluent” in international

\textsuperscript{136}“Survey says SBY to win election in a single round,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 5, 2009

\textsuperscript{137}“Raise budget, build military industry, Kalla team,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 6, 2009

\textsuperscript{138}“Megawati offers huge defense budget hike,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 5, 2009

\textsuperscript{139}“Presidential hopefuls outline foreign policy,” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 4, 2009

\textsuperscript{140}“Presidential hopefuls outline foreign policy” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 4, 2009
politics.\textsuperscript{141} Beyond these two topics, presidential candidates and parliamentary candidates were consumed by the same issues, which included corruption, human rights, education, service delivery, and migrant workers.

The focus on policy issues did not mean that tribe and religion did not play a role in campaign imagery. Dr. Luky Djani of Transparency International - Indonesia, notes, “political parties certainly wanted to renew their Islamic credentials” but “this is just for the sake of symbolism.”\textsuperscript{142} One candidate explained in an interview the importance of female candidates to dress modestly in conservative areas.\textsuperscript{143} Another member of parliament described his recent electoral victory: “I defeated a candidate from my own party because of a simple reason: he produced a biography that shows his picture with his wife…with no scarf.” He described his district as “very Muslim but they are moderate. If they see people not using the Muslim hat, they will think ‘this is not a good guy’.”\textsuperscript{144}

National elections also produce tribal imaging. For example, a Democrat Party MP explained that it is important for candidates in Bali to speak Balinese.\textsuperscript{145} PAN Deputy Chairman said, “It’s a must to accommodate the issue of Javanese and non-Javanese”

\textsuperscript{141} “Presidential hopefuls outline foreign policy” \textit{The Jakarta Post}, June 4, 2009

\textsuperscript{142} Interview, Luky Djani, November 7, 2011, Deputy Secretary General of Transparency International - Indonesia

\textsuperscript{143} Interview, 11/11/11, anonymous Democratic Party MP

\textsuperscript{144} Interview, 11/28/11, Hanif Dakiri, Secretary General of PKB

\textsuperscript{145} Interview, 11/11/11, anonymous Democratic Party MP
when selecting a candidate and deputy candidate for an executive position.\textsuperscript{146} The Secretary General of PKB similarly noted, “In Papua, if you don’t put a Papuan candidate…then you will fail.”\textsuperscript{147} Parties will also run a candidate from outside its traditional ethnic constituency in order to win a particular district, but this is not widely acknowledged publicly. A PKS official noted that in Christian areas “some of our candidates are not Muslim,” but this was downplayed because “some traditional voters will not like it.”\textsuperscript{148}

In sum, the presidential and parliamentary campaigns were both strongly multiethnic. The slightly higher percentage of bridging rhetoric during the presidential campaign can be explained by the presence of fewer candidates competing over the entire electorate (rather than district-based candidates during the parliamentary election). However, the traditionally abangan presidential parties did not aggressively court the santri vote nor did they make an overt effort to solidify their secular-nationalist credentials. The parties overwhelmingly stayed on safe ground, preferring policy (neutral) to tribal or religious (bridging and bonding) appeals.

Party Contacts during the 2004 Campaign

Beyond public statements made during debates and rallies, election campaigns also employ direct voter contacts, whose multiethnic character can also be assessed. A

\textsuperscript{146} Interview, 11/4/11, Bima Arya, Deputy Chairman of PAN

\textsuperscript{147} Interview, 11/28/11, Hanif Dakiri, Secretary General of PKB

\textsuperscript{148} Interview, 11/06/11, Zulkieflimansyah, party strategist and former parliamentarian, PKS
A survey asked Indonesians which if any parties contacted them during the 2004 campaign. Examining the number and demographics of voter contacts during an election illuminates the strength of party organization as well as their electoral strategy.

Indonesian political parties weakly connect with voters during elections. Only 18 percent of Indonesians reported contact from a party during the 2004 campaign (directly, by letter, or by telephone). The highest percentage of Indonesians reported contact from Golkar, which reached 5.4 percent of Indonesians. The two multiethnic parties (Golkar and PDI-P) reached 10.2 percent of Indonesians. The moderately Islamic parties (PAN, PBB, and PKB) together contacted 8.8 percent of the population. PKS and PPP—both santri, Islamist parties—together contacted 5.2 percent of Indonesians.

Figure 24: Percent of Indonesians Contacted By Each Party

Source: (CNEP 2004a): Figure constructed by author.

Of those contacted, 56.28 percent reported being contacted by Golkar or PDI-P and 28.84 percent reported contact from Islamist parties PKS and PPP. These numbers indicate both the overall weakness of party structure as well as the relative strength of the
multiethnic parties. Eighty-two percent of Indonesians reported no contact from a party during 2004. Given that Indonesia’s multilevel democracy produces hundreds of thousands of candidates in an election cycle, the low level of voter contact indicates that directly relating to individual voters is not the preferred method of campaigning or that parties simply do not have the apparatus to support direct-contact campaigning.

Figure 25: Indonesians Contacted, Percent By Party

When we sort party contacts by tribal group, we find that no ethnic group is targeted disproportionately. Looking narrowly at those contacted in-person by a political party—and for convenience looking only at the four parties most ideologically and ethnically polarized—Javanese constituted the highest percentage of those contacted by three of the four parties in 2004. With Javanese constituting the plurality of the population, it makes sense that this group would be targeted most heavily. However, no party spent more than approximately 35 percent of its in-person contact efforts on Javanese voters. Additionally, ideological polarization between parties did not seem to
influence whether any one group was targeted disproportionately. The santri, Islamist PPP contacted in-person more Javanese as a percentage of its targeting effort than did the multiethnic Golkar but less than the PDI-P. Thus, both abangan and santri parties believe Javanese voters are worth pursuing, indicating no particular political identity with this group. This is true for the Sundanese, Malay, Madurese, and Batak as well, which were not overwhelming targeted by any one party.

Figure 26: In-Person Party Contact by Ethnic Group

Sorting this data by religious group provides similarly inconclusive results. Muslims constitute 90 percent of the population and thus we would expect most of those contacted in-person by each party to identify with this religion. Indeed, over 80 percent of each party’s in-person contracts were directed towards Muslims. Unfortunately, we cannot make the distinction between santri and abangan voters with this data. However, there was a clear distinction between the multiethnic parties and santri, Islamist parties in
their effort to contact non-Muslim voters. Christians constituted 15.4 percent and 11.4 percent of in-person contacts for PDI-P and Golkar respectively. Whereas no Christian voters reported in-person contact from PKS and only 3.1 percent of those contacted by PPP was Christian.

Figure 27: In-Person Party Contact by Religious Group

![Figure 27: In-Person Party Contact by Religious Group](image)

Source: (CNEP 2004a); Figure constructed by author.

*“Christian” combines Protestant and Catholic

The multiethnic strategy of party contacts further demonstrates the multiethnic character of Indonesia’s politics. Both the traditionally multiethnic parties and the Islamic parties targeted a diverse tribal constituency. All parties targeted Javanese voters most, but not to the exclusion of other tribal groups. Though the survey data cannot provide a more fine-grained understanding of Muslim outreach, we do see that minority groups are contacted significantly more by multiethnic parties than by Islamist parties.
Communal Composition of Parliament, 2009

The nature of election campaigns outlined above suggests that all Indonesian political parties focus on multiethnic appeals. This is reflected in the broadly representative parliament elected after the 2009 campaign. Of 560 DPR members, 82.32 percent were Muslim and 11.96 were Christian, with the remaining either Buddhist, Hindu, or unknown.149 This mildly under-represents Muslims and over-represents Christians, which makes the DPR somewhat more religiously diverse than the Indonesian people.

Figure 28: Religious Composition of Parliament: 2009-2014 DPR

Source: Figure constructed by author using parliament roster

When broken down by party, each of the main multiethnic parties over-represented Christians among their MPs and under-represented the majority Muslim

149 Indonesia’s parliament provides the religious identity of members of parliament, but not their cultural identity, which cannot be dispersed by name (as in India and South Africa). This analysis therefore excludes cultural group.
population. The Democrat Party MPs were 80.67 percent Muslim and 13.31 percent Christian. Golkar MPs were 83.98 percent Muslim and 13.21 percent Christian. The most secular of the leading parties, PDI-P, had only 59.57 percent Muslim MPs and 29.79 Christian MPs. However, santri parties, PAN and PKS, both over-represented Muslims. PKS had 100 percent Muslim MPs and PAN had 91.11 percent Muslim MPs. The composition of parliament only indicates the religious identity of those who won and not the full range of candidates selected by each party. Nevertheless, the inclusive communal composition by the three largest parties in the 2009 parliament suggests that each party chose a religiously representative group of candidates to compete in the election.

Figure 29: Communal Composition of MPs by Party, 2009 DPR

Source: Figure constructed by author using parliament roster

Tribal, Religious, and Regional Group Voting Behavior

The above examination of political party strategy suggests that Indonesian parties pursue a multiethnic set of voters during campaigns. Election outcomes appear to confirm this claim. When voting behavior is sorted by tribal group, religious group, and regional
location, little discernable pattern emerges. Political parties have diverse ethnic constituencies. The following analysis draws on election data from the 2004 parliamentary election and the 2009 presidential election.

Tribal and Religious Voting Behavior

In 2004, the religious breakdown of the electoral constituencies of the multiethnic parties (Golkar, PDI-P, and the Democrat Party), moderate Islamic santri parties (PKB, PBB, and PAN), and Islamist santri parties (PPP and PKS) were largely Muslim given the overwhelming prevalence of Muslim voters in Indonesia. For Golkar, PDI-P and PD, Muslims constituted 90.7 percent, 78.7 percent, and 84 percent of their respective constituencies. The PDI-P had the most diverse electoral bloc: approximately 16 percent and 5 percent of their voters were Christian and Hindu respectively. The constituencies of the santri-based Islamic (PKS, PAN, and PKB) were almost entirely Muslims: less than 2 percent of their voters were non-Muslim. The data show that all major parties relied heavily on the Muslim vote, which is logical given the small fraction of the population that minorities comprise.
Because each party drew heavily from the Muslim community, no one party was able to dominate the Islamic vote. Interestingly, it was the secular-national parties, Golkar and PDI-P, which won the largest share of Muslims with 29.20 percent and 13.60 percent respectively. The explicitly Islamist PKS secured only 8.50 percent of the overall Muslim vote. This total barely beat out the performance of the multiethnic PD with Muslims (6.80 percent).
Figure 31: Religious Group Vote by Party

Source: (CNEP 2004a); Figure constructed by author.

Similar to religious identity, tribal group seems to play little role in predicting voting behavior. The Javanese—Indonesia’s largest tribal group—were split between political parties in 2004. The Islamist PKS received 26.4 percent of their vote from Javanese while the secular-nationalist PD, PDI-P, and Golar received 53.8 percent, 55.2 percent, and 28.78 percent respectively. The moderately Islamic PKB’s constituency was comprised of the largest percentage of Javanese voters of any political party: 73.1 percent. The Sundanese were the next most common voter for each main party. A plurality of voters for both PKS and Golkar came from other tribal groups.
Figure 32: Party Constituency by Tribal Group

However, among all Javanese voters, only PDI-P surpassed 20 percent of the vote (20.3 percent). Among Sundanese, the second largest tribal group in Indonesia, a plurality (43.8 percent) voted for Golkar. Among Malay, the third largest tribal group, a plurality (20.6 percent) voted for the moderately Islamic PAN. While some parties show comparatively strong performances among specific tribal groups, overall, tribal identity provides little predictive power in explaining voting patterns or election outcomes.

Indeed, PDI-P—the best performing party with the largest tribal group in 2004—came in second in the 2004 legislative election. This indicates that even tribal groups that possess the most potential political power if unified are in fact split between political parties. One reason for this could be a lack of strong identification with parties. Among the five biggest tribal groups—Javanese, Sundanese, Malay, Madurese, and Batak—8.1 percent,
6.6 percent, 6.8 percent, 11.7 percent, and 18.6 percent respectively cited party affiliation as the most important reason their vote (IFES 2009).

Figure 33: Tribal Group Vote by Party

This analysis of tribal and religious party support confirms the decline in identity voting discussed in the literature on Indonesian voting behavior and reflects the limited bonding appeals seen during elections. Indonesia’s largest tribal groups show no uniform party affiliation and Muslim voters are split between multiethnic, moderate Islamic, and Islamist parties. Given the large plurality of Javanese and a dominant Muslim majority, one might expect strong tribal or religious-based parties to form around these identities. However, the few parties that come closest to a particularistic agenda (the moderately Islamic and Islamist parties) are declining in support. In short, the ethnic identities of ‘Muslim’ or ‘Javanese’ do not predict for which party Indonesians will vote.
Regional Voting Behavior

Though membership in a particular tribal or religious group does not predict voting behavior, regional location appears more important. As noted earlier, 60 percent of the Indonesian population lives on Java, which is heavily Javanese. During the 2009 presidential election, PDI-P (65.68 percent) and PD (58.9 percent) each received more than half of their vote from Java’s six provinces. Golkar received more of its votes from the Outer Islands (58.11 percent).

Figure 34: Party Vote by Region

![Party Vote by Region](image)

Source: (Komisi Permilihan Umum 2009); Figure constructed by author.

Yet the predictive capacity of regional identity diminished in 2009. The PD won over 60 percent of the vote in both the Outer Islands and Java. Though a majority of Golkar voters still come from the Outer Islands, its voters constitute only 17.42 percent of the Outer Island population. Similarly, the PDI-P’s voting block is most heavily skewed toward Java; however, it won only 30.02 percent of Java voters overall.
Conclusion

Indonesia and India share the same political puzzle: multiethnic political parties succeed despite conditions conducive to ethnic appeals. Ethnic conflict ravaged Indonesia across and within religious, tribal, and regional groups after the fall of Suharto. The legitimacy and character of the state had been reopened for contestation. Already mobilized along ethnic cleavages, these social units presented easily accessible vote banks for political parties seeking to gain support in the first competitive democratic period since 1955. Yet Indonesia’s major political parties have embraced multiethnic politics in three post-Suharto election cycles.

The empirical evidence for this argument is overwhelming. Using case studies of the 2004 and 2009 legislative and presidential elections, this chapter collected data on various aspects of party strategy. In sum, it shows that vice-presidential and presidential
debates focus predominantly on policy issues; legislative and presidential campaigns use overwhelmingly multiethnic (bridging and neutral) rhetoric; political parties directly contact a religiously and tribally diverse set of voters during campaigns; and the parliament is religiously representative of Indonesian society, which suggests that parties nominate a representative sample of candidates to compete for votes. Moreover, election outcomes are strongly multiethnic: no one party dominates any religious, tribal, or regional group.

Like in India, multiethnic politics is vital for the stability of Indonesia. Persistent ethnic conflict could yield democratic paralysis, separatism, and a regression to authoritarian rule. Similar to India’s Congress Party, Indonesia’s political parties also serve an essential function in holding together this conflict-prone and ethnically divided country. They choose to unify rather than divide. Despite myriad problems of governance, Indonesia represents a strikingly successful peacebuilding effort amid almost uniformly hostile conditions. Explaining this outcome could yield important insights for other deeply divided democracies.
CHAPTER SIX: THE ANC AND THE DECLINE OF MULTIETHNIC POLITICS

Introduction

South Africa’s identity was shaped by race before its founding as a union in 1910. The Boer Wars pitted British and Dutch settlers against each other with little regard for the native population. Three years after its formation, the South African parliament passed the Natives Land Act, which restricted black acquisition of land. This major piece of legislation began decades of race-based laws governing almost all aspects of political, social, and economic life. Formalized as apartheid in 1948, the South African state became a racist white-minority regime that perpetrated countless acts of physical and psychological violence on all non-black citizens, but particularly against the black majority. The African National Congress, formed in 1912, became the leading organization challenging racial discrimination.

As the ANC militarized its resistance to apartheid, the white South African state fiercely repressed it and other organizations and activists. The Sharpeville killings and the Soweto riots came to symbolize the apartheid state’s violent suppression of black liberation activities. But even after the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, racial violence continued to rage. The white government fueled an internecine battle between the ANC and the Inkatha movement, which killed thousands, and white vigilantes assassinated black leaders. Violence has subsided but not ended since the first post-apartheid election in 1994. There remain sporadic acts of racial
violence, including killings, bombings, and hate speech. This reciprocal racial bloodshed reinforces already deep racial divisions in South Africa, which in turn create a foundation for ethnic politics.

Yet the moderate leadership of Nelson Mandela precluded a post-apartheid political system dominated by racial politics. ANC leaders marginalized the extremes of the black liberation movement, eschewing ethnic outbidding and promoting a multiracial and inclusive “rainbow nation.” The ANC, which has won all four democratic elections since apartheid’s fall, retains nominal multiracialism. Its election manifestos and rhetoric include all racial groups. However, a close examination of the ANC’s election campaigns, voter targeting efforts, and party list composition show that the ANC is disproportionately targeting black voters and excluding white, Indian, and coloured voters. This electoral mobilization strategy is meant to counter the leading opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, which is slowly building a multiracial alliance against the ANC.

The trend of racial politics in South Africa imperils the country’s fragile multiracial peace. The emergence of Mandela’s ANC was profoundly important for South Africa. The long history of racial violence and discrimination primed the country for a vengeful political transition that could have torn South Africa apart. Instead, vibrant and stable democracy emerged. However, the extraordinary leadership of Mandela has been replaced by the quite ordinary leadership of the current African National Congress. As defectors and reformers—both white and black—have challenged the ANC, the party
has responded with increasingly divisive political tactics that have maintained racial polarization in the South African electorate.

This chapter empirically demonstrates the ethnic dimensions of South Africa’s party politics, particularly the degenerating multiethnic character of the ruling African National Congress. The chapter will first provide an introduction to South African party politics and several important political parties. Second, it will outline South Africa’s numerous axes of ethnic identity while demonstrating the primary of racial identity. Finally, it will use the most recent South African elections to show the diminishing multiethnic orientation of the ANC’s election rhetoric, voter contacts, and candidate selection. All of which contradicts the party’s multiethnic manifesto and drives ethnically polarized elections.

**Background of Party Politics**

The release of Nelson Mandela and other anti-apartheid activists in 1990—along with the unbanning of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party, and the Pan-Africanist Congress—democratized electoral contestation but not the electoral process. It began a four-year negotiation rocked by violence and intransigence. The ruling National Party initially sought guaranteed minority rights and federalism for post-apartheid South Africa. However, early polling indicated to the NP that it could gain a substantial number of black voters, which prompted a shift from support for group rights to proportional representation. The NP also believed that prolonged negotiations would cool support for the ANC and allow it to build a black voter base (Mattes 1995).
The ANC slowly shifted its negotiating position as well. Initially supporting first-past-the-post elections that it could dominate, the party came to accept proportional representation. The ANC realized that any additional representation won by minority parties under proportional representation would be irrelevant as long as the ANC could control 51 percent of the vote—a result virtually assured given its enormous popularity among the black majority (79 percent of the population). As the negotiations wore on, the NP’s strategy of delay backfired. Its popularity began to decline, which precipitated a series of concessions designed to schedule elections as quickly as possible before the party’s support collapsed (Mattes 1995). The two sides ultimately agreed to closed-list proportional representation and scheduled elections for April 1994.

Led by Nelson Mandela, the ANC dominated the 1994 election, winning 62.55 percent of the vote. The incumbent NP and the Inkatha Freedom Party came in second and third with 20.39 percent and 10.54 percent of the vote respectively. It is widely believed that the IFP’s vote total was inflated in exchange for its participation in the election.\(^\text{150}\) Regardless, the performance of the NP and the IFP permitted their entrance into the Government of National Unity with the ANC. The interim constitution mandated that any party that won more than twenty seats in the parliament was guaranteed one or more cabinet posts. The GNU remained in effect until May 1996 when the final constitution was adopted, prompting the NP to leave the coalition.

\(^{150}\) As will be outlined below, the IFP’s leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi led a violent Zulu-chauvinist movement challenging the ANC for post-apartheid political power, which resulted in thousands of deaths.
South Africa held its second post-apartheid election in 1999. The ANC’s new leader, Thabo Mbeki, led the party to another landslide victory with 66.35 percent of the vote. The election marked an important shift in opposition politics. The Democratic Party became the leading opposition party with only seven seats in parliament, a position it would maintain and strengthen in the next two elections. The DP’s 1999 “Fight Back” campaign garnered a 7 percent increase in votes as well as criticism for race-baiting (Welsh 2000). The support for both the New National Party (formerly the NP) and the IFP began a permanent decline in 1999.

The rise of Mbeki within the ANC solidified the position of the moderate wing of the party. Mbeki strongly supported the market-oriented Growth, Employment, and Redistribution program (GEAR) in 1996, which addressed endemic poverty through pro-growth mechanisms. The ANC’s left-wing partners in the Tripartite Alliance—the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)—opposed the plan and called for stronger redistribution policies. GEAR’s implementation caused bitterness and distrust within the alliance because it appeared to promote neoliberal polices in response to IMF and World Bank pressure (Turok 2008, 117; Andreasson 2006).

The ANC, however, held its coalition together and again increased its vote total in the 2004 election. President Thabo Mbeki led the ANC to 69.69 percent of the national vote, which put the party over the two-thirds majority required to change the constitution. The non-ANC electorate had begun consolidate around the newly renamed Democratic Alliance (formerly Democratic Party). The DA added twelve seats, which increased its
total to fifty. The NNP, which had aligned itself with the ANC after its precipitous
decline in 1999, fell further to 1.65 percent of the vote. The IFP also lost six seats from
its 1999 total.

Following the 2004 victory, the ANC began to fracture internally. At the 2007
ANC national conference in Polokwane, Limpopo, Mbeki rival Jacob Zuma was elected
head of the ANC’s National Executive Committee. Mbeki hoped to stay on as party
president after he left office. The split showcased ideological and ethnic cleavages within
the ANC. The left wing had not forgiven Mbeki for his promotion of GEAR in 1996 and
identified with Zuma’s economic populism. Moreover, the Mbeki-Zuma rift mirrored a
Xhosa-Zulu tribal divide in the party. In 2008, a corruption case against Zuma was
dismissed after revelations emerged that President Mbeki had rigged the charges. The
ANC’s National Executive Committee then moved against Mbeki, forcing him to resign
the presidency in September 2008. Kgalema Motlanthe replaced Mbeki as South Africa’s
third president.

Three months after Mbeki’s resignation, former ANC member and Mbeki loyalist
Mosiuoa Lekota formed a new party, Congress of the People. Comprised of mostly ANC
defectors, COPE entered the 2009 election amid high expectations. Though Lekota
claimed, "The history of South Africa will never be the same again,"151 the 2009 election
results looked much like the past. The ANC’s national vote share declined minimally to
65.90 percent, which still put it nearly 50 percentage points ahead of the next party. Jacob
Zuma became the fourth president of South Africa. The DA again increased its vote share

to 16.66 percent of the vote. COPE finished a disappointing third, but its 7.42 percent of the vote made the party an important voice within the opposition.

National-Level Parties

The core of South Africa’s party system in 2009 was comprised of four parties: the African National Congress, the Democratic Alliance, Congress of the People, and the Inkatha Freedom Party. These four parties won approximately 95 percent of the popular vote in 2009 and hold 379 of the 400 seats in parliament. The following briefly introduces the history, agenda, and recent electoral performance of these parties as well as the now defunct National Party, which played an important role in early post-apartheid politics.

African National Congress - The ANC has preserved a dominant position in South African politics since transforming itself from a liberation movement to a political party in 1994. The ANC has won each of South Africa’s first four democratic elections with over 60 percent of the vote. Its public agenda retains the multiracialism of its most famous leader, Nelson Mandela. However, the party’s electoral tactics and corruption have bred growing political opposition. Nevertheless, the ANC is almost certain to maintain its strong electoral majority for several more election cycles.

The Democratic Party/Democratic Alliance - The Democratic Party was the official opposition party during the National Party’s apartheid rule. While opposing apartheid policies, it chose to participate in the government rather than abstain. In 1994, the party carried only 1.7 percent of the vote with its largely white, liberal base. However, five-years later it won 9.5 percent of the vote, which earned it the status of
official opposition in parliament. Changing its name to the Democratic Alliance (DA), which it retained after its abortive alliance with the NNP, the party expanded its share of the vote in 2004 and 2009 to 12 percent and 16 percent respectively. The DA remains the official opposition in parliament and the only opposition party that has expanded its voter base since apartheid.

**Inkatha Freedom Party** - The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) grew out of a Zulu cultural association formed by Mangosuthu Buthelezi in 1975. The organization was initially aligned with the ANC, but the two groups became violent competitors for power in the 1980s and 1990s. Ultimately, Buthelezi agreed to participate in the 1994 elections, in which the party won only its provincial stronghold of Kwa-Zulu Natal (under suspicious circumstances). Since winning 10 percent of the national vote in 1994, the IFP has become an increasingly irrelevant force in South African politics. It lost badly to the ANC in Kwa-Zulu Natal in 2009 and won less than 7 percent of the national vote.

**Congress of the People** - After a leadership battle within the ANC, disgruntled party members formed the Congress of the People in 2008, which contested the 2009 election. COPE is the first viable opposition party to have a predominantly black voter base, though its agenda is broadly multiracial. Many regarded the party’s development as a profound shift in South African political and racial dynamics; however, the party performed below expectations in 2009 and has declined in relevance because of leadership conflict and lack of resources.

**The National Party** - F.W. de Klerk’s National Party (NP) received 20 percent of the vote in the 1994 election, during which it won two-thirds of white voters and 60
percent of Indian voters with a mix of free-market ideology and ANC fear-mongering (Giliomee 1995). However, its popularity declined after leaving the Government of National Unity in 1996. After failed alliances with both the Democratic Party and ANC, it dissolved itself in 2005. The Freedom Front Plus is strongest remaining Afrikaner party, which won .83 percent of the vote and four seats in 2009.

**Ethnic Cleavage Structure and Ethnic Violence**

South Africa’s black majority constitutes a dominant-majority ethnic structure. Yet there is also a high degree of ethnic fractionalization that exists within and outside the black majority. Other racial and tribal axes of identity, such English, Afrikaner, Zulu, or Xhosa, are important in South African society. However, the unique history of apartheid as well as subsequent racial violence has reified constructed racial groups into near permanent social categories, making race the primary conflict cleavage in South Africa.

**Ethnic Cleavages**

South Africa has a large racial majority. According the 2001 census, 79 percent of the population is Black, 12.40 percent is White, 8.9 percent is Coloured, and 2.5 percent is Indian. Additionally, seven of nine provinces have Black majorities of at least 73 percent. Coloureds are mostly clustered in the Northern Cape and the Western Cape, constituting 51.60 percent and 53.90 percent of the respective provincial populations. Whites are clustered in Gauteng (19.90 percent), the Northern Cape (12.40 percent), and the Western Cape (18.40 percent). The largest concentration of Indians is in Kwa-Zulu Natal (8.50 percent). The racial demographics of South Africa create distinct regional
concentrations. The Northern Cape and Western Cape, which are adjacent in the southwest part of the country, are 64.30 percent and 73.30 percent non-Black (White, Coloured, and Indian). The rest of the country is predominantly Black.

Figure 36: Racial Composition of South Africa

![Racial Composition of South Africa](image)

Source: (Statistics South Africa 2001a); Figure constructed by author.

There are eleven recognized languages in South Africa. The country’s largest language groups correspond with cultural identities. For example, unlike Hindi speakers in India, Zulu speakers in South Africa share distinctive cultural traits, which make them part of a tribal-linguistic ethnic group. Zulus are the largest of such groups in South Africa. Approximately 23 percent of South Africans identified Zulu as the language they use at home. Xhosas are the second largest tribal-linguistic group (17.60 percent) and

---

152 Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swazi, Tswana, Tsonga, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu
Afrikaners the third (13.30 percent). Despite the important role of English in South Africa’s history and contemporary politics, only 8.20 percent of the population speaks the language at home.

Figure 37: Home Language Use

Cleavage Structure

Similar to India and Indonesia, South Africa’s cleavages are crosscutting, but also have some ethnically reinforcing characteristics. Tribal groups are subsumed within rather than across racial categories. The 2008 Afrobarometer survey asked South Africans to name their tribal, ethnic, or cultural group, which included the option “South African only.” Among Blacks, 87.2 percent identified with a traditional African tribe. Among Whites, 83.9 percent identified as White, English, Afrikaans, or Boer. Among Coloureds, 45.9 percent identified themselves as Coloured and 15.6 percent identified themselves with a traditionally White group. Among Indians, 75.4 percent identified as
Indian. Only 10.2 percent of Blacks, 15.1 percent of Whites, 34.2 percent of Coloureds, and 5.8 percent of Indians identified themselves as South African only.

Table 5: What is your tribe, ethnic, or cultural group?153

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Xhosa, Zulu, and other African tribes</th>
<th>English, Afrikaans, white, Boer</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>South African Only</th>
<th>Don't Know/Refused to answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>83.9%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>34.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Afrobarometer 2008); Table constructed by author.

Home language use also suggests both intra and inter-racial polarization. Among Blacks, only 1.4 percent speak English “most frequently” at home, while 58.3 percent of Coloureds, 100 percent of Indians, and 36.3 percent of Whites do so. One hundred percent of Whites surveyed speak either English or Afrikaans at home whereas only 1.8 percent of Blacks speak either language. Conversely, 98.2 percent of Blacks speak Zulu, Xhosa, or another tribal language, whereas only 1.7 percent of Coloureds, Indians, and Whites combined reported the same. However, this survey also indicates significant intra-racial divides. Blacks are split between Zulu, Xhosa, and other linguistic identities. Similarly, whites are split between the linguistic identities of English and Afrikaans.

153 The racial designation of each respondent in the Afrobarometer survey is observed by interviewer.
An annual survey conducted by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation confirms the potential for intra-racial crosscutting cleavages. It shows that in 2012 South Africans split their “primary association” between language (21.6 percent), tribal (15.8 percent), and race (18.4 percent). However, the survey also finds that while South Africans’ association with language and tribe has remained steady since 2007, their identification with race has risen nearly 7 percent. The IJR’s report concludes that South Africans “associate most strongly with others who speak the same language, share their ethnic background, or they believe to be of the same race group” (The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation 2012, 42).

The survey data from South Africa show a mixed picture. The black majority is split between Zulu, Xhosa, and other tribal-linguistic identities. Moreover, the white minority is split between English and Afrikaaner linguistic identities. However, opinion data in South Africa show little overlap between white and black groups. The existing sub-groups cut within not between racial groups. So while the data suggest the relevance of intra-group identities (e.g., Boer, Zulu, or Afrikaans), the clear alignment of race and tribal-linguistic cleavages create the potential for meta-racial categories to dominate.

---

154 The top three responses for “primary group association” were language (21.6 percent), race (18.4 percent), and ethnicity (15.8 percent).
Ethnic Violence

Despite the potential for intra-racial crosscutting cleavages, race remains the primary conflict cleavage in South Africa. As outlined in chapter three, the apartheid system used systematic violence through the political and legal systems against black South Africans. Legislation dictated where black citizens could travel, what jobs they could hold, whom they could marry, and myriad other activities. Any violation of these laws brought imprisonment, beating, or murder by police and state security forces. Two particular incidents became famously associated with apartheid brutality. The first is the 1960 Sharpeville massacre, during which police killed 69 unarmed demonstrators outside a police station in Gauteng. The second is the Soweto Uprising, during which thousands of students participated in street demonstrations against the mandatory use of Afrikaans in schools. An estimated 600 were killed in clashes with the police. This section will focus on violence during South Africa’s democratic transition (1990-1994) and post-apartheid period (1994 - present) to show the continuing salience of race.

Intra-Black Violence

In July and August of 1990, only several months after the unbanning of the ANC and the release of Nelson Mandela, violence erupted in the townships around Johannesburg. At least 1,000 people were killed in the area by the end of 1990. This conflict between ANC supporters and the Inkatha movement is often described as black-on-black violence; however, the role of state security personnel in fostering intra-racial hostility made this a proxy war between the crumbling apartheid state and the ANC. In 1991, a Human Rights Watch report alleged that police, army, and state security
personnel refused to halt Inkatha attacks or disarm the militants, transported Inkatha fighters into neighborhoods for attacks, and directly participated in the murder of ANC activists and the destruction of their property.

The report concludes that security personnel opposed to negotiation had good reason to foment violence: “certainly a divided African population is less threatening to white domination than a united one. Black conflict also encourages white conservatives to pressure the government to halt apartheid reform, justifying a cautious and limited approach” (Human Rights Watch 1991). Violence between the Inkatha movement (later the Inkatha Freedom Party) and the ANC continued throughout the transition period. In August 1993, the IFP—along with several white right-wing parties—declared a boycott of the 1994 elections because they claimed negotiations were ignoring their concerns about an overly centralized state. Violence during the boycott period was particularly acute, culminating in 429 deaths in KwaZulu and Natal in the four weeks leading up to Buthelezi’s last-minute agreement to participate in the election (Human Rights Watch 1995). ANC-Inkatha riots killed thousands between 1990 and 1994, but the violence was closely linked to black-white conflict because of the involvement of the apartheid state.

Inter-Racial Violence

Incidences of post-1990 inter-ethnic violence are few in comparison to Indonesia and India and are generally isolated rather than systematic. However, racial violence continues to present a serious challenge to South Africa’s stability and democracy. Amid the ANC-Inkatha violence outlined above, SACP and ANC activist Chris Hani was assassinated in 1993 by a white man linked to the Conservative Party, which had split...
with the National Party over its negotiations with the ANC. As race riots ensued, Nelson Mandela implored the country for peace: “Now is the time for all South Africans to stand together against those who, from any quarter, wish to destroy what Chris Hani gave his life for—the freedom of all of us.”

In October and November 2002, two bomb blasts killed one woman and damaged property in Gauteng. During the first attack on October 30, eight explosions ripped through a mosque, train tracks, and gas stations. Two more explosions on November 28 targeted a bridge and airport. The attacks were linked to the white supremacist organization called the Warriors of the Boer Nation, which said in a message to the press, "We declare that these attacks are the beginning of the end for the African National Congress (ANC) government and accept full responsibility for it." ANC Defense Minister Mosiuoa Lekota said the group was trying to start a race war.

Eight years later an ANC official was also accused of fomenting racial conflict. In March 2010, ANC Youth League head Julius Malema sang the lyrics “shoot the Boer” at a university campus rally. “Boer” is the Afrikaans word for farmer, but it is often used to refer to any white person. Later that month a provincial court ruled the lyrics to be racially inflammatory and unconstitutional. The ANC initially resisted the ruling, but told Malema not to use the song after Eugene Terre’Blanche, a white, racist farmer, was


156 “Right-wing group claims Soweto blasts,” BBC, November 11, 2002.

murder by one of his black laborers the following month. Malema, though, continued using the lyrics and was ultimately convicted of hate speech in September 2011.\textsuperscript{158} In 2012, the ANC expelled Malema from the party for various public embarrassments as well as internal party politics.

The legacy of apartheid and its violence continues to have enormous importance in contemporary South Africa. South African sociologist Deborah Posel argues that systematized racism made South Africa “one of the most thoroughly racialized social orders in the world” (Posel 2001, 88). Apartheid’s racial constructs were powerfully rooted in the materiality of everyday life. The ubiquity of the state’s racial designations, and the extent to which they meshed with lived hierarchies of class and status, meant that apartheid's racial grid was strongly imprinted in the subjective experience of race. (Posel 2001, 109)

Posel concludes that it unsurprising then that even after the end of apartheid these racial categories are still writ large in the everyday life of the citizens of the ‘new’ South Africa. New debates and contestations on the subject of race have begun to proliferate. But it remains the norm for articles and letters in the press, reports on radio and television, and other modes of conversation and commentary to identify social actors in racialized terms, attesting to the lingering salience of these racial constructions within social consciousness. There is little reason to suppose that they will atrophy spontaneously. (Posel 2001, 109)

Indeed, in-depth focus group data indicate the continued social importance of race in South Africa. An edition of the South African journal \textit{Politikon} was dedicated to an analysis of a series of focus-group sessions on race relations in South Africa in 2011. Discussing the results specifically and racial identity more broadly, the journal’s contributors all acknowledged the obvious predominance of racial identity. David Everatt

\textsuperscript{158} “ANC’s youth leader found guilty of hate speech for Shoot the Boer song,” \textit{The Guardian}, September 12, 2011.
wrote, “South Africans…see race first” (Everatt 2012, 20). A group of researchers from the University of KwaZulu Natal concluded, “the core classification…in South African society in general…is that of race” (Bass et al. 2012, 34). Rupert Taylor argued that it is an “incontrovertible truth that South Africa remains a highly racialized society” (Taylor 2012, 42). Another researcher noted, “respondents appear to show no shame or reticence in using blatantly racist language…. It is clear that race functions explicitly as a fundamental cognitive category in personal relationships in South Africa” (Nyar 2012, 105).

The contributors argue that racial categories remain relevant for both historical and contemporary reasons. Apartheid’s divide-and-rule policies fostered and rewarded racial competition in society and politics, creating lasting and deep-seated animosity. Moreover, the South African government’s continued use of race categories on official forms and for affirmative action polices perpetuates divisive racial identities. Regardless of the exact origin of racial salience in South Africa, David Everatt argues that the “denial of race as anything beyond a social construct” is “deeply naïve” (Everatt 2012, 11).

Given the deep reification of racial divisions in South Africa through apartheid and the ensuing racial violence, the emergence of Nelson Mandela and the multiethnic African National Congress was a surprisingly positive outcome. In 1998, Arend Lijphart declared, “the ANC is a strongly multi-racial and multi-ethnic party; in particular, its members of parliament and its cabinet ministers have been broadly representative of all of the major racial and ethnic groups in South Africa” (Lijphart 1998, 148). However,
recent studies of South African party politics—to which this chapter contributes—find that the country’s politics are highly racialized and that the ANC is increasingly abandoning its multiracial message for ethnic chauvinism as it faces new political challengers.

**Race and Party Politics**

The sanguine views of Lijphart and others obscure the political salience of race in present-day South Africa, which is generally acknowledged in most of the academic literature. However, the exact role race plays in voting behavior and party strategy is contested. The debate largely addresses whether South Africans vote according to race itself or use race as a proxy for policy performance. Below is a brief overview of perspectives on race and party politics in South Africa.

Many observers of South African elections use Donald Horowitz’s concept of an “ethnic census” (Horowitz 1985), which suggests demographics predict election outcomes in ethnically divided countries. Applying this framework to South Africa, Andrew Reynolds argues that the ANC’s vote in 1994 was “almost entirely racially based” and "while many ANC supporters voted with their heads and hearts in equal measure, on balance the ANC's historic victory was a collective vote of the heart” (A. Reynolds 1995b, 192). Hermann Giliomee claims the National Party in 1994 “had no counter to the ANC in an election which was for all practical purposes a racial census" (Giliomee 1995, 67). Similarly, David Welsh contends that the ethnic census nature of 1994 hurt the historically white Democratic Party because white and black voters divided between the National Party and the ANC respectively (Welsh 2000).
Robert Mattes, Helen Taylor, and Cherrel Africa challenge the primordial ethnic census thesis, which, they argue, might provide a useful description of South African elections, but does not necessarily explain voting behavior (Mattes, Taylor, and Africa 1999). In fact, using survey data, Mattes et al find one can predict party choice based on a voter’s evaluation of political performance and economic trends. Though the authors acknowledge that skin color, ethnic features, or language could determine a voter’s perception of party performance, they conclude, “in an extremely racially and economically stratified society, voters are doing the best they can with what they know (or at least what they think they know) about how political parties and government performance affects their interests” (Mattes, Taylor, and Africa 1999, 246). Therefore, South Africa’s ostensible “ethnic census” elections are potentially a product of racialized political interest formation, but not racialized identity.

Building on and challenging this insight, Karen Ferree argues in her study of post-apartheid elections that “race has overwhelmingly predicted voting behavior for white and African voters” (Ferree 2006, 803). Ferree posits three potential explanations for racial voting: ethnic allegiance, policy performance, or informational shortcuts. She finds little evidence that either primordialism or policy evaluation influence voting behavior. Rather, party labels serve as informational cues for the racial credentials of a party, which in turn affect party support. Ferree concludes that “racialized party images play a critical role in shaping South African voting behavior” and that "manipulation of racial credentials is likely to feature prominently in the campaigns of both the opposition and the dominant parties" (Ferree 2006, 814).
Ferree provides a detailed account of race in South Africa’s first three post-apartheid elections in her book *Framing the Race* (Ferree 2010). She describes the 1994 election as often focused on issues, policy, and performance, but that “race—specifically the racialized images of the parties—formed a major election undercurrent” (Ferree 2010, 70). The 1999 election was more heavily racialized, according to Ferree. The Democratic Alliance sought to consolidate the white vote and the ANC “took great pains to emphasize and highlight the ‘whiteness’ of the opposition” in order to diminish its viability as a “competitor for the African, coloured, and Indian vote” (Ferree 2010, 102). Ferree argues the 2004 election turned to more policy-based rhetoric and featured both the ANC and the DA reaching out to white and black voters respectively. However, this did not signal the end of racial campaigning. Ferree contends, “questions of race and performance became fused as the ANC and its running mate, the NP, used the DA’s ‘whiteness’ to discredit its criticisms” (Ferree 2010, 126).

Many observers criticize the ANC Youth League particularly. Even some ANC officials acknowledge that the party and its youth league have lost its vision and values regarding non-racialism (Anciano-White and Selemani 2012). Former president Kgalema Motlanthe said in 2010 that the ANC’s vision of non-racial society has been “dimmed by the refraction of the rays of the new dawn of freedom.” Scholar Daniel Hamnett argues that the ANC and the ANCYL “have deployed race and allegations of racism in

159 An additional study by Gavin Davis concurs with Ferree. Davis finds that the ANC targeted mainly black voters during the 1994 and 1999 elections (Davis 2004).

political ways which have contributed to the reinforcement of racial identities and divides” (Hammett 2012, 78). Journalist Fiona Forde evocatively claims former ANCYL head Julius Malema “knowingly gave the finger to the project of non-racialism, rubbed the notion of a rainbow nation and challenged the goals of transition” (Forde 2011, 16). David Everatt pessimistically concludes, “Democracy has not ushered in the non-racial nirvana of a ‘Rainbow Nation’” (Everatt 2012, 18).

Though competing explanations exist for the effect of race on elections, there is a general consensus that racial identity matters in South African politics, particularly for the ruling ANC. However, some argue that multiracialism remains strong. Roger Southall writes:

In a country previously racked by racial division, political conflict and low-level civil war, the ANC's cocktail of unity in diversity, national reconciliation, non-racialism, and black advancement, together with an emphasis upon equality and democracy, has offered a foundation for a common society, notwithstanding many mixed messages. (Southall 2010, 7)

Using survey data, Collette Schulz-Herzenberg argues that there is little evidence of explicit identity or racial voting in South Africa. In fact, she explains, “African voters do not vote for an African party because they see it as exclusive to Africans. This suggests that South Africans generally buy into the ideal of the rainbow nation: inclusive politics is worthy while exclusive politics is detrimental” (Schulz-Herzenberg 2010, 37).

Race in the 2004 and 2009 Elections

Building on the debate regarding race in South African politics, this section empirically investigates the use of race in party strategy. It focuses on the 2009 election but also includes data from the 1994, 1999, and 2004 elections. Through an analysis of
party manifestos, campaign rhetoric, election targeting, and party list composition, this section shows the increasing use of race by the African National Congress during elections. The outcome of the ANC’s strategy is shown in highly polarized election results.

2009 Election Manifestos: the ANC, COPE, and the DA

The 2009 election pitted the incumbent African National Congress against the leading opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, and the newly formed Congress of the People. The three parties’ manifestos were strikingly similar. Each party explicitly appealed to a multiracial constituency with calls for unity and generic policy proposals. Despite the opposing histories of these three parties, each clearly endeavored to present an inclusive public platform.

African National Congress – On March 1, 2009, the ANC released its two election documents both titled “Working Together We Can Do More.” Its fifteen-page election manifesto (ANC 2009a) and accompanying 23-page policy framework (ANC 2009b) emphasized three themes: 1) a multiracial South Africa, the ANC’s liberation credentials, and the lingering impact of apartheid; 2) policy successes over the previous fifteen years; and 3) current problems and proposed policy solutions. These three themes combined to create election documents that were broadly multiracial and mostly policy focused.

The ANC manifesto began by proclaiming an aspiration to a “nation united in diversity.” The phrase “build a united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic” South Africa appears several times in the document. The ANC’s role in ending apartheid is also
invoked. “For over 97 years, the ANC has led the struggle to bring about a South Africa that belongs to all our people, black and white...to embrace the unity of all South Africans irrespective of their race...” The policy framework states, “We emphasize the capacity of the ANC, as the National Liberation Movement, to bring together all our people behind a common programme of transformation of society.” The policy framework cites the 1955 Freedom Charter, which is the ANC’s foundational liberation document, sixteen times. The election documents also find blame for South Africa’s current problems in its apartheid past. “Much of the economic and social devastation of apartheid and its scars are still with us,” the manifesto read. Additionally, the ANC claimed to understand the policy prescriptions needed to “address our apartheid past.”

The ANC’s election documents were also quick to showcase its policy successes in governance. The manifesto proclaims its dedication to democratic principles, such as guaranteeing minimum human rights standards, involving citizens in decision-making, maintaining an independent judiciary, and upholding workers rights. Additionally, the document claims tangible improvement on various socioeconomic indicators, such as: a greater access to social grants to alleviate poverty, 80 percent of the population now with access to electricity, subsidized housing projects that have housed 14 million additional people, gender equality policies that ensure women’s representation in government, and affirmative action programs that increase skill levels and boost diversity in the workplace.

The ANC manifesto also acknowledged, “much more needs to be done.” The documents admit that many South Africans “remain trapped in poverty” and that
unemployment is “unacceptably high.” Additionally, the manifesto concedes that crime and corruption are rampant, inequality has increased, the workers’ income share has declined nationally, and rural areas remain divided between well-developed commercial farms and poor communal areas. It concludes, “The benefits of economic growth have not been broadly and equitably shared.” Over half the manifesto is used to address these issues, including specific policy proposals in five “priority” areas: work and sustainable livelihoods, education, health, rural development, and crime and corruption.

Overall, the 2009 ANC manifesto and policy framework were broadly multiracial in their rhetoric and non-racial in their policy proposals. Despite references to the continued impact of apartheid, the documents did not emphasize racially divisive programs such as affirmative action (5 references) and the Black Economic Empowerment program (3 references), which provides economic opportunities to non-whites (Blacks, Indians, and Coloureds). The rhetoric of “transformation,” which indicates the transformation of apartheid’s political, social, and economic structures from white-dominated to multiracial, was more prominent (11 references). However, the references were often broad and tangential to specific policy proposals, particularly in the manifesto. The ANC election documents represented the party’s public image in 2009. ANC candidates and officials as well as journalists cited them often and prominently. The documents indicated the ANC’s emphasis on inclusionary rhetoric and a policy strategy designed to appeal to a multiracial electorate.

*Congress of the People* – As a breakaway party filled with former ANC members, COPE struggled to differentiate itself from the ruling party in its 2009 manifesto (COPE
2009). It contained similarly broad appeals to multiracialism and was focused on policy solutions for pressing social and economic problems in South Africa. However, these erstwhile ANC officials could not critique their former party too forcefully, as they themselves had endorsed the ANC policies from which their new party needed to distance itself.

According to its twelve-page manifesto, COPE “emerged out of a commitment to defend the constitution, protect our democracy and to promote the rule of law...and ensure that government is led by people with high moral standing, integrity, honesty and a commitment to serve people.” It also proclaims COPE’s dedication to “equality, non-racialism and inclusiveness.” The document repeats almost verbatim the ANC’s manifesto when it claims a desire to “create at truly democratic, united, non-racial, non-sexist, and prosperous South Africa.”

COPE’s manifesto had twelve core themes, including eliminating corruption, building a united non-racial South Africa, creating jobs, broadening economic participation, fostering sustainable development, and fighting poverty. However, within these themes, COPE’s policy proposals rested mostly on improvements to existing ANC policies rather than new proposals or wholesale changes. The manifesto used the terms “strengthen,” “improve,” “enhance,” and “expand” forty-eight times, mostly in reference to current ANC policies. Similar to the ANC, COPE declared its support for Black Economic Empowerment, affirmative action, and transformation, but only briefly. COPE’s manifesto lacked much of the lofty rhetoric of the ANC’s election documents.
Rather, it presented itself as better able to alleviate the social and economic maladies that continue to disproportionately impact South Africa’s black community.

*The Democratic Alliance* – The DA presented a heavily policy-oriented manifesto in 2009 (DA 2009). As a descendant of apartheid power structures, the DA did not emphasize South Africa’s liberation from apartheid, which conjures images of a righteous and victorious ANC. Instead, the DA’s dense 40-page manifesto showcased optimistic and inclusive rhetoric and had the most extensive policy agenda of the competing parties. The manifesto juxtaposed what the DA calls an “open opportunity society” with President Zuma’s “closed, crony society.”

While less explicit in its proclamations of South Africa’s multiracial identity, the DA’s inclusive vision was encompassed in the final line of Helen Zille’s introductory letter (a line that was also the party’s campaign slogan): “This is a plan for the rainbow people—one nation with one future.” The manifesto’s references to apartheid are few, but it acknowledges the continued impact of that era’s policies. The DA wished to ensure “that South Africans who were deprived of the land by the apartheid government can be helped to reclaim their land.” Moreover, “Removing the discriminatory laws of the apartheid government is not enough on its own to empower disadvantaged South Africans.” It concludes, “Returning land appropriated under apartheid laws is central to healing the divisions of South Africa’s past.”

The DA manifesto emphasized five themes: enhancing constitutional democracy, promoting an opportunity society, helping the disadvantaged, making communities safe, creating better infrastructure, encouraging diversity, and bolstering South Africa’s
foreign policy. The DA argued for a new mixed electoral system, which would feature national lists, multi-member districts, and direct elections of presidents, premiers, and mayors, using a two-round run-off system. The DA advocated an “opportunity society” in which competition drives improvements in education, technology, the economy, and land reform. The DA pledged better service delivery and government management for social development programs, healthcare, and housing. The DA’s anti-crime provisions emphasized more police and better judicial procedures. The manifesto also focused on infrastructure development, including roads, rail, and airports.

The DA’s manifesto was broadly multiracial in its rhetoric and policy prescriptions. The most contentious of its policy proposals, reforming Black Economic Empowerment programs, was cast as helping the black community. The manifesto claims the DA is “fully behind broad-based black economic empowerment,” but that BBE has become “elitist” and has “excluded millions of deeply disadvantaged South Africa’s from the economy.” By framing its opposition to BEE as philosophical (i.e., as inherently incongruous with an open opportunity society), the DA addressed the issue in a way that could potentially appeal to black voters: it was the implementation of the program, not the program itself, which the DA challenged.

The summaries above show the inclusivity and policy focus of each party’s 2009 manifesto. The ANC, the DA, and COPE all presented themselves to the South African electorate as catch-all and multiracial parties. Their concern was with policy not identity or ideology. Though the ANC emphasized apartheid and its role in the liberation while the DA downplayed apartheid, neither party overly accentuated issues that would appeal
to a specific racial group. Similarly, COPE’s manifesto made no clear appeal to a specific ethnic group.

2009 Campaign Rhetoric in Comparative Perspective: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral

In order to fully assess the ethnic rhetoric of South Africa’s party politics during the 2009 campaign beyond the carefully crafted manifestos, about 400 campaign statements from the ANC, COPE, and the DA were drawn from seventeen English-language daily and weekly newspapers. Because some newspapers cater to white or black audiences, it was important to include newspapers from across the country to minimize the effect of biased coverage. The exclusion of Zulu or Afrikaans press could have conceivably skewed the sample of collected statements. However, the multitude of English-language publications and reporters virtually ensured that any statement made in a local language would likely be translated and reported on in the English-language press.

The electronic database SA Media was used, which has clipped and coded articles from 150 South African newspapers since 1978. This database, which does not exist in India or Indonesia, enhanced the depth and accuracy of the analysis. The examination collected statements from only the ANC, COPE, and the DA, and included statements made in all nine provinces. The statements were made during the fifty-three day period prior to the election: March 1, 2009 until April 22, 2009 (election day). South African parliamentary and provincial elections are held simultaneously using a single ballot.

which means political statements during this period are designed to mobilize voters for both national and sub-national elections.

In order to evaluate bridging, bonding, and neutral rhetoric in the South African setting, the traditional racial constituency of each party had to be determined. Following Gavin Davis (Davis 2004), this analysis assumes 1) the ANC’s traditional constituency is black because of its role in the anti-apartheid movement; 2) the DA’s traditionally constituency is white because of its participation in apartheid-era politics; and 3) COPE’s logical\(^{162}\) constituency is black because it is a splinter party of the ANC. Therefore, ANC or COPE rhetoric that targeted white, Indian, or coloured voters or DA rhetoric that appealed to black, Indian, or coloured voters was coded as bridging. For example, any party’s invocation of South Africa’s multiracialism was coded as bridging whereas references to racial division were coded as bonding.

Neutral statements, i.e., those that did not clearly target a racial constituency, presented a unique coding challenge in South Africa. Some policy issues disproportionately impact one racial group and are therefore not neutral. For example, HIV/AIDS primarily afflicts the black community. However, whether issues of education or crime are also racialized is more difficult to determine. Survey data were used to solve this problem. In 2009, South Africans were asked about the most important issues facing the country (CNEP 2009). The answers were cross-tabulated with race and categorized as Black or non-Black (White, Indian, or Coloured). Issues that had a spread of greater than 20 percentage points between Black and non-Black respondents were considered racial

\(^{162}\) COPE did not have a “traditional” constituency because 2009 was its first election.
issues and, as such, party references to those issues were considered either bonding or bridging instead of neutral.

For example, of those who cited unemployment as the most important issue facing South Africa, 83 percent were Black and 17 percent non-Black, a spread of 66 points. Therefore, unemployment was considered a ‘Black’ issue and any DA references to that issue were considered bridging. Conversely, of those who cited “crime and security” as the most important issue, 31.7 percent were Black and 68.3 percent non-Black, a spread of 36.6 points. Therefore, crime and security was considered a ‘non-Black’ issue, and any DA references to that issue were considered bonding (see appendix for the table of all relevant election issues). Issues about which all South Africans were concerned, such as corruption, were coded as neutral for all parties.

However, policy-bonding statements required a coding assessment that accounted for the party’s position in the political system. Statements made by a ruling party are different from those made by opposition parties. The ANC, as the ruling party, is compelled to discuss issues of unemployment because it impacts the majority of South Africans. Whereas COPE and the DA, as opposition parties, are trying to build and expand their constituencies and therefore choose rhetoric strategically. Following this logic, a party-and-issue-specific addendum was used in conjunction with the above rubric:

- DA references to addressing or improving unemployment, healthcare, poverty, HIV/AIDS, electricity, water, infrastructure, and housing were coded as bridging because the Black to non-Black spread was greater than 20 points on each issue.
ANC references to the same issues were coded as neutral (instead of bonding). The ruling party must address issues of poverty, healthcare, and HIV/AIDS as problems of state service delivery—regardless of the racial implications—while the DA and COPE are making a strategic choice to address these issues. It would be inaccurate to regard the ANC’s anti-poverty and pro-healthcare proposals as racially targeted, even though black citizens stand to gain the most from these reforms.\(^{163}\)

The following case-specific rubric was used for this content analysis:

**Table 7: Coding Rubric: Bridging, Bonding, and Neutral**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to racial groups</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|                           | -Reconciliation  
|                           | -Unity between races | -Division/Separation  
|                           | -Us versus Them | -- |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to party or other parties</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-We are multiracial/they are not multiracial</td>
<td>-We represent interests of the traditional racial base</td>
<td>Other party bad on service delivery or governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Need for non-racial cooperation</td>
<td>-Other party can’t/doesn’t represent our traditional racial base</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference to specific policy</th>
<th>Bridging</th>
<th>Bonding</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive reference to a policy issue that is</td>
<td>Positive reference to a policy that is</td>
<td>Reference to policy that is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{163}\) Some additional clarifications are necessary. COPE’s invocation of the above service delivery issues were coded as bonding. COPE needed to poach traditional ANC voters in order to gain power and therefore its use of ‘black’ issues was considered strategic. Crime and security is a non-Black issue, but different coding logics were used for each party. DA references to the issue were considering bonding and COPE references were considered bridging, given their respective traditional constituencies. ANC references to crime and security were considered neutral. Even though this is a non-Black issue according to surveys, the ruling ANC is compelled to address all issues of service delivery. Even so, its references to crime and security were minimal and changing the coding to bridging would have had little effect. References to service delivery \textit{writ large}, education, economic management, and corruption, regardless of which party said it, were coded as neutral. Blacks and non-Blacks were equally concerned about these issues.

This project’s coding of the 2009 campaign’s rhetoric builds upon the work of Gavin Davis (Davis 2004) and Karen Ferree (Ferree 2010). Davis analyzed rhetoric from the 1994 and 1999 campaigns from the ANC, the DP (now DA), Inkatha Freedom Party, National Party/New National Party, and the Freedom Front. Between 1994 and 1999, Davis found that both the DA and the ANC used increasingly racialized rhetoric. His analysis shows that the ANC’s bridging rhetoric decreased by 10 percent from 1994 to 1999 (from 20 percent to 10 percent), while its bonding rhetoric increased from 42 percent to 47 percent, and neutral rhetoric increased from 38 percent to 41 percent. For the DP, he found that its bridging rhetoric decreased 9.5 percent (from 16 percent to 6.5 percent), its bonding rhetoric increased from 30 percent to 40 percent, and its neutral rhetoric stayed virtually the same.

Karen Ferre’s analysis of the 2004 campaign is harder to compare systematically to Davis’s analysis of 1994 and 1999 and this project’s analysis of 2009. Her multifaceted coding effort looked at campaign audiences as well as campaign rhetoric

---

164 Davis used a geographically representative sample of eight South African newspapers, focusing specifically on reports of party officials addressing members of the general public during the three months prior to each election. Campaign messages that explicitly referenced race, represented racial outbidding, or addressed policy were coded as bonding, bridging, or neutral.
and used more categories than merely bridging, bonding, and neutral. Nevertheless, her account provides a clear picture of racial framing during the 2004 election, which can be usefully juxtaposed with other elections. Ferree finds that the DA sought out more “bridging” or “partially bridging” campaign audiences (non-white voters) than the ANC. Sixty-one percent of DA campaign events were before mixed audiences, while 9 percent were before white audiences. Conversely, 36 percent of ANC campaign stops were before “bridging” or “partially bridging” audiences (non-black) and 54 percent were before black crowds.

Ferree also coded the ways parties talked about themselves and each other. She finds that both the ANC and the DA presented themselves as multiracial parties and reached out to opposing parties’ traditional bases while attacking each other as racially exclusive. Yet the ANC was guiltier of racial rhetoric than the DA. Ferree concludes that the ANC mentioned race more times than its competitors while the DA emphasized policy, issues, and performance over race. Additionally, the DA was also less likely to originate racial rhetoric while more likely to be the target of it.

The work of the Davis and Ferree show the trend-lines of bonding (ethnic), bridging (multiethnic), and neutral (multiethnic) rhetoric during South Africa’s first three democratic elections. Overall, these studies demonstrate that the ANC has increasingly deployed bonding rhetoric targeting its traditional black constituency, often attacking the DA as a racist party. Alternatively, the DP/DA, after consolidating its white base through a more racialized 1999 campaign, became significantly more multiracial in 2004.
Election Rhetoric: 2009 Campaign

A content analysis of the 2009 election campaign shows new trends in South African politics. The emergence of COPE as a legitimate black opposition party fundamentally changed the dynamics of the campaign, at least in the early phases. COPE utilized a significant amount of bonding (21.5 percent) and neutral (72 percent) rhetoric in an effort to win black voters, but comparatively less rhetoric targeting non-black voters (6 percent bridging). Unlike in previous elections in which the primary opposition was the DA, the ANC struggled to attack COPE as a racist, apartheid-linked party. Consequently, the ANC’s 2009 rhetoric featured more neutral issues (67 percent) in an effort to combat COPE’s constant attacks on its governance record. But the ANC still used the most bonding rhetoric (26.5 percent) of any party. The DA used the most bridging rhetoric of any party (34 percent).

Overall, the DA accounted for 62.5 percent of the bridging statements and 2.5 percent of the bonding statements made during the 2009 campaign. The ANC accounted for 60 percent of the bonding statements, 21.5 percent of the bridging statements, and 42.5 percent of the neutral statements. COPE’s rhetoric included 15.5 percent of the campaign’s bridging statements and 37.5 percent of the bonding statements.
Table 8: Rhetoric from the 2009 Campaign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ANC</th>
<th>DA</th>
<th>COPE</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bridging</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(21.5%)</td>
<td>(62.5%)</td>
<td>(15.5%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(60%)</td>
<td>(2.5%)</td>
<td>(37.5%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(42.5%)</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
<td>(35.5%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentiles rounded to nearest .0 or .5, so totals do not always equal exactly 100%

The ANC’s bridging rhetoric continued its downward trend since 1994 (down 14 points to 6 percent). However, its neutral rhetoric increased 25 points between 1999 and 2009 and its bonding rhetoric decreased 15.5 percent. The DA continued its movement away from its racialized 1999 “Fight Back” campaign. Its increase in bridging rhetoric (up 27.5 points to 34 percent) and decrease in bonding rhetoric (down 38 points to 2 percent) between 1999 and 2009 were equally dramatic. The party’s neutral and policy-based rhetoric also increased 10.5 points in 2009 to 64 percent.
The ANC’s bridging, bonding, and neutral rhetoric was shaped by the two-front campaign it waged in 2009. The ANC simultaneously sought to promote its achievements while acknowledging areas for improvement. The party’s five “priority areas” outlined in its manifesto—work and sustainable livelihoods, education, health, rural development, and crime and corruption—were featured prominently at rallies, during interviews, and in party statements. The ANC, Zuma argued while campaigning, has helped the vulnerable, orphans, the elderly, and those with HIV/AIDS.

Yet much of the neutral campaign rhetoric focused on addressing the major critiques of ANC leadership over the previous fifteen years. South African President Kgolama Motlanthe argued that the ANC was

---

165 “Zuma spells out party morality,” *Saturday Star*, March 7, 2009
working to root out corruption, improve education and health systems, and fight crime. Zuma often emphasized the ANC’s “vision” for the future, which included “no longer tolerating incompetence and laziness in government employees.” SACP leader Blade Nzimande argued before a rally that the working class should vote ANC to enhance decent work opportunities, ensure free and quality education, create healthcare for all, expand food production and food security, defeat crime, and deepen democracy. On the economy, Zuma argued that BEE and affirmative action had “contributed to the growth of the black middle class” and that mineral corporations must give back some profits to community.

The ANC also sought to maintain its multiracial credentials with some amount of bridging rhetoric. A video message shown to a crowd of ANC supporters featured Nelson Mandela saying the ANC will “help build a united, non-racial society.” At a church in Gauteng, Zuma declared, “unity and reconciliation will continue to be the cornerstone of the new administration after elections.” Zuma and other ANC officials also

166 “Motlanthe campaigns in KZN,” Daily News, March 9, 2009
168 “Nzimanda pays NC a visit to up ANC votes,” Diamond Fields Advertiser, March 11, 2009
169 “ANC wants ‘strong state’,” The Herald, March 24, 2009
170 “JZ face barren poverty in Namaqua,” Cape Argus, April 13, 2009
171 “Parties lock horns on the constitution at final rallies,” Business Day, April 20, 2009
172 “ANC president addresses 30,000 at Easter service,” The Herald, April 13, 2009
controversially reached out to Afrikaners, calling them the only true white South Africans and imploring them not to leave the country, which the DA claimed was an attempt to divide the white vote.\(^{173}\) At the final election rally, Zuma proclaimed, “Join us in building a nation that is a beacon of tolerance, equality, nonracialism, and unity in diversity.”\(^{174}\)

For the first time, the ANC faced an opposition party that could seriously challenge the ANC for black voters as well as its use of liberation imagery. COPE’s choice of Bishop Mvume Dandala as its presidential candidate also indicated its intention to critique the ANC on moral grounds. The ANC’s response was to emphasize its role in ending apartheid, its own religiosity, and COPE’s dysfunctional and “treacherous” leadership. The ANC’s rhetoric toward COPE was split between neutral claims and bonding statements directly targeting the black vote.

COPE’s co-optation of Mandela riled ANC officials. The ANC’s swift response with bonding rhetoric signified the potential potency of COPE’s tactic. “I heard a voice sounding like a bishop this morning,” Zuma told a crown in reference to Dandala, “saying that Madiba is for all of us. When I heard that, I wanted…to warn them that if they do not have anything to say, they must not claim Madiba.”\(^{175}\) Before a different audience, Zuma claimed, “Nelson Mandela belongs to the ANC, he was shaped by the

---

\(^{173}\) “ANC president catches flak for trying to court Afrikaners before polls, *Cape Argus*, April 3, 2009

\(^{174}\) “Election show of force” *Star*, April 20, 2009

\(^{175}\) “Hands off Madiba – he’s ours, Zuma tells Cope,” *Star*, March 9, 2009
ANC and he also shaped the ANC.”176 Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Mandela’s former wife, summoned ANC history at an election rally: “This is the best audience I’ve had this year,” she said before a gathering that included children. “To see the future leaders of our country. From these children we will have the Chris Hanis of tomorrow, the Oliver Tambos of tomorrow and the Mandelas of tomorrow.”177 The ANC’s claim to Mandela was not restricted to rallies. An ANC television advertisement, described by the Mail & Guardian, featured an elderly man discussing his crushed dreams during apartheid and how his life was renewed by Mandela’s release from prison.178 The ANC’s election message was bluntly summarized by ANC chaplain-general Vukile Mehana, who implored an audience of churchgoers to “remember who liberated them” when they went to the polls.179

In order to counter the influence COPE’s Bishop Dandala, ANC leaders made numerous church visits as well as outlandish claims of divine support for re-election. In the North West province, Zuma announced that the ANC is a “child of the church” and that the church’s support of the ANC was an “unequivocal biblical declaration that if God is for us who can be against us.”180 At a rally in Mpumalanga, Zuma said, “When priests

176 “ANC urges supporters to fight for two-thirds majority,” Daily Dispatch, March 9, 2009

177 “ANC campaign ratchets up as Winnie pledges support in fight against poverty,” Cape Times, March 17, 2009

178 “ANC takes flight,” Mail & Guardian, March 5, 2009

179 “O come all ye faithful, COPE, ANC disciples,” City Press, March 15, 2009

180 “ANC is a child of the church, says Zuma,” Star, March 19, 2009
pray for poverty to end and for development, then it means God agrees with the ANC because the ANC stands for those things.”

He added, “We in the ANC know God.” ANC leader Mathews Phosa compared ANC voters to Jesus’ disciples and claimed, “As we emerge from Easter, we are sprinkling the blood of Jesus Christ into the body and soul of the ANC...Now He is with the ANC.” Both Zuma and other ANC officials said that the ANC would rule until Jesus returned. The ANC’s use of religion indicated the party’s concern with Dandala’s criticism of ANC corruption. Dandala’s high moral standing—along with Bishop Desmond Tutu’s renunciation of the ANC—enhanced the potential effectiveness of these attacks. To dispel COPE’s claims, the ANC used neutral rhetoric to emphasize the party’s piety.

The defensive measures outlined above—emphasizing liberation politics and the ANC’s close relationship with the church/God—were coupled with intense bonding attacks on the character, intentions, and organization of COPE and its leaders. The ANC also cast COPE members as corrupt, disgruntled, and tied to disposed former ANC.

181 “God is on our side – Msholozi,” Sowetan, March 9, 2009
182 “Be like Jesus’ disciples for ANC,” Sunday Times, April 19, 2009
185 “COPE-ANC battle in North West as election nears,” Business Day, March 23, 2009
186 “ANC urges supporters to fight for two-thirds majority,” Daily Dispatch, March 9, 2009
leader Thabo Mbeki (who never formally endorsed COPE). At a press briefing, an ANC spokesman accused COPE of trying to “devour” the ruling party and betraying the legacy of Mandela. Another ANC official claimed that Dandala had no integrity and was insulting the movement by urging voters to go against the ANC. A COSATU official called COPE the “black DA.” Former ANC Youth league head Fikile Mbalula claimed COPE was full of people who sought “to destroy the ANC,” calling them “witches” who would be defeated like other ANC challengers such as the United Democratic Movement.

Youth League leader Julius Malema emphasized COPE’s disloyalty, comparing them to the “same people who killed [anti-apartheid activist] Chris Hani.” The ANC also tried to portray COPE as ethnically exclusive. Mlungisi Hlongwane, a returned COPE defector, claimed, “A select group of Xhosa-speaking leaders [in COPE] have embarked on a secret strategy to place only Xhosa speaking leaders at strategic political

187 “They are fighting for fat,” City Press, March 29, 2009
188 “ANC thanks COPE,” Citizen, April 18, 2009
189 “COPE comes out guns blazing,” City Press, March 8, 2009
190 “Cosatu slams Tutu over Zuma claims,” Cape Argus, April 3, 2009
191 “Mbeki betrayed ANC but we won’t kick him out, says Mbalulu,” Star, April 15, 2009
192 “Motlanthe urges voters to entrench polices,” The Herald, April 6, 2009
193 “Mbalulua rallies Fort Hare students,” Daily Dispatch, March 14, 2009
194 “Stylish ‘dimwit’ on a mission,” Daily Dispatch, April 21, 2009
Days before the election, Malema summarized the ANC’s view of COPE with his characteristic flamboyance: “We can’t wait for them to get their ugly faces out of our TVs after [election day].”

Initially, the ANC’s primary focus during the election was COPE, which was challenging the ANC for national power. However, as the campaign progressed, it became clear COPE was significantly weaker than anticipated. The DA slowly re-emerged as the strongest opposition party, particularly in the Western Cape, where it posed a serious challenge to ANC control. The ANC, as it had in previous election campaigns, framed the DA with bonding statements that portrayed the party as racist and linked with apartheid. In a letter to the Cape Argus newspaper, a South African voter summarized a common view of the DA: “To us, the National Party (NP) and all the parties in the apartheid parliament, including the PFP (later to become the DP and later to unite with the NP to become the DA), were part of the apartheid system.” The DA wanted to shed this historical baggage while ANC sought to emphasize it.

ANCYL head Julius Malema was the ANC’s main combatant with the DA. At an election rally, Melema said, “[DA leader] Helen Zille is racist and fake, even her face is not original. Her real face is ugly, that is why she had plastic surgery. DA’s polices are just as fake as her.” In a coloured township, Malema claimed that the DA was closing

---

195 “COPE election manager rejoins ANC,” Business Day, March 27, 2009
196 “Youth leader takes swipe at ANC rivals,” Daily Dispatch, April 18, 2009
197 “Why I will vote for the ANC again,” Cape Argus, April 24, 2009
off water from “our people,” who are “tired of racially based governance” and want “the people’s organization to lead.”\textsuperscript{199} At a youth rally in Galeshewe, Malema called Zille an “apartheid agent” who “dances like a Chihuahua.” At the same rally, he claimed Joe Seremane—a black former anti-apartheid political prisoner and now DA official—was Helen Zille’s token black supporter who says “yes, madam...with a smile” but has no real power in the party.\textsuperscript{200} At another rally, Malema referred to the DA’s black youth league leader, Khume Ramulifho, as Zille’s “garden boy.”\textsuperscript{201}

Though Malema’s statements received high-profile headlines, they were not the only racially charged attacks on the DA. The ANC head of elections Fikile Mbalula said in a party statement that the ANC would defeat the DA’s fascist, racist, “swart gevaar” tactics.\textsuperscript{202} In a coloured township, ANC politician Chris Nissen warned of the ramifications of DA rule in coloured areas: “If they [the DA] ever come to power in the Western Cape, they won’t take care of you. The DA-led city only takes care of selective communities,” he said. “They have an administration and a mayor that does not care about you. Look at how the townships look. We challenge them to say why (they) are selective in service delivery to the poor.”\textsuperscript{203} Such charges of poor service delivery were

\textsuperscript{198} “Youth leader takes swipe at ANC rivals,” \textit{Daily Dispatch}, April 18, 2009

\textsuperscript{199} “Malema says good reception in ‘coloured’ area proves ANC will take province,” \textit{Cape Argus}, April 15, 2009

\textsuperscript{200} “Malema Spews Fire,” \textit{Diamond Fields Advertiser}, March 30, 2009

\textsuperscript{201} “Bosesak has run out of ideas, says Zille,” \textit{Star}, March 3, 2009

\textsuperscript{202} “We will defeat racist, fascist Zille – Mbalula,” \textit{Citizen}, April 18, 2009
often linked to the DA’s alleged racial disconnect. ANC Finance Minister Trevor Manuel claimed in a town hall discussion that his debate opponent, the DA’s Ryan Coetzee, could not understand a student’s question because it was not asked in a “bishopscourt accent”—a rich white suburb of Cape Town. Furthermore, a fake DA pamphlet calling for white unity was distributed anonymously to voters in Mpumalanga early in the campaign. It read: “It’s a call to every white South African and abroad, if you have a club/society, church or a community organisation, bring them along, we have funds available so that we together can make it happen.” Although the ANC denied culpability for the pamphlet, the DA claimed it was produced by the ANC.

COPE’s rhetoric against the ANC was a mix of neutral and bonding, focusing on poor service delivery, criticism of campaign tactics, and disgracing the legacy of Mandela and the liberation. In an editorial, COPE’s head of communications accused Zuma and his supporters of “utilizing every aspect of South African culture, history and politics to achieve their personal objectives; whether it is to stay out of jail, get elected or re-elected into office and, not least of all, keep taking the money.” He argued that there are “criminal elements in the liberation movement” that only pursue “the accumulation of wealth.” If Zuma wins election, Dexter concluded, a new “populist-authoritarian regime” will be imposed on South Africa.

Presidential candidate Bishop Dandala routinely

---

203 “Nissen says DA to blame for conditions at Vrygrond,” *Cape Times*, April 2009

204 “Manuel trades insults with DA’s Coetzee in debate,” *Cape Argus*, March 17, 2009

205 “DA doubts the sincerity of ANC’s pamphlet probe,” *Star*, March 6, 2009

206 “Of Politicians, priests and prostitutes,” *Mail & Guardian*, April 9, 2009
invoked poor service delivery, patronage, unemployment, and state corruption on the campaign trail.  

COPE often mixed accusations of corruption with liberation imagery in order to target black voters. At a campaign rally, COPE President Mosiuoa “terror” Lekota said corruption, cronyism, and nepotism dominated the ANC, which was a “betrayal of everything that the generation of Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela stood for.” He added at a different rally in Gugeletu, “We promise that we will redeem the promises made by Nelson Mandela and point out deviations of the leading party.”

Documented intimidation of COPE supporters by ANC followers drew comparisons with the apartheid regime. In a newspaper editorial, a COPE official wrote, “How [the ANC], which has such a proud history so quickly degenerated into the enemy that it defeated just a decade and a half ago is not only unfathomable it also hurts deeply.” He continued:

We call on South Africans to reclaim their dignity and hope. The Liberation struggle was primarily about the restoration of the dignity of our people. Never again should we allow any political party to take away the one thing that sustained many of us during the dark days of Apartheid.

Dandala argued that COPE would restore honor and value back to South Africa while improving service delivery, but he and the party struggled to differentiate COPE’s polices from the ANC’s. At one rally, Dandala acknowledged that COPE and ANC


208 “Lekota blasts ANC for ‘corruption,” Sowetan, April 20, 2009

209 “Vote with caution, says Lekota,” Cape Argus, April 16, 2009

210 “Restore dignity,” Diamond Fields Advertiser, April 17, 2009
policies “are the same...But the difference is that [the ANC] have had those policies for the past 10 to 15 years. Their people in government did not implement those polices.”

COPE candidates warned that ANC corruption and intimidation was turning South Africa into Zimbabwe. COPE also tried to challenge the Tripartite Alliance. Former COSATU president and COPE member Wille Madisha argued that ANC-aligned COSATU and SACP work against the interests of workers and that unions should be politically independent.

COPE spent comparatively little time attacking the DA, though its bonding rhetoric toward the historically white party mimicked the ANC’s tone. COPE’s candidate in the Western Cape, Alan Boesak, asked, “What do (the DA) think of our people? In Delft, they fan racism and divide people. We’ve struggled together. We died together and we do not want to be racially divided any more” At one campaign event, a COPE supporter said the DA was “full of apartheid.” Simultaneously, the party was split on its position toward affirmative action, a contentious issue for whites and blacks. Even though COPE’s manifesto proclaimed support for affirmative action, Dandala argued on

211 “Too little, too late,” Mail & Guardian, April 16, 2009
212 “There’s no place for intimidation,” Sunday Tribune, March 9, 2009
213 “Cosatu are sellouts,” Sunday Times, March 8, 2009
214 “Last-ditch bid to woo Michells Plains voters,” Cape Times, April 20, 2009
215 “We’ve poached hundreds from DA, says Boesak,” Star, April 1, 2009
the campaign trail that the program was marginalizing whites. Claims regarding affirmative action constituted a large portion of COPE’s minimal bridging rhetoric.

The DA’s campaign focused on policy critiques of the ANC and its own vision for improving South Africa. Sixty-four percent of its statements were neutral. The DA juxtaposed the ANC’s alleged corruption and cronyism with what it claimed were successes of its own governance in local areas: better service delivery, more transparency, and less crime. The DA’s “Stop Zuma” slogan played on fears of expanded corruption under Zuma. If Zuma was elected with a two-thirds majority, Zille argued, “the powerful will have free rein to engage in power abuse and corruption” The DA also critiqued the ANC’s commitment to the poor: “Corrupt leaders make the poor people poorer,” Zille proclaimed often while campaigning.

Zille mocked Black Economic Empowerment programs as “Black Elite Enrichment” and called Malema and other Youth League officials “Gucci revolutionaries” who do not care about empowering the youth. She reserved even harsher terms for Malema, whom she also called an “inkewnkwe” (Xhosa for an

---

216 “COPE to do well in poll as it rekindles hope – Dandala,” Business Day, March 20, 2009
217 “ANC ‘will get more corrupt under Zuma’,” The Herald, April 16, 2009
218 “Zille and Boesak turn up the heat in last push for votes,” City Press, April 19, 2009
219 “Zille slams ANC’s ‘crony society’,” Daily News, April 16, 2009
220 “Change course of history – Boesak,” Business Day, March 6, 2009
221 “Snappy new Zille image a hit,” Daily Dispatch, March 7, 2009
‘uncircumcised boy’) as well as a fascist and imbecile.”222 Rather than address COPE head on, the DA’s rhetoric elided its two opponents. COPE “lacks an alternative policy platform” and has “run out of ideas,”223 Zille argued at a rally. The DA’s bonding rhetoric (2 percent) surrounded issues of crime and security, which is particularly important to non-black voters.

The DA went to great lengths to proclaim its multiracial identity with bridging rhetoric. The ANC’s efforts to cast the DA as a racist and white-only party were met head on by Zille, who was forced to declare at one event, “We will never bring back apartheid. Never, never, never.”224 Adding in a newspaper profile, “People who say that we are a white party are being ignorant...it’s not about colour anymore, it’s about going to bed hungry.”225 Zille spoke at campaign events in Xhosa, which she had spent years learning, and encouraged other DA officials and supporters to learn other languages.226

Zille argued that the ANC uses the “lure of history”227 to win and was trying to “define people according to race and ethnicity,” which suited the ANC “because if it can

222 “High turnout vital,” Citizen, April 20, 2009
223 “Boesak has run out of ideas, says Zille,” Star, March 3, 2009
224 “Zille keeps it low-key at Middelburg rally,” Star, April 20, 2009
225 “On campaign with superwoman,” Saturday Star, April 18, 2009
226 “Translation nation – parties truly try to be people’s voice,” Saturday Star, March 28, 2009
227 “DA’s Zille spells out plans to beat ANC,” Saturday Weekend Argus, March 14, 2009
divide South Africa into separate boxes of race and ethnicity [it] will rule forever.”

Other DA officials also said directly to voters that the DA is “not a white party” In a Daily Dispatch editorial, DA politician Bobby Stevenson outlined the party’s multiracial vision “to bring back the ideal of a rainbow nation, where all South Africans, regardless of political connections, race or culture, know they have a bright future and their dreams for a better tomorrow will be realised.”

The campaign statements of the three major parties showcase their respective electoral strategies. The DA made by far the most bridging statements and the least bonding statements on the campaign trail. While its progress among black voters has been slow, the DA is trying to build long-term multiracial constituency. COPE, which believed it could challenge the ANC on national terms, emphasized service delivery—focusing in particular on issues important to black voters—as well as attempted to claim the legacy of Mandela and the liberation. In response, the ANC’s campaign strategy was bifurcated. It had to respond to COPE’s challenges on service delivery and the DA’s newly constructed multiracial image. To do so, it emphasized neutral policy statements as well as attacked the DA as racist while upholding its own history in the liberation movement.

228 “ANC president catches flak for trying to court Afrikaners before polls,” Cape Argus, April 3, 2009

229 “Malema can learn from me, says ‘garden boy’ Ramulifho,” Star, April 15, 2009; “Root out corruption, Zille says,” Star, April 16, 2009

230 “Vote to bring back the ideal of the Rainbow Nation,” Daily Dispatch, April 4, 2009
This content analysis shows a different picture of South African party politics than do the manifestos. The presence of COPE diminished the ANC’s reliance on bonding statements, but the campaign’s combined rhetoric demonstrates the dwindling multiracialism of South African elections. Only 13 percent of the campaign rhetoric bridged between races—and the traditionally white opposition party was responsible for 62.5 percent of that rhetoric. It is unlikely the anomalously large emphasis on neutral issues signals a new trend. The ANC could not attack the black leadership of COPE as racist, so it was forced to emphasize neutral issues. Tellingly, both the ANC and COPE were quick to attack the DA as racist even while challenging each other on mostly policy grounds.

Voter Targeting: The ANC and Opposition Parties

A party’s campaign rhetoric is not the only way to evaluate its racial targeting efforts. Parties appeal to voters through direct contacts with electronic, telephonic, and in-person messages. This section evaluates each party’s voter targeting effort using post-election survey data that asked South Africans which parties contacted them. The survey results do not show disproportionate racial targeting beyond what one would expect given South Africa’s demographics. However, it corresponds to the rhetoric analysis from 2009, which shows that the ANC made little effort to target minority voters.

The 2009 CNEP survey asked South Africans whether a political party or candidate contacted them and, if so, by what means: in person, SMS, telephone, mail, or email. By combining these five means of contact into a ‘contacted’ category broken down by race, we can see the frequency each political party contacted specific racial groups.
The ANC had the most skewed direct-targeting campaign during the election. Of those directly contacted by the ANC, 83.1 percent were Black, 15.6 percent were Coloured, and less than one percent were Indian or White. COPE’s direct contacts were minimally more diverse. Of those directly contacted by COPE, 77 percent were Black, 18.4 percent were Coloured, 1.1 percent were Indian, and 3.4 percent were White. The DA had by far the most racially diverse contact campaign. Of those contacted by the DA, 39.5 percent were Black, 35.5 percent were Coloured, 1.3 percent were Indian, and 23.7 percent were White.

Figure 39: Racial Composition of Voter Contacts (In person, SMS, Telephone, Mail, Email)

Source: (CNEP 2009); Figure constructed by author.

231 An additional note of caution is necessary for interpreting these data. The vast majority of voting-age South Africans reported no direct contact with any campaign. Ninety-two percent, 90.9 percent, and 80.1 percent of those surveyed reported no direct contact from the DA, COPE, or the ANC respectively. Table 2 indicates the percentages of those who were contacted by a political party or candidate, not of the whole voting-age population.
This data on voter targeting correspond to the results of the rhetoric analysis of the 2009 campaign. During the election, the ANC overwhelmingly contacted black voters. Only 16.9 percent of its direct voter contacts were non-Black, with Indians and Whites each constituting less than one percent. COPE’s voter contacts were 24.6 percent non-Black –7.7 percentage points higher than the ANC’s – but still strikingly less than its black outreach. Similar to its campaign rhetoric, the DA’s direct voter contacts were 76.3 percent non-White, with Coloureds comprising only 4 percentage points less than Blacks.

In sum, the direct targeting campaigns of the ANC, COPE, and the DA provide corroborative but inconclusive evidence of ethnic and multiethnic campaigning: the ANC and COPE mostly targeted black voters while the DA targeted a more racially diverse group. However, the parties’ targeting efforts alone do not indicate racial campaigning. Given the demographics of South Africa, one would expect a party to strategically target black voters. Yet the ANC did under-represented whites in its targeting campaign by around 10 percent of their demographic total. Combined with election rhetoric, this is further evidence of, at minimum, a party uninterested in reaching out to white voters.

Party List Composition

Party lists provide each party the opportunity to define the ‘face’ of the party. Parties can choose to fill and structure their lists as they chose, which presents a strategic opportunity to target specific racial groups by stacking lists with a racially skewed set of candidates. Building on the work of Karen Ferree, who created a database of racially coded party lists for the 1994, 1999, and 2004 election, national, regional, and provincial
party lists for the ANC, DA, and COPE in 2009 were coded.232 The coding shows that the ANC and COPE have far more racially representative lists than the DA. However, it also confirms the trend identified by Ferree, who shows the ANC’s party lists have become “Africanized,” i.e., the proportion of black MP candidates has increased. The DA had been following this trend of “Africanization” between 1994 and 1999, but this analysis shows that the DA’s lists had more white candidates and less black candidates in 2009 than in 2004.

COPE’s party lists closely mirrored South African society, which was 78.3 percent Black, 10.7 percent White, 8.6 percent Coloured, and 2.5 percent Indian in 2009, according to Statistics South Africa. On its national list, COPE’s candidates were 71 percent Black, 14.5 percent White, 8.5 percent Coloured, and 2.5 percent Indian. Its regional and provincial lists had similar totals. All three lists closely matched South Africa’s demographics, in fact slightly under-representing blacks.

232 The three parties’ lists totalled over 2000 names. In order to conduct the racial coding, each name was evaluated as black, Indian, white, or coloured. Racially distinctive names in South Africa make this method highly accurate. However, since white and coloured names are often difficult to distinguish, additional internet and Facebook searches were conducted to confirm the person’s race. A native South African and political science graduate student was employed as a research assistant for this task, which follows the method used by Ferree.
As Karen Feree shows, the DA has made great strides in placing more black candidates on its lists. Yet, in 2009, the DA’s lists were most misrepresentative of South African society and were in fact a digression from the racial representativeness of previous lists. At the national level, the DA’s candidates were 26 percent Black, 63 percent White, 5 percent Coloured and 6 percent Indian. This under-represented Blacks by 52 percentage points and over represented Whites by 52 percentage points.
Additionally, the DA’s lists showed an increase in the percentage of White and Coloured candidates and a decrease in Black candidates between 2004 and 2009. In 2009, the DA had 7.5 percent fewer Blacks and 7 percent more Whites/Coloureds on its lists. However, the DA greatly expanded its lists between the two elections. Therefore, the DA actually had 83 additional black candidates in 2009, but this still equaled a drop in the overall percentage. While this evidence disconfirms the DA’s “Africanizing” trend identified by Ferree, it also corresponds to her argument that the DA has difficulty recruiting well-known black candidates even though it wants to diversify its lists. In short, the DA’s growing popularity required it to expand its party list membership, but in doing so, the party struggled to fill these new slots with black candidates.

---

233 Ferree’s racial coding of lists combined whites and coloureds whiles this project separated the two. For comparative convenience, coloureds and whites are combined for 2009.
In 2009, the ANC’s national, regional, and provincial candidates closely mirrored South African society. The overall composition of all candidates selected to represent the ANC was 84 percent Black, 7 percent White, 5.3 percent Coloured and 3 percent Indian.

As shown in Figure 43, the national list, regional lists, and combined provincial lists closely fit South African society, minimally over-representing Blacks and Indians, while minimally under representing Whites and Coloureds.
Parties can stack lists in particular ways to advantage certain candidates over others. The ANC can predict with high accuracy its percentage of the vote at the national and provincial level. Therefore, it knows in advance which seats are safe or competitive and which are certain losers. The ANC could then conceivably position its minority candidates at the bottom of the lists, ensuring both the image of multiracialism and the governing reality of mostly black parliamentary members. However, an additional analysis showed the racial composition of the ANC’s winners and losers also mirrors South Africa’s demographics, showing that the ANC’s lists are truly representative.

Although the ANC’s 2009 list remains broadly representative of South African society, the party’s lists are becoming increasingly less diverse. Between 1994 and 2009, the ANC’s percentage of Black candidates increased from 70 percent to 84.5 percent. Its percentage of White/Coloured candidates decreased from 21 percent to 12.5 percent, and Indian candidates have decreased 9 percent to 2.5 percent.
While the composition of the ANC’s party lists does not signify the full abandonment of multiracialism, there is a clear homogenizing of its candidates. Though the lists remain broadly representative—thus allowing the ANC to legitimately claim multiracialism—its progressively diminishing percentage of non-Black candidates suggests that the ANC no longer feels the need to reach out to non-black voters by over selecting their representatives. The ANC’s logic is likely influenced by the opposition’s strategic use of their party lists. Despite clear difficulty in acquiring black candidates, the DA has greatly enhanced the racial diversity of its party lists. The drop in the DA’s percentage of black candidates obscures its recruitment of more black candidates than in any previous election. Similarly, COPE’s lists featured a racially reflective candidate selection. The ANC, facing two multiracial challengers, had a strategic imperative to strengthen its core of black support while not disregarding the social imperative to maintain at least nominal multiracialism.
Racial Group Voting Behavior in the 2004 and 2009 Elections

As seen in the preceding analysis of party manifestos, campaign rhetoric, voter targeting, and party list composition, race is an important element in South African party politics. Between 1994 and 2009 the ruling ANC has increasingly abandoned multiracial appeals. In contrast, the Democratic Alliance has escalated its multiracial appeals. COPE’s strategy in 2009 fell in between the DA and ANC: its efforts were less racialized than the ANC but less multiracial than the DA. The three parties’ respective voter mobilization strategies correspond to the highly polarized election outcomes of 2004 and 2009, which feature clear patterns of racial voting.

The 2004 election was highly racially polarized. The main contenders—the DA and the ANC—failed to win any significant number of votes from outside their respective traditional constituency. Of voting age Blacks, 80.8 percent voted for the ANC and only 0.7 percent for the DA. The White vote was just as polarized. One percent of Whites voted for the ANC while 64.8 percent voted for the DA. The Coloured vote divided between the ANC and the DA (61.8 percent versus 10.3 percent). Among the small Indian community, one-third voted for the ANC, with the remaining votes split between the DA and other parties.
However, a different trend emerges when analyzing the racial composition of each party’s voters. Of those who voted for the ANC, 92.5 percent were Black, 6.7 percent were Coloured, and less than one percent Indian or White. Of those who voted for the DA, 6.1 percent were Black and 82.9 percent were White.
Analyzing the racial composition of each party’s vote still shows racialized voting behavior among whites and blacks; however, it also indicates a greater racial diversity among those who voted for the DA in 2004. Though a much smaller election constituency, the DA’s voting bloc was more racially representative than the ANC’s. As a percentage of its vote, the DA gets a higher proportion of Indian and coloured voters than the ANC. The DA’s constituency included significantly more black voters (as a percentage) than the ANC’s constituency included white voters, which respectively represent each party’s non-traditional voting group.

The racial breakdown of the 2009 election changed dramatically from 2004. Among Blacks, 73.8 percent voted for the ANC, 4.6 percent for COPE, and 2.1 percent for the DA. Among Whites, 4.4 percent voted for the ANC, 64.7 percent voted for the DA, and less than 1 percent voted for COPE. Among Coloureds, 29.8 percent voted for the ANC, 1.8 percent for COPE, and 4.4 percent for the DA. Among Indians, 11.1 percent voted for the ANC, 4.0 percent for COPE, and 5.2 percent for the DA.
percent voted for the ANC, 33.3 percent for the DA, and less than 1 percent for COPE. The rest of each racial group’s vote was distributed between other parties.

Figure 47: Within-Party Support by Race (2009 National Election)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Coloured</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>73.80%</td>
<td>29.80%</td>
<td>11.10%</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>32.50%</td>
<td>33.30%</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>4.60%</td>
<td>32.50%</td>
<td>33.30%</td>
<td>64.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't vote/Don't know</td>
<td>29.80%</td>
<td>11.10%</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Party</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>30.00%</td>
<td>40.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (CNEP 2009); Figure constructed by author.

Between the 2004 and 2009 elections, the percentage of the ANC’s vote dropped within every racial group except Whites. It dropped 7 points among Blacks, 32 points among Coloureds, and 22.2 points among Indians. Interestingly, it gained 3.1 percentage points among whites. However, the DA maintained its support among White voters, which suggests that the ANC’s gain in white votes came not at the expense of the DA but rather other parties. The DA, while maintaining its white support, gained 22.2 points among Coloureds, 16.6 points among Indians, and 1.1 points among Blacks. COPE scored weakly among each racial group, scoring best with black voters.

Turning to the racial breakdown of party constituencies in 2009, the ANC and COPE had a remarkably similar voter base. Among ANC voters, 93.9 percent were
Black, 4.7 percent were Coloured, and less than one percent were Indian or White.

Among COPE voters, 95.5 percent were Black, 4.5 percent were Coloured, and less than 1 percent were Indian or White. Among DA voters, 12.2 percent were Black, 23.7 percent were Coloured, 7.7 percent were Indian, and 56.4 percent were White.

Figure 48: Racial Composition of Party Vote (2009 National Election)

Source: (CNEP 2009); Figure constructed by author.

Between the 2004 and 2009 elections, the racial composition of ANC voters remained almost the same. Its proportion of White, Black, Indian, and Coloured voters changed by no more than 2 percent in either direction. Alternatively, the DA’s constituency became dramatically more diverse. Its Black proportion increased by 6.1 points, its Coloured proportion increased by 15.2 points, and its Indian proportion increased by 5.3 points. The DA’s White proportion decreased by 26.5 points, but this was not due to decreased support among whites (its within-group support remained the
same between 2004 and 2009). Rather, it was indicative of a larger, more diverse voting bloc moving to the DA.

Despite the DA’s improvement among non-White voters, breaking down the DA’s and ANC’s national vote shares by province shows the continuing importance of race in South Africa’s elections. Figures 49 and 50 plot provincial racial demographics on the right y-axis and the party’s provincial vote total on the left y-axis.

As Figure 49 shows, the ANC is weakest where there is the most diversity and strongest in more homogenously Black provinces. The correlation coefficient between the ANC’s vote total and Black population size is .91. The ANC’s worst 2009 performance was in the Western Cape, which is 24 percent Black, 21.20 percent White, 53.70 percent Coloured, and 1.10 percent Indian. Its strongest electoral performances were in Limpopo and Mpumalanga, which are 97.20 percent and 91.40 percent Black respectively.
The DA’s national vote shows the opposite relationship between race and popularity. The DA is weakest where Blacks constitute the largest share of the population and gets stronger as the White and Coloured populations rise in size. The DA’s vote total is positively correlated (.83) with White population size and negatively correlated (-.86) with Black population size. The DA’s strongest and weakest provinces are the mirror image of the ANC’s. Its best performance was in the racially diverse Western Cape; its weakest performances were in the far more homogenous provinces of Limpopo and Mpumalanga.
The combined evidence of election results shows a high degree of racial polarization in South Africa. In 2009, the ANC received over 73 percent of the black vote and over 93 percent of its voters were black. The ANC’s voters were only 4.4 percent white and less than 1 percent of whites voted for the ANC. Additionally, there is a clear correlation between provincial demographics and party performance. The ANC performs best in the most homogenously Black provinces and worst in the most diverse provinces. These data confirm a commonly held belief about South African elections: race is highly correlated to party choice. South Africa’s election results corroborate the empirical analysis of party strategy presented here. The ANC’s increasingly racialized campaign tactics have retained racial polarization during elections.
Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates the slow degeneration of South Africa toward the expected post-apartheid political outcome: exclusivist racial—particularly black—politics. After decades of violence and discrimination during apartheid, which persisted albeit at lower levels after 1990, the emergence of Nelson Mandela and the “rainbow” African National Congress was remarkable. Though racial appeals were still seen in the first democratic contest, the 1994 election was a stunningly peaceful and unifying moment for this deeply divided nation. Yet since 1994, the ANC has incrementally escalated is racial mobilization strategy. Though the party is not formally an ethnic party, its use of race during campaigns is becoming increasingly divisive.

There is a preponderance of empirical evidence for this argument. Using case studies of the 2004 and 2009 elections (and to a lesser extent 1994 and 1999 as well), this chapter collected data on various aspects of party strategy. In sum, it shows the ANC’s campaign rhetoric relies on progressively less multiethnic (bridging) appeals; its voter outreach program targets mostly black voters; and its party lists include fewer white, Indian, and coloured candidates every election cycle. All of this belies the strong multiracialism of the party’s election manifesto. Furthermore, the ANC’s strategy is reflected in the highly polarized voting behavior of South Africans.

Like in India and Indonesia, multiethnic politics is essential to the stability of South Africa. Race politics could intensify ethnic violence and exacerbate the flight of racial minorities from the country. Though the ANC is certain to dominate elections in the near future, the Democratic Alliance and to a lesser extent COPE are consolidating a
political opposition that increasingly includes voters of all racial groups. However, there is no obvious reason why the ANC would change tactics given its success over the last four election cycles. The South African peacebuilding experience therefore needs to be understood in light of the particular incentives for ethnic politics facing the ANC, which appear opposite to those facing parties in India and Indonesia.
CHAPTER SEVEN: ELECTORAL DECENTRALIZATION AND MULTIELTHERNIC POLITICS

Introduction

The empirical evidence presented in the three previous chapters demonstrates the diverging trends of multiethnic politics in the three countries under investigation. Using manifests, election rhetoric, candidate selection, voter contacts, and voting behavior to measure multiethnic appeals and political behavior, this analysis shows strong multiethnic politics in India and Indonesia and comparatively weak multiethnic politics in South Africa, where ethnic political appeals are increasing within some dimensions of electoral mobilization.

Given the fundamental similarity of these three cases, which share large populations, high ethnic fractionalization, dominant-majority ethnic structures, past liberation movements, the presence of ethnic conflict since 1990, and vibrant democratic competition, this variation in political outcomes is significant. All three countries had unifying, multiethnic nationalist movements that created a strong foundation for multiethnic party politics. However, the character of party politics has shifted in South Africa while remaining consistent in India and Indonesia. As multiethnic and ethnic competitors have challenged the dominant multiethnic parties in India and Indonesia, their political appeals have remained broadly multiethnic. In India, the Congress Party was only seriously challenged starting in 1989 by the Hindu nationalist BJP. Though the
INC briefly responded with communal appeals, it renewed its multiethnic tactics and won back the parliament. In Indonesia, after the surprising rise of the Islamist PKS in 2004, the major parties have continued with multiethnic appeals. In contrast, the ANC has increasingly abandoned its already comparatively low levels of multiethnicity as the DA slowly challenges the its dominance.

In short, the main political parties in India, Indonesia, and South Africa emerged from national liberation movements as the inheritors of unifying and inclusive politics, but these parties have responded differently to political challengers amid conditions still conducive to ethnic outbidding. This variation is explained by examining the incentives for ethnic and multiethnic politics built into the institutional arrangement in each country, particularly its electoral system design. However, the logic of political action created by electoral system choice does not alone explain multiethnic politics in these countries. It is the interaction of electoral system design and ethnic cleavage structure that creates a logic of what this dissertation calls electoral decentralization: the rule-based strategic necessity for a political party to compete with localized appeals across a large part of a country in order to control national political institutions. Electoral decentralization is enhanced by strong federalism, which makes sub-national political power worth pursuing for national parties.

Differing levels of electoral decentralization explain the variation in multiethnic political behavior in these countries. The electoral system in India and Indonesia creates a high degree of electoral decentralization. In order to control the central government in both countries, a political party must generate support across large and diverse polities,
which naturally moderates political appeals in order to maximize support. In contrast, South Africa’s electoral system produces electoral centralization: a political party can control the central government by winning merely a large national vote total. Given the ethnic structure of South Africa, this encourages racial politics. Furthermore, the varying extent of federal power sharing augments the incentives for multiethnic and ethnic politics in these countries.

This chapter first summarizes and compares the evidence of multiethnic and ethnic politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa, showing clearly higher levels of ethnic politics in South Africa. Next, it addresses a series of non-institutional explanations for multiethnic politics in each country. Finally, it shows that the political incentives created by each country’s electoral system provide a parsimonious and compelling explanation for variations in multiethnic politics across time.

**Comparing Multiethnic Politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa**

Using case studies of recent elections in India, Indonesia, and South Africa, the previous chapters outlined the state of multiethnic and ethnic politics in each country. This section synthesizes the case studies into a structured, focused comparison of issue platforms presented in manifestos and debates, campaign rhetoric, candidate selection, voter contacts, and voting behavior. It demonstrates a clear trend: strong and steady multiethnic politics in India and Indonesia and comparative lower and declining multiethnic politics in South Africa.
Manifestos and Debates

The manifestos and platforms of the major political parties in India, Indonesia, and South Africa were equally inclusive and nationalistic. Though this analysis did not include a quantitative measurement of platform content, all the parties investigated—even parties commonly called ‘ethnic’—constructed issue agendas to appeal to the largest number of voters.

India’s Indian National Congress (INC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) both produced manifestos in 2009 with dense policy proposals and few if any ethnic appeals. The INC emphasized its “secular and liberal” vision for the country. Though the INC attacked its competitor’s “communal nationalism,” the BJP focused its attention on economic policy and downplayed divisive social issues. Indonesian political parties do not produce manifestos, but the vice-presidential and presidential debates serve as public expositions of the main parties’ platforms and therefore function similarly to a manifesto. During the 2009 debates, candidates from Golkar, the Democrat Party, and PDI-P, which each represented broad and diverse alliances, used almost entirely policy-based (and barely distinguishable) rhetoric. Similar to parties in India and Indonesia, South Africa’s African National Congress, Democratic Alliance, and COPE all employed broad-based appeals in their 2009 election manifestos.

Campaign Rhetoric

The inclusive rhetoric of party platforms is matched during the campaigns in India and Indonesia but not in South Africa. Using the totals of bridging, bonding, and neutral rhetoric, none of the major parties in these countries is “ethnic,” which can be defined as
a party that uses a majority of ethnic rhetoric (bonding statements) and a minority of multiethnic rhetoric (bridging and neutral statements). Nevertheless, there are unambiguous differences between the campaign rhetoric of the dominant parties in each country.

The rhetoric during elections in India, Indonesia, and South Africa is heavily skewed toward neutral issues. However, the weighting between bridging, bonding, and neutral categories is significantly different between the countries. In India, the INC’s 2009 rhetoric was 100% multiethnic. In Indonesia, the rhetoric of the presidential parties in 2009 was 99% multiethnic and 1% ethnic. The ruling ANC in South Africa used substantially more bonding rhetoric and less bridging and neutral rhetoric. It used over 26 percent ethnic rhetoric in 2009, which was 25 percent higher than the INC and Indonesia’s main parties. The party’s 73 percent multiethnic rhetoric is 27 percent lower and 26 percent lower than the parties in India and Indonesia respectively. Though the ANC is clearly not yet a fully ethnic party, it uses considerably more ethnic appeals that the other parties under investigation.
Candidate Selection and Parliamentary Composition

The candidates from the two major parties in India and South Africa over-represent the ethnic majority and under-represent the ethnic minority. In 2009, the ANC had approximately 4 percent more Black candidates that the South African population. The INC had approximately 7 percent more Hindu MPs than the Indian population. However, in Indonesia, each of the main parties significantly under-represented the Muslim majority. When the MPs of PD, Golkar, and PDI-P are combined, Muslims are under-represented by approximately 13 percent and Christians are over-represented by approximately 10 percent.
However, the longitudinal data from India and South Africa show different trends.\textsuperscript{234} Between the 2004 and 2009 elections, the ANC’s national party list included 5.5 percent more black candidates and 5.5 percent fewer non-traditional (White, Indian, and Coloured) candidates. Between the 2004 and 2009 elections, the INC’s MPs included approximately 4 percent fewer Hindus and approximately 4 percent more MPs from its non-traditional constituency (Muslim, Sikh, and Christian).

Figure 52: ANC and INC Constituency Trends, 2004 to 2009 Election

Unlike in India or Indonesia, the trend lines show the ANC’s candidate lists are becoming more ethnic. An examination of the four post-apartheid elections shows an increasing proportion of black candidates each year. Though the number of the INC’s Hindu and Muslim candidates has fluctuated across fifteen national elections in India, there has been no strategic pattern to the shifts. The demographic composition trend for

\textsuperscript{234} This project does not have Indonesia’s 2004 MP sorted by religion.
Indonesia’s parliament is not available, but based on other evidence, there is little reason to believe that Muslims have been increasingly over-represented, particularly given that the three largest parties under-represented Muslims in 2009. In sum, the candidate selection process demonstrates that the ANC is becoming more ethnic whereas the INC and Indonesia’s main parties are maintaining their multiethnicity (albeit limited multiethnicity, in the case of India).

Voter Contacts

The project’s data on voter contacts are incomplete because the Comparative National Elections Project, which asks voters in South Africa and Indonesia which parties contacted them during elections, does not include India. No survey organization asks a comparable question. Nevertheless, the available data contribute to our understanding of party behavior in South Africa and Indonesia.

Political parties in these two countries contacted only a small portion of their respective populations during recent elections. Approximately 20 percent, 9 percent, and 8 percent of South Africans reported contact from the ANC, COPE, and the DA respectively during the 2009 election. Even worse, no more than approximately 5 percent of Indonesians reported contact from any political party during the 2004 campaign. However, even among this small percentage of the population, the data give a clear picture of which voters parties contact.

In Indonesia, the Javanese plurality constituted no more than approximately 35 percent of those contacted by any major political party. The main multiethnic parties also contacted Muslims slightly less than the group’s demographic proportion. Only the
Islamic parties contacted a larger proportion of Muslims than the group’s percentage of the population. In South Africa, the demographics of voter contacts were similar. Of those contacted by the ANC in South Africa in 2009, 83.10 percent were Black and 15.60 percent were White, which slightly over-represented both groups when compared to South Africa’s demographics. But when compared to the DA, the ANC’s voter contacts are significantly less heterogeneous: no demographic group constituted more than 40 percent of the DA’s contacts.

There are two ways to interpret this data. A benign interpretation would conclude that the voter contact data for the ANC and the main Indonesian parties merely reflect the ethnic demographics of each country: Blacks, Muslims, and Javanese are represented among contacted voters in close proportion to their population size in South Africa and Indonesia respectively. However, using the lens of ethnic politics, the data become more ambiguous. One would expect an ethnic party to contact almost exclusively members of their own ethnic group regardless of demographics. By this measurement, we can confidently say no Indonesian party is ethnically Javanese, as no party targeted Javanese with more than 35 percent of its contacts. On the other hand, Muslims constituted the vast majority of voter contacts for all parties, which make them potentially ethnic Muslim parties. But the other data collected in the project undermines this claim. In no other dimension of party behavior—debate rhetoric, campaign rhetoric, or parliamentary composition—could these parties be considered ethnically Muslim. Because of this, we can reasonably interpret Indonesia’s voter contact data as reflecting the country’s demographics and not an ethnic mobilization strategy.
Interpreting South Africa’s voter contact data is more difficult. The demographics of the ANC’s voter contacts reflect South Africa’s population, which means that the party disproportionately targeted blacks. Yet this would also be the behavior of an ethnically black party. Moreover, in the context of other dimensions of party behavior, which all suggest an increased ethnic emphasis by the ANC, the party’s voter contacts appear racially driven. However, there is no way to conclusively prove this without knowing the content of the contacts: Were these messages to the electorate multiethnic or ethnic? Therefore, unlike in Indonesia, we cannot confidently conclude that the ANC’s voter contact data are merely a reflection of the population, but we cannot discount this possibility either.

In India, a significantly higher proportion of the population than in South Africa or Indonesia reported contact from parties during the 2004 election. Over 51 percent of Indians said a candidate, party worker, or canvasser approached them during the election (CSDS 2004). Although the identity of the party was not asked, no other dimensions of party behavior in India indicate ethnic appeals, so we can assume that voter contacts were similarly multiethnic.

The voter contact data are useful, though inconclusive, for this comparison. We can conclude that Indonesia’s main parties’ voter contacts are weakly multiethnic (i.e., representative of demographics). On the other hand, the ANC’s voter contacts could either be weakly multiethnic or ethnic. At minimum, the data does not refute the claim that the ANC has become, at best, a weakly multiethnic party.
Voting Behavior

The voting patterns in each country represent the logical outcome of the diverging political tactics outlined above. Both India and Indonesia have highly depolarized electorates. In India, no more than 25 percent of the Hindu majority voted for any single party in 2004 and no more than 40 percent of Muslims, Christians, or Sikhs voted for any single party. The ruling Congress won 24.80 percent of the Hindu vote. In Indonesia, the Javanese plurality divided its vote: about one-fifth voted for Golkar, PDI-P, and moderately Islamic PKB respectively. The Muslim majority similarly divided its vote in 2004: Almost 30 percent voted for Golkar while the rest split between several parties. However, South Africa’s vote was highly polarized. Over 70 percent of the Black majority voted for the ANC in 2009 and 92 percent of the party’s vote was Black. Similarly, 64 percent of Whites voted for the Democratic Alliance. When comparing the three countries, South Africa has the most ethnically polarized elections.

Diverging Trends of Multiethnic Politics

In sum, the comparative evidence demonstrates stable multiethnic politics in India and Indonesia and comparatively weak and partly declining multiethnic politics in South Africa. The African National Congress’s multiethnic issue platform is contradicted by various elements of its campaign strategy. The party’s campaign rhetoric, candidate selection, and voter contacts showcase a tendency to disproportionately target black voters. Conversely, India’s Congress Party and Indonesia’s major parties employ campaign practices that largely match the inclusive issue platforms laid out in manifestos and during debates. Moreover, voting behavior in South Africa is highly ethnically
polarized whereas ethnic groups in India and Indonesia split their vote between different parties.

Table 9: Comparing Multiethnic Politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INC (India)</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>ANC (S.A.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manifestos</strong></td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focus on secular and inclusive</td>
<td>Focus on secular and inclusive</td>
<td>Focus on secular and inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rhetoric</td>
<td>rhetoric</td>
<td>rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Campaign</strong></td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>Less Multiethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetoric</strong></td>
<td>Focus on bridging and neutral</td>
<td>Focus on bridging and neutral</td>
<td>Less bridging rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rhetoric</td>
<td>rhetoric</td>
<td>More bonding rhetoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Candidate</strong></td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>Multiethnic</td>
<td>Increasingly Ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selection</strong></td>
<td>Minimally under-represents</td>
<td>Over-represents Christians</td>
<td>Percentage of black candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>and under-represents Muslims</td>
<td>increasing over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weakly Multiethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voter</strong></td>
<td>Weakly Multiethnic</td>
<td>Ethnic group contacts match</td>
<td>Ethnic group contacts match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contacts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>demographics</td>
<td>demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnically Polarization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voting</strong></td>
<td>Ethnically Depolarized</td>
<td>Ethnically Depolarized</td>
<td>Black, white voters divided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior</strong></td>
<td>Hindus, Muslims split votes</td>
<td>Muslims, Javanese split</td>
<td>between two separate parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between different parties</td>
<td>votes between different</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>parties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This comparison clearly shows deviating trends in multiethnic politics in these three deeply divided countries. The South African case has slowly regressed across elections toward ethnic politics while India and Indonesia have not. This variation suggests a difference in fundamental conditions that divide India and Indonesia from
South Africa. Before positing an institutional explanation, the following section will address a series of potential alternative hypotheses for party behavior in these countries.

**Explaining Multiethnic Politics: Alternative Hypotheses**

This dissertation argues that institutional incentives are the underlying cause of differing levels of multiethnic politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa. This argument assumes that political parties win through appeals to voters (manifestos, campaign rhetoric, candidate selection, and voter contacts) as opposed to some other political dynamic. This section addresses alternative hypotheses for the main argument and its assumption, ultimately dismissing the ability of these alternatives to systematically explain the conditions under which multiethnic political parties win elections in these three deeply divided countries.

**Political Setting: The Political Party is Instinctually Inclusive**

Though having been indirectly addressed already in Chapter One, a possible explanation for the use of multiethnic appeals by the Congress Party, the African National Congress, and Indonesia’s main parties is that these parties’ are instinctually inclusive and moderate. This argument claims that each party is closely tied to nationalist figures and multiethnic liberation movements, which continue to shape their political descendants today. For example, Nehru said of India, “In a country like India, which has many faiths and religions, no real nationalism can be built except on the basis of secularity.” M.K. Gandhi said in 1947, “I swear by my religion. I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The State has nothing to do with it. The State would look after your secular welfare, but not your or my religion. That is everybody’s personal concern.”
At Nelson Mandela’s trial for treason in South Africa in 1964, he said:

I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. If needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.

In 1955, Sukarno said of Indonesia: “This country, the Republic of Indonesia, does not belong to any group, nor to any religion, nor to any ethnic group, nor to any group with customs and traditions, but the property of all of us from Sabang to Merauk.” One could argue that these admonitions against ethnic politics by influential leaders created an historical path dependence for party politics in each country: the juncture point of nationalist liberation produced a deep and unalterable dedication to multiethnic politics.

Although intuitively appealing, the empirical evidence presented in previous chapters refutes this argument. Although nationalist figures have undeniably shaped contemporary politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa, there is not a strong path dependence determining political outcomes. In fact, the major parties have employed ethnic political strategies at various times. India’s Congress Party began to cater to Hindu voters in response to the BJP’s precipitous rise in the 1980s. One Muslim member of the Lok Sabha claims that the INC continues to use “covert communalism” despite its secular slogans.235

In Indonesia, the main multiethnic parties—PD, PDI-P, and Golkar, all have Islamic wings and some have supported conservative legislation like the anti-pornography law in 2008. In South Africa, the overtly racial language of ANC officials in

235 Interview, Ali Anwar, December 9, 2012, Janata Dal (U) MP, Rajya Sabha
2009, specifically Julius Malema, directly contradicts the message of Nelson Mandela. Although this dissertation argues that multiethnic politics are present in contemporary India, Indonesia, and South Africa, this has not been historically determined. Political parties have at times strayed from inclusive politics. This is particularly clear in South Africa, where the ANC’s politics are trending in a divisive direction.

A related argument regarding the political setting could claim that the variation in multiethnic politics observed in this study is due to differences in political maturation. India and Indonesia transitioned from colonialism in the mid 1940s and have had seventy years of institutional maturation around the concept of multiethnicity whereas South Africa’s recent transition from apartheid leaves its institutions comparatively under-developed and the conception of multiethnic politics commensurately weak. Unlike the previous argument, which claims political parties themselves uphold multiethnicity, this argument contends democratic competition becomes routinized within political institutions around a set of norms of proper behavior. Such a sociological institutionalist approach sees institutions as set of symbol systems and moral templates that shape “rational” action (Hall and Taylor 1996).

However, arguing that South Africa’s comparatively weak institutional maturation explains its degeneration into ethnic politics relies on a false assertion about both India and Indonesia: that ethnic political parties became less effective as the political institutions developed over time. As outlined extensively above, this is simply not the case. The Congress Party dominated Indian politics for thirty years within a maturing political discourse around inclusivity prior to the Hindu-nationalist BJP’s sudden
emergence in the 1980s. Similarly, the multiethnic ideology of Pacasila dominated the
democratic and authoritarian regimes in Indonesia for over forty years before the rise of
the Islamist PKS. Though South Africa’s political institutions and discourse are
undeniably less mature than in India or Indonesia, the latter two countries’ well-
developed institutions proved unable to stem the rise of ethnic political parties.

Social Setting: A Naturally Cohesive Society That Cares About Policy Issues

A common explanation for the persistence of multiethnic politics in India and
Indonesia—and even in South Africa, where it is in fact declining—is that the
populations of these countries instinctually reject ethnic appeals. This claim generally
identifies deeply entrenched political and cultural norms, which individually or together
preclude ethnic chauvinism. In such a normative setting, only unifying and inclusive
appeals are effective and therefore political parties, which understand the boundaries of
acceptable action, do not transgress multiethnic mores. A related claim, which is not
always linked to this normative assumption, is that the citizens of the country simply care
more about service delivery than identity. These two claims are expressed in all three
countries.

The Indian state was founded on a strong—though contested—conception of
secularism. M.K. Gandhi believed in the principle of religious equality, which inherently
accepts the value of religion in society and politics. Jawaharlal Nehru was less
comfortable with the public role of religion. Nehru understood secularism to mean the
exclusion of religious considerations from policy formulation (Chandhoke 2011, 335).
Both men, however, believed explicit or implicit religious tolerance was appropriate for India and its people.

Many elected officials continue to share this sentiment, who, when asked about the ineffectiveness of religious appeals during elections, referred to the innate secularism of Indian society. Mahesh Joshi, a Congress MP from Rajasthan, said, “Indian culture is very peaceful. People in India are not so communal.”

A Congressman from Assam claimed that “secularism is now very prominent” in India. Another member of parliament argued, “India is a secular country. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians pray on their own and get along.” An MP from south India claimed, “Indians are instinctually religious and secular, but continuous preaching and false propaganda can discredit secularism.” This statement implies a natural tendency among Indians toward secularism unless manipulated to think otherwise.

This view is complemented by a similar contention that Indians are far more concerned with issues of service delivery than religion during elections. Ali Anwar, a Rajya Sabha MP from Janata Dal (U), argued, “For Muslims, the important issues are jobs, social status, not emotional issues. It’s not that these emotional issues aren’t important, but issues of equality are more important.” Congress MP J. Rojagopal said

---

236 Interview, Mahesh Joshi, March 21, 2013, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha

237 Interview, Bhubaneswar Kalita, December 14, 2012, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha

238 Interview, Mohinder Singh Kaypee, March 11, 2013, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha

239 Interview, Anonymous, March 21, 2013, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha

297
voters care more what the state has done for them. “Hungry people don’t care about which religion you are. Their hunger is too much,” he said. “People who are more well off, their religious feelings are more than poor people. Since majority of people are poor, religion doesn’t impact the outcome of elections.”

Ranjeet Nirguni, an Independent member of a local assembly in Bihar, said each voter “somewhere deep within, irrespective of his caste and his religion, keeps questioning himself as to which government in terms of politics has given what to him…People are thinking in terms of their day-to-day needs.”

In Indonesia, many scholars and elected officials share a similar understanding of the society. Numerous observers have written about the syncretic, multidimensional, and secular nature of Indonesian culture, which impedes ethnic politics. Scholar Mark Woodward, while writing on the religious orientations within Indonesia’s Muslim community, contends that the majority abangan Muslims “think of themselves as Muslims but generally skirt the ritual behavior required by Islamic law” (Woodward 2001, 31). Michael Buehler summarizes this understanding of Indonesian society: “the overall argument that it is the syncretist nature of Indonesian Islam, and the moderation and tolerance that stems from it, which allows democracy to flourish…” (Buehler 2009, 54). Many Indonesian political parties share this outlook. Bima Arya, Deputy Chairman

---

240 Interview, Ali Anwar, December 9, 2012, Janata Dal (U) MP, Rajya Sabha

241 Interview, J. Rojagopal, March 18, 2013, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha

242 Interview, Ranjeet Nirguni, April 12, 2013, Independent, Zila Panchayat
of the National Mandate Party (PAN), claimed ethnic parties fail because “the majority of Indonesian people is not santri, is not devout Muslim…they don’t practice.”

As seen in India, many party officials also believe Indonesian voters care about policy not identity. When asked about the importance of religious issues during elections, a PKS official responded, “People really care about employment, poverty, infrastructure…if you are in a poor position, ideology doesn’t matter.” Regarding the usefulness of Islamic appeals during elections, the General Secretary of the moderate Islamic party PKB claimed:

We have to give them more than a quote from the Quran or a quote from the Sunna, but it’s only an indicator that this candidate is a good Muslim. But what can a good Muslim do for me? This is what people think. ‘I like him because he’s a good Muslim’, but the next question is ‘what can he do for me as a political representative’. So that’s why a candidate should talk about the issues as well: home industries, agriculture politics, there are many issues that are import to the electorate.

PAN official Bima Arya said, “I think for most voters the most important issue is not the idea of having Islamic party, the idea of having Islamic rules, or the idea of having moralist party and a moralist state. No, it’s all about basic needs.”

Many in South Africa share this benign view of their own political and social culture. Researchers Helga Dickow and Valerie Moller studied the belief in the “rainbow

243 Interview, November 4, 2011, Bima Arya, Deputy Chariman, National Mandate Party (PAN)
244 Interview, November 6, 2011, Zulkieflimansyah, party strategist and former MP, PKS
245 Interview, November, 28, 2011, Hanif Dakiri, Secretary General of PKB
246 Interview, November 4, 2011, Bima Arya, Deputy Chairman of PAN

299
nation” symbol among South Africans, which they defined as “a strong collectivist and inclusive symbol which defines the group as the entire nation in contrast to the racial groups defined by apartheid society” (Dickow and Møller 2002, 178). Though their survey data is mixed, Dickow and Møller conclude that South Africa’s new “civil religion” of rainbow symbolism “remains inclusive to a large degree” (Dickow and Møller 2002, 195). Building and perpetuating the “rainbow nation” symbol has been analyzed through the lens of music, architecture, broadcasting as well as other social and political mediums (Viljoen 2002; De Raedt 2012; Barnett 1999).

The de-racialization of South African society and politics is a strongly held belief among ANC officials. At his inaugural address as president in 1995, Nelson Mandela said,

We have triumphed in the effort to implant hope in the breasts of the millions of our people. We enter into a covenant that we shall build the society in which all South Africans, both black and white, will be able to walk tall, with out any fear in their hearts, assured of their inalienable right to human dignity—a rainbow nation at peace with itself and the world.247

This sentiment has been echoed by Mandela’s successors. President Thabo Mbeki eschewed racial division at his inauguration in 1999. He declared that the ANC’s liberation movement “planted a legacy among our people which drives all of us constantly to return to the starting point and say—I am my brother's keeper! I am my sister's keeper!”248 Ten years later, in 2009, President Jacob Zuma proclaimed, “Madiba

healed our wounds and established the rainbow nation very firmly…He taught us that all South Africans have equal claim to this country, and that there can be no lasting peace unless all of us, black and white, learned to live together in harmony and peace.”

In sum, many political elites and academic observers of India, Indonesia, and South Africa share a similarly optimistic view of each country’s ethnic relations. They argue that secularism, or sycreticism, or multiracialism is deeply embedded in the country. Ethnic appeals and chauvinist parties, they contend, are antithetical to the cultural and normative foundation of India, Indonesia, and South Africa. Therefore, the success of multiethnic political parties is not puzzling, but is rather the expected result of democratic competition in socially unified societies.

The continued presence of ethnic violence and ethnic parties in each country is an obvious rebuttal to this argument. As outlined in preceding chapters, all three countries continue to suffer ethnic tension and conflict. If intrinsic social unity cannot prevent ethnic violence, then it is unclear how it is responsible for multiethnic politics. Moreover, though multiethnic parties win elections in India, Indonesia, and South Africa, ethnic appeals remain prevalent in each country. If one assumes political parties are rational actors that strategically choose their electoral strategy, the presence of ethnic


249 Jacob Zuma, “Address by his Excellency Mr Jacob Zuma on the occasion of his inauguration as fourth President of The Republic of South Africa.” Available online at http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?id=3031.
mobilization suggests much deeper social division that the above analysts and party officials recognize or acknowledge.

Although political elites can exacerbate ethnic tension in order to benefit from identity politics, parties cannot generate social divisions where they do not exist. Arun Swamy writes that while political parties can help to define which potential lines of division are more salient than others by providing an avenue for the expression of grievance, party elites “do not necessarily cause political action to occur” (Swamy 2011, 269). Social divisions provide the raw material with which political parties shape election constituencies. If ethnic divisions do not exist, political actors cannot mold them in short periods of time.

The persistence of ethnic appeals demonstrates the political potential of ethnicity in each country. Sunil Khilnani argues that the “taboo” in India against religious politics fell in the 1980s when “the insecurities of different religious minorities were played on...” (Khilnani 2011, 199). Indeed, many of the same Congress officials who claim that India is religiously unified also concede the BJP’s use of religious appeals, which should be strategically irrational. A Congress MP claimed the Hindu fundamentalists will “use small issues during the election. They create a problem about the cow. These small things can spark a big issue. They’ll say you’re a cow eater.”

[250] Interview, Anonymous, March 21, 2013, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha
claimed, “there are elements in the BJP that openly promote communal hatred.” MP Ali Anwar said, “The BJP practices communal politics openly.”

Political actors in Indonesia and South Africa also recognize the utility of ethnic politics. Yenny Wahid of PKB, acknowledged, “politicians are playing the Islamic card” in some parts of the country. Another member of the Indonesian parliament stated, “ethnicity still plays an important role in Indonesian politics.” A party strategist for an opposition party in South Africa worried that if the opposition continued to gain seats in the parliament, the ANC would replicate authoritarian racial model of Zimbabwe rather than give up power.

In short, the continuing use of ethnic appeals as well as the persistence of ethnic violence make the dominance of multiethnic parties a counter-intuitive outcome. Indian, Indonesian, and South African societies are indeed bound together by a history of unifying, multiethnic nationalism, which serves as a partial bulwark against particularistic politics. However, it is clear that multiethnic parties in India, Indonesia, and South Africa succeed in conditions where the social and political salience of ethnicity remains strong.

251 Interview, Bhubaneswar Kalita, December 14, 2012, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha

252 Interview, Ali Anwar, December 9, 1012, Janata Dal (U), Rajya Sabha

253 Interview, Yenny Wahid, November 17, 2011, PKB official

254 Interview, Hanif Dakiri, November 28, 2011, Secretary General of PKB

255 Interview, Anonymous, September 15, 2011, political strategist for an opposition party
This contradiction suggests an external variable that mediates between divisive social realities and inclusive party politics.

**Corruption: Parties Win by Buying Votes**

Some argue that the political parties in these countries simply buy votes, which challenges this dissertation’s assumption that political parties win by mobilizing voters with issue appeals (ethnic, ideological, or policy-based). In essence, the claim is that electoral victories are bought rather than earned; voters will vote for whichever party or politician gives them the most money or gifts. Whether a political party uses multiethnic or ethnic appeals in these countries is irrelevant to the political calculus of either the party or the voter. Substantial evidence of corruption in each country ostensibly supports this argument.

Corruption is rampant in India. Transparency International (TI) gives India a score of 36/100 for its public sector corruption (Transparency International 2012). When surveyed, 74 percent of Indians said corruption had increased in the past three years; only 25 percent of Indians said the government’s actions to fight corruption were effective; and Indians gave political parties and parliament an institutional corruption score of 4.2/5 and 4/5 respectively (five representing “extremely corrupt”) (Transparency International 2010). Furthermore, political and electoral corruption has become particularly severe. Chief Election Commissioner S.Y. Qureshi said in 2009, “elections have become the biggest source of corruption.”

Bihari local assemblyman Ranjeet Nirguni lamented the
standard practice of Indian politics: “Normally, you know you have to give money, liquor, and many things on the eve of the election to get votes….Dalits are normally given liquor, some money, some food.”

Indonesia’s corruption rating has improved significantly since 2001 when it was rated the third most corrupt country in the world (Transparency International 2012). However, Freedom House continues to describe corruption in the Indonesian parliament and other political institutions as “endemic” (Freedom House 2013). So-called “money politics” takes on many forms in Indonesia. First, local leaders—oftentimes tribal leaders—who control a large amount of votes because of local loyalty, are given substantial sums of money for an endorsement. Second, politicians give money directly to voters in exchange for the promise of their vote. Political parties are known to poll on this issue, asking voters how much money their vote is worth. Voters, however, tolerate this arrangement. A PKS official said voters “don’t really care whether you are clean or not as long as you are able to give something: money, education, jobs,” adding, “if a candidate provides money, it is way more significant than [using religious appeals].”


257 Interview, Ranjeet Nirguni, April 12, 2013, Independent, Zila Panchayat

258 Interview, Anonymous, November 11, 2011, Democratic Party MP

259 Interview, Bima Arya, November 4, 2011, Deputy Chairman of the National Mandate Party (PAN)
Finally, ‘wholesale’ vote buying targets the vote counting process because it is easier and cheaper.\textsuperscript{261} This process involves bribing those who count the votes rather than the voters themselves. A Democrat Party member described the susceptibility of overseas voting to wholesale fraud: There is no definitive registry for these voters; therefore, a candidate’s vote total can increase based on fake overseas votes that cannot be confirmed by an audit. There are examples of Indonesian political candidates actually bribing election officials not to lower their totals in favor of other candidates— in other words, a bribe to prevent fraud.\textsuperscript{262} A PKS official described Indonesian politics as “transactional,” concluding, “If you don’t have money, don’t bother in politics.”\textsuperscript{263}

In South Africa, the ANC uses its campaign funds to indirectly buy votes. In 2009 the ANC coordinated large “Ride ‘n braai parties” with free food and alcohol in extremely impoverished townships (Butler 2010, 79). The South African newspaper \textit{The Sunday Times} described one such event: “They arrive in 4x4s and an assortment of luxury sedans. In the convoy are senior leaders of the ruling party, with an array of activists” who pour out of cars. Music blares from the sound system, attracting the attention of the neighbourhood. Soon the booze is flowing. Meat is ordered from nearby butcheries...The music and the wafting meat smell draws and crowds...While the locals chew on the flesh and gulp down Queen Victoria’s tears, party activists

\textsuperscript{260} Interview, Zulkieflimansyah, November 6, 2011, party strategist and former MP, PKS

\textsuperscript{261} Interview, Luky Djani, November 7, 2011, Deputy Secretary General of Transparency International - Indonesia

\textsuperscript{262} Interview, Anonymous, November 11, 2011, Democratic Party parliamentarian

\textsuperscript{263} Interview, Zulkieflimansyah, November 6, 2011, party strategist and former MP, PKS
pounce on them with the gospel according to Luthuli House. (Quoted in Butler 2010)

Incumbent President Jacob Zuma also allegedly engaged in indirect vote buying during the 2009 campaign. A South African charity gave the ANC over one million Rands (approximately $110,000) worth of goods to distribute in Mpumalanga two weeks before the election. Jacob Zuma then distributed the goods, which included blankets, food parcels, and stationary, to local residents without mention of the charity. The Democratic Alliance also reported complaints from voters that welfare officials were demanding ANC support in exchange for poverty relief grants and social development food vouchers.

In short, elections in India, Indonesia, and South Africa are undeniably corrupt. The stakes of elections have increased dramatically as the economy of each country has expanded: more money in state coffers makes winning more lucrative. As money rushes into political systems filled with a large number of illiterate and uneducated voters, exchanging cash or food for votes has become a cost effective way to gain support and win elections. Voters, this argument contends, are therefore not swayed by either policy or identity, but rather short-term financial benefit.

Though direct and indirect vote buying certainly occurs in each country, its influence on electoral outcomes is unclear. It is virtually impossible to know if a person’s vote has truly been purchased. Even if a voter accepts cash or goods they are unlikely to

264 “Charity slammed for using Zuma to hand out aid,” Star, March 10, 2009
admit to it afterward. Moreover, many voters accept money from candidates they were already prepared to vote for, take money from a candidate and then vote for a different one, or accept money from all candidates who offer. Ranjeet Nirguni asked voters to reject vote buying during his campaign in Bihar, India. He claims, “at least 20 percent of the people denied taking money. There were others who said please don’t stop us from taking money. Many took [other’s] money but then voted for me.” Congress MP L. Rajagopal argues that vote buying is a waste of money in Indian politics:

Governments have been changing in India. In both the center and the state, people of India have been voting out incumbent governments no matter how rich or powerful they are. Which definitely demonstrates in Indian electoral outcomes, money and power do not matter and don’t determine the outcome of elections. If you look at results, more than 80% of incumbent governments are voted out. I’m not saying there’s no corruption but it doesn’t affect the outcome of elections. Money, corruption, power, muscle is not affecting the outcome of elections. They might take the money, but when they come to vote they vote consciously for the party they want.

There is a similarly tenuous connection between money and voting in Indonesia. Luky Djani of Transparency International - Indonesia describes Indonesia as a “pre-paid democracy” in which voters extort the most money they can from all the candidates during elections because they know politicians will never deliver actual services. Voters “understand after elections whoever sits in the office… will forget them. So this is the way the poor overcome their problem,” Djani argues. “They attend a rally of party A to get 30 thousand [Rupiah]…. In the next day, attend party B rally and get the same. The next day attend another party’s rally or candidate’s rally. So in sum, after these

266 Interview, Ranjeet Nirguni, April 12, 2013, Independent, Zila Panchayat

267 Interview, J. Rojagopal, March 18, 2013, Congress Party MP, Lok Sabha
campaigns, they could earn enough money that they think would satisfy their needs."\textsuperscript{268} Djani’s statement also applies to South Africa, where there is little evidence that pay-offs win a substantial number of votes. Moreover, unlike in India and Indonesia, there is a clear ethnic affinity for the dominant ANC, which would have little need for illicit voter mobilization.

Money can also work together with ethnicity. Indonesia’s Islamic party, PKS, was founded in part to combat the corruption of other parties. However, strategists found that voters felt religiously required to vote for other Islamic parties that offered them money. “We came to the campaign and said okay take the money but don’t vote for them,” said a PKS official. “But it doesn’t work. That’s how the religion works. They shake [your] hand and say, ‘in the name of God you take this money’. That’s the role of religion. They’re afraid to break their word when they take the money.”\textsuperscript{269} In such a case, money and ethnic politics are inseparable.

The prevalence of vote buying in these countries cannot be denied, but there is little evidence that it actually garners a substantial number of voters. Furthermore, with electorates as large as those in India, Indonesia, and South Africa, buying votes is a financially impractical option for political parties. Its effectiveness will decline as one moves from municipal to provincial/state to national elections, during which tens of millions of votes are cast. Moreover, outside observers and organizations, which closely

\textsuperscript{268} Interview, Luky Djani, November 7, 2011, Deputy Secretary General of Transparency International - Indonesia

\textsuperscript{269} Interview, Zulkieflimansyah, November 6, 2011, party strategist and former MP, PKS
monitor electoral fraud and abuse, give these democracies high ratings despite indisputable problems with vote buying. In short, though direct and indirect vote buying occurs in these countries, there is no evidence that it is an important—or even a feasible—national-level strategy for political mobilization.

Political Economy: Incumbent Parties Win Through Redistribution

Another argument, which challenges this dissertation’s assumption, is that incumbent political parties win through redistribution policies not election appeals. Control over state resources and policy formulation allows a ruling party to generate support through policies that provide economic and social services to the people. This can be a particularly effective means to build popularity in countries with high levels of poverty. According to the World Bank, approximately 68 percent of Indians, 46 percent of Indonesians, and 31 percent of South Africans lived on less than 2 dollars (PPP) a day in 2012. Each country therefore has a large bank of voters who live in abject poverty and likely care little for the political process beyond its ability to alleviate their suffering. This argument contends that incumbent political parties win elections through the policies they implement while governing as opposed to the appeals or promises they make during elections.

Indeed, all three countries have large state-run development programs. The most ambitious Indian development program is the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA). The promise of a ‘right to work’ first appeared in the Congress’s manifesto in 2004. After significant debate, the NREGA was passed in August 2005. This massive development scheme guarantees employment in rural areas to all who are willing to do
manual labor at the statutory minimum wage. Under the act, any adult is entitled to work in a public works project within fifteen days of applying or are entitled to receive an unemployment allowance (Jayal and Mehta 2011). NREGA joins many other large state-run programs that provide school lunches, water management, healthcare, and other services.

The ANC-led South African state has a variety large-scale development and distribution programs. The government runs a formal land redistribution program to provide land to black farmers discriminated against during apartheid (Zimmerman 2000). This joins other government schemes for education, water delivery, electricity, and other services (Spreen and Vally 2006; Muller 2007). The government also runs a series of programs to address unemployment. The Expanded Public Works Program provides temporary work to the unemployed. The Department of Trade and Industry provides financial support for economic activities such as manufacturing, business competitiveness, and market access. The Comprehensive Rural Development Program provides funds for infrastructure, seeds, and skills training to small farmers. These programs, among others, constitute the South African government’s extensive intervention in economic affairs.

Indonesia’s welfare state also uses programs conducive to redistribution-based voter mobilization. The Direct Cash Assistance Program (BLT) distributes cash directly to poor Indonesians with no qualifications or requirements. Around 19 million poor

families have received cash assistance of 100,000 Rupiah [approximately 10 USD] each as well as monthly packages of cooking oil and sugar. In 2008, the government allotted 41.1 trillion Rupiah [approximately 4 million USD] for the program. Indonesia also heavily subsidizes oil when global crude prices rise. These programs are susceptible to election-year politics. During the 2009 election, President Yudhoyono’s campaign for re-election benefited from the BLT. The third phase of the program was strategically implemented two weeks before the parliamentary election (Tomsa 2009).

In sum, India, Indonesia, and South Africa each carry out large-scale redistribution programs that provide services, jobs, and money to the poor. Each country has a large and electorally important number of low-income voters, which also constitute the core constituency of parties examined in this project, particularly the ANC and the Congress Party. Redistribution programs could allow incumbent parties to win voters through economic policies while governing, which potentially lessens the impact of ethnic or multiethnic appeals during elections.

Though this argument is theoretically plausible, the redistribution programs in India, Indonesia, and South Africa are far weaker than they might appear. Despite the anti-capitalist rhetoric common in each country, their economic polices are in fact largely market oriented. This greatly constrains the state’s ability to use redistribution programs for truly widespread poverty alleviation. Consequently, the ruling party’s ability to

271 “Govt to disburse last portion of direct cash assistance,” The Jarata Post, March 11, 2009.
cultivate support through these programs in commensurately constrained. Moreover, the inconsistent effectiveness of these redistribution policies has limited their electoral utility. Since the early 1990s, the Indian economy has slowly shifted from Nehruvian socialism to market-oriented policies. Atul Kohli writes, "Over time, the state in India has shifted from a reluctant pro-capitalist state with a socialist ideology to an enthusiastic pro-capitalist state with a neo-liberal ideology” (Kohli 2011, 499). These polices have generated high levels of growth, but the state-run social safety net has been unable to effectively protect those left out of the growth boom. Despite “an official commitment to improve the well-being of its people…through targeted programmes in India,” writes Devsh Kapur, “the state does an abysmal job” providing basic services in areas such as literacy, malnutrition, vaccines, and education (Kapur 2011, 443).

Indeed, the INC’s prominent NREGA program has struggled to achieve its goals amid various implementation problems. Its critics have called the program a “costly joke,” the “corruption guarantee scheme,” and a “gargantuan guzzler of taxpayers’ money” (quoted in Dreze 2011, 514). Rahul Mukherji links this failure of redistribution policy to the INC’s political struggles since 1989. India’s modernization promoted literacy, mass communications, and urbanization in the context of political democracy…The relative decline of the Congress since the mid-1980s… has been due largely to the Congress' institutional incapacity to articulate and respond to the demands of an increasingly mobilized society (Mukherji 2011, 486)

Indonesia’s pro-market polices began under Suharto’s authoritarian rule and have remained essentially unchanged since his fall in 1998. Facing a series of economic problems in the 1960s, Suharto implemented a neoliberal macroeconomic stabilization
program including the diversification of production, employment, and exports. This occurred even amid strong state intervention in some aspects of the economy, particularly oil and industrial policy (Rock 2003; Rock 1999). After the Asian financial crisis in 1997, Indonesia accepted International Monetary Fund conditions in exchange for loans, which deepened the country’s market-oriented economic agenda. Today, even though the IMF has left Indonesia, “economic policymaking is still conservative and geared towards stabilizing financial monetary indicators...[which] have too often sacrificed the performance of the real sector, resulting in increases in poverty and unemployment” (Ramli and Nuryadin 2007, 85).

Like in India and Indonesia, South Africa’s market-oriented development program constrains the ruling party’s ability to distribute state largess for political support. Upon the ANC’s unbanning and its transition to power, the party was committed to strongly redistributive policies. After his release from prison, Nelson Mandela proclaimed the ANC’s commitment to nationalization in order to address the vast economic inequalities in South Africa (Southall 2007). The economy featured stagnant production, a mismanaged public sector, dramatic social inequalities, and large disparities between the urban/rural and township/white suburban communities. In 1993, 5 percent of South Africans owned 88 percent of the country’s wealth. Four white-owned corporations controlled 81 percent of the capital. Whites owned 87 percent of the land and 50,000 white farmers owned 85 percent of all agricultural land (Turok 2008, 81).

The political and economic conditions were ripe for heavily redistributive policies. Early drafts of what would become the Reconstruction and Development
Program (RDP)—approved by the Mandela government in 1994—called for changing the social and power relations in South Africa, improving the material conditions of the majority, and fundamentally changing the direction of the economy (Turok 2008, 76). However, before its implementation, ANC leaders Oliver Tambo and Thabo Mbeki pushed a policy shift. Their efforts, along with intense pressure from South African businesses, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, persuaded Mandela to change his position. By 1992, Mandela was praising the private sector and was dedicated to reforming the ANC’s economic policies (Southall 2007). This culminated in the passage of the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution program (GEAR) in 1996, which committed South Africa to open markets, privatization, and monetary stabilization, which were designed to entice investment from abroad. Though generating economic growth, little has been redistributed: South Africa remains one of the most unequal countries in the world.

In sum, the potential political utility of economic redistribution is diminished by the strongly pro-market approach to development taken in India, Indonesia, and South Africa. Though large, redistributive, state-run programs exist in each country, these do not represent the development programs in general, which feature an emphasis on growth and private investment. Such programs are not conducive to mass-level clientelism. Moreover, these programs’ inability to significantly reduce poverty limits their political use. Finally, the redistribution argument implies that incumbent parties, which control state resources, should be electorally invincible. If redistribution policies win elections, the ruling party should never lose. However, ruling parties in both India and Indonesia
have lost elections, which suggests that a party’s control over resources plays a minor role in election outcomes.

A variation of the political economy argument claims that the correspondence of ethnicity and poverty, rather than ethnicity alone, explains party and voter behavior. This is particularly relevant to South Africa, where the black majority is also historically disadvantaged and disproportionately poor (particularly with respect to the white minority). Therefore, the ANC is actually a pro-poor party rather than a pro-black party: black voters support the ANC out of economic solidarity, not racial camaraderie. This argument is less relevant in India and Indonesia where the parties that use some degree of ethnic appeals (the BJP and the PKS respectively) do not target low-income voters explicitly and the correspondence of poverty and ethnic identity (Hindu or Muslim respectively) does not exist.

In South Africa, this argument can be evaluated using survey data from the Comparative National Elections Project study of South Africa’s elections in 2004 and 2009. If low income is shown to correlate with support for the ANC, we could claim that income level potentially influences voting behavior. However, we find that the ANC drew its voters disproportionately from middle class voters and its performance declined among low-income voters between 2004 and 2009. Among those who voted for the ANC in 2004, approximately 38 percent lived in poverty or a shack, 54 percent lived in the middle or lower middle class, and 6 percent lived in luxury or semi luxury. In 2009, the ANC’s voters were approximately 8 percent more middle and lower class, 8 percent more living luxury and semi-luxury, and 15 percent less living in poverty or a shack.
Moreover, overall support among those describing their housing as poor or a shack declined by 16 percent and 27 percent respectively in 2009. The only group with which the ANC increased its performance between 2004 and 2009 was among those living in semi-luxury: by 18 percent.

Figure 53: Type of Housing Among ANC Voters, 2004 and 2009

The CNEP survey also asked South Africans to describe the type of neighborhood in which they lived. In 2009, approximately 51 percent of ANC voters said they lived in a lower middle or working class neighborhood (up 10 percent from 2004) and 19 percent said they lived in upper or upper middle class neighborhoods (up 12 percent from 2004). Additionally, the ANC’s voter demographics shrank among those living in poor and informal shacks between 2004 and 2009 (from approximately 29 percent to 20 percent) and in traditional villages (from approximately 21 percent to 8 percent). Among neighborhood groups, the ANC’s support declined among the working class, poor, informal shack dwellers, and traditional villagers in 2009.
These survey results refute the claim that income level explains voting patterns in South Africa, specifically that the ANC wins by disproportionately targeting the poor. Mattijs Bogaards argues that the ANC “is inclusive in the sense that it is an 'all-class black party' that succeeds in attracting support from black voters irrespective of their socio-economic status” (Bogaards 2005, 170). In fact, the CNEP data show that the ANC’s voting base has included fewer of the poorest South Africans over time. The data also show that support for the ANC is declining among the poorest South Africans. Interestingly, the ANC has made gains among those describing themselves as living in upper or upper middle class neighborhoods and those living in luxury or semi-luxury homes. Though unclear in the data, this support is likely coming from a newly ascendant black elite that benefits enormously from ANC rule, which would explain the simultaneously drop in support among poor blacks who feel increasingly disconnected from the ANC’s wealthy and corrupt leadership.
The Inadequacy of Alternative Explanations

The above arguments all provide valuable insights, but are, at best, ad hoc, partial, and proximate explanations for party politics in India, Indonesia, and South Africa. Though the political and social setting of each country influences the use of multiethnic appeals, the persistence of ethnic violence, explicitly ethnic parties, and divisive appeals creates a challenging environment for multiethnic parties to succeed. It is not obvious why multiethnic parties—as opposed to ethnic parties—thrive in these countries. Additionally, vote buying and redistribution do not adequately challenge this dissertation’s assumption that parties win through election appeals. These phenomena undeniably affect voting behavior to some degree, but there is no evidence that they are a determinative factor in election outcomes or party strategy.

Electoral Decentralization and Multiethnic Politics

Having addressed other major explanations for the electoral success of multiethnic political parties in India, Indonesia, and South Africa, this section now examines the influence of institutional design. It argues that electoral system design combines with ethnic cleavage structure to make multiethnic or ethnic politics electorally rational. Multiethnic politics is incentivized by electoral systems that create a logic of electoral decentralization, which is the rule-based strategic necessity for a political party to compete with localized appeals across a large portion of a country in order to control national political institutions.

Two specific features of electoral system design constitute the causal conditions for electoral decentralization and consequent multiethnic politics: multiple districts and
candidate-centered elections. A large number of districts force a political party to compete across a substantial portion of the country to control the national parliament. In order to rule the center, a political party must gain 51 percent of the parliamentary seats; to do this under a multiple-district system, a party has to win 51 percent of the districts spread across the country. Coupling multiple districts with candidate-centered elections, during which voters select a specific candidate, forces parties to compete with localized appeals in districts. Candidate-centered elections do two things: 1) create pressure for candidates to cultivate a base of support independent of party backing; and 2) foster intra-party competition.

Intraparty competition weakens the power of political parties and any distinct programmatic appeals they represent because “the party label is not a tool voters or candidates can use to separate one candidate from another, since there are multiple candidates from the same party in the race” (Schaffer 2007, 49). This produces candidates who campaign on local issues while remaining nominally connected to broadly defined parties. Election specialist Timothy Meisburger argues that systems in which candidates run as individuals are beneficial for divided societies because “elections will not be party-based, each legislator will have equal power, and each will be free to form whatever alliances seem best for constituent interests” (Meisburger 2012, 159). Multiple districts and candidate-centered elections thus compel parties into broad-based, catch-all mobilization strategies that can accommodate candidates tailoring campaigns to ideologically and ethnically diverse districts.
Federalism is an important facilitating condition for electoral decentralization. Highly centralized governing systems create little incentive for political parties to compete over weak local power, which in turn narrows the scope of relevant political issues to the national level. In contrast, power decentralization makes sub-national electoral success attractive and adds an additional level—the provincial or state level—to the political calculus of a party. This works in conjunction with candidate-centered, multiple-district elections, which force parties to be at least superficially responsive to local concerns. The addition of strong federalism with significant decentralized powers incentivizes parties to be substantively responsive to local issues. The bifurcation of political organization and strategy between local and national levels further encourages catch-all parties.

A high degree of ethnic fractionalization is an important though not essential antecedent condition for electoral decentralization. Significant ethnic fractionalization increases the likelihood of ethnically heterogeneous districts, which force parties to make inclusive appeals. Ben Reilly argues:

The single most important demographic precondition for centripetal strategies to work effectively is that electoral districts be ethnically heterogeneous. The more heterogeneous a constituency, the more likely it is that meaningful vote pooling will take place. (Reilly 2001, 185)

Donald Horowitz writes, heterogeneous federal units can “provide an experience in political socialization for politicians of different groups who become habituated to dealing with each other at the lower levels before they need to do so at the centre.” Simultaneously, Horowitz says homogenous districts can produce intra-group competition that can undermine ethnic violence and chauvinism (Horowitz 2002, 25).
Homogenous districts, though, also create the possibility of divisive ethnic outbidding among within-group elites. Therefore, *ceteris paribus*, heterogeneous political units combined with candidate-centered elections and multiple districts are more likely to produce multiethnic parties, but it is not an essential condition—as homogenous units can theoretically foster catch-all, multiethnic politics as well.

Having outlined the causal, facilitating, and antecedent conditions for electoral decentralization, we can now apply this framework to the three countries under investigation. As will be shown in greater detail below, we find that India and Indonesia, whose political systems have been predominantly controlled by multiethnic parties, have high levels of electoral decentralization. Alternatively, South Africa, whose ruling ANC has increasingly shed its multiethnic character, has a highly centralized electoral system. This institutional argument provides a parsimonious macro-level explanation for multiethnic politics. It does not attempt to explain micro-level political action, but rather identifies underlying structures that shape ethnic and multiethnic politics over time.

India and Electoral Decentralization

India’s electoral decentralization is achieved through a first-past-the-post electoral system, which features candidate-centered, multiple-district elections. India’s ostensibly dominant-majority ethnic structure actually displays a high level of ethnic fractionalization that creates significant crosscutting cleavages—particularly with respect to caste, which divides not only Hindus but other religious groups that have adopted the caste hierarchy. The political salience of these myriad social identities is nurtured by electoral decentralization, which isolates and thereby enhances local political power.
Furthermore, India’s relatively robust federal arrangement strengthens the political significance of local power. All of this combines to incentivize multiethnic parties that use catch-all appeals to win votes across India’s massive and diverse landscape. This section first outlines India’s electoral system and then situates its incentives for multiethnic appeals within a narrative of national-level Indian politics. Second, it tests the dynamics institutional political incentives at the state-level with a brief case study of elections in the state of Gujarat.

Causal Conditions: Candidate-Centered Elections and Multiple Districts

In the 1940s, India’s Constituent Assembly debated different electoral system designs prior to its first democratic elections but ultimately chose to retain British-inspired parliamentary democracy. The Westminster system, it was believed, would avoid fragmented national and provincial parliaments by generating two-party rule (Patidar 2005). The constitution of India mandates that the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, can have a maximum number of 552 members. Each member is elected to a single-member district with at least a plurality of the vote. Population size determines the number of districts allotted to each state and union territory. The party or coalition of parties that control a majority of Lok Sabha seats selects the prime minister, who must be a sitting member of either house and serves a five-year term or until the ruling government falls.

The upper house of the Indian parliament is called the Rajya Sabha, which holds a constitutionally mandated maximum of 250 members. Twelve of its members are selected for their contributions to science, literature, art, or other activities. The rest are
indirectly elected by the parliament in each state and union territory. All members sit for six-year terms, with one-third of the body up for reelection every two years. Unlike the Lok Sabha, the Rajya Sabha cannot be dissolved.

India’s parliament reserves seats for historically disadvantaged communities. This issue has been controversial since long before independence. The British implemented separate communal electorates, which included Dalits among groups receiving special representation. The creation of caste reservations divided Dalit leader Ambedkar from Gandhi, who fasted in protest because they undermined India’s nationalist movement. However, today scheduled caste (Dalit) reservations remain alongside reserved seats for tribal communities. Currently, Lok Sabha seats are reserved for both groups according to their demographic size: 79 seats for the 15 percent scheduled caste population and 41 seats for the scheduled tribes. In these districts, only a member from the scheduled tribe or caste can stand for election, but all citizens of the district—regardless of socio-economic status—can vote (Patidar 2005).

State legislatures follow the same election procedure as the Lok Sabha. The population size of each state determines the number of MLAs (Member of Legislative Assembly) in each assembly. Each MLA is elected from a single-member constituency. Some states also include an upper house called the Legislative Council. The head of each state is called a chief minister, who is a sitting MLA elected by the ruling party or coalition. Like the Lok Sabha, many state legislatures include a nominated member from the Anglo-Indian community—defined as anyone with a European father.
India’s first-past-the-post system with candidate-centered elections in multiple districts creates strong electoral decentralization, which has shaped party politics in different ways over time. The INC, as a movement-based political party, controlled India’s government unimpeded from 1952 until 1977, when it lost its first election. Despite this loss, the Congress continued to dominate subsequent contests. It increased its seat share almost 40 percent in the next election and enlarged its total again in 1984. Because of seat disproportionality inherent in FPTP systems, the INC won parliamentary majorities without a majority of the popular vote. It has never surpassed 48.1 percent support, which it received after Indira Gandhi’s assassination in 1984. The Congress’s true decline began in 1989, when it dipped below 40 percent of the vote for only the second time in nine national elections.

The challenge to Congress power came from the BJP, which harnessed virulent Hindu nationalist sentiment. The 1989 election brought a shift in Congress strategy that lasted until 1998. Fearful that the BJP could mobilize the Hindu majority, the Congress initially tried to partially co-opt the BJP’s Hindutva agenda during the late 1980s into the 1990s: exemplified by its complicity and then inaction in the politicization and destruction of the Babri Mosque (Hasan 2004). However, by 1999, both the Congress and the BJP shifted toward multiethnic secularism, which marked a reorientation of national-level politics to the political center.

This reversal of ethnic politics is explained by the incentives for multiethnic appeals embedded in the electoral system design along with the idiosyncrasies of post-independence Indian politics. After 1967, the INC’s traditional voter base splintered,
which fragmented the party system along new poles of local power, particularly caste-based, even while the INC retained national-level power. This occurred after years of Congress dominance left the party corrupt, undemocratic, and disconnected from regional concerns. E. Sridharan writes that the post-1967 period of divergent national-level and state-level support for Congress was linked to a suspension of organizational elections within the INC and the slow centralization of power at the top of the party apparatus (Sridharan 2011, 122). In short, as the INC focused on power at the center, regional and caste parties emerged to represent local interests and concerns.

The newly open political space at the local level gave the BJP room to push its Hindutva agenda, which succeeded in increasing the party’s vote share from 7.4 percent in 1984 to 25.5 percent in 1998. But the religious nationalism of the BJP failed to address regional and caste concerns, which fractured the Hindu majority essential to the BJP’s national success. After its plurality victory in 1996, the BJP’s religious platform could only hold together a government for twelve days. After this set back, the party quickly “shelved its overt Hindutva agenda to strike explicit or tacit alliances with a range of state-based parties, both regional and others” (Sridharan 2011, 124). The BJP entered the 1998 election with sixteen pre-election alliance partners and swept to victory.

The consensual decisionmaking required by these unwieldy coalitions meant the BJP, during its full term of rule (1999-2004), was “unable to implement polices which incorporate extreme versions of its Hindutva philosophy” and had to “tone down its extremism” (Dutta 2009, 98). The institutional rules forced the party reinvent itself. “The BJP started its upward mobility in the Indian Parliament with a shrill Hindu agenda,”
writes Vijay Patidar, “but after one full term in office the imperatives of electoral politics compelled it to scale down its ultra-rightist militant stance. It had to adopt an inclusive agenda, enabling it to appeal to Muslim, tribal, backward class and other Dalit (downtrodden) voters” (Patidar 2005, 42).

This is also true at the state level, where the BJP has had to align with state and caste parties to retain power. Ranjeet Nirguni, an Independent member of a local district government in Bihar, said,

> When JD-U [Janata Dal (U)] and NDA [the BJP-led alliance] tied hands there was a memorandum of understanding between them that [the BJP] are not going to bring in issues of uniform civil code or any other religious issue in the elections. The buzzword in Bihar these days is growth with justice, good governance. Even if JD-U has lots of differences, but BJP can’t afford to lose out…There is common sense politics around day-to-day needs rather than thinking in terms of religion. So BJP doesn’t use any religious agenda in Bihar. What are the programs, what did we achieve, and what do we aim to. Not even a single word of Hindu ideology or Hindu identity is being used. Because they know if they do they will not only lose the Muslim vote but they will lose the vote of rational educated young people.²⁷²

This electoral dynamic of coalitional moderation—the character of which is shaped by the diversity of candidate-centered, single-member district elections—also explains the Congress’s move back to strong multiethnic appeals. The INC’s unexpected victory in 2004 and reelection in 2009 were due, in part, to its ability to fashion state-level coalitions. The INC returned to the secular center, which allowed it to ally with parties unwilling to align with the BJP because of “differences on secularism and their need for religious minority votes” (Sridharan 2011, 128). The Muslim minority represents a substantial voting bloc: over 15 percent of the vote in seven states including

---

²⁷² Interview, Ranjeet Nirguni, April 12, 2013, Independent, Zila Panchayat
India’s most populous state, Uttar Pradesh. As a result, Muslim votes are integral to electoral victory, particularly for the Congress, which has long cultivated its multiethnic reputation. Additionally, the growing political consciousness of caste groups undermined the salience of the BJP’s Hindu-Muslim fear mongering, which aided the Congress’s ability to align with local caste parties.

Political alliances between state and national parties have therefore been driven by the imperative to consolidate votes at the constituency level rather than by ideology (Sridharan 2011). Zoya Hasan writes, "Indian parties are more pragmatic than ideological, which makes party boundaries highly flexible and permeable (Hasan 2011, 242–246). Pradeep Chhibber and John Petrocik argue that the Congress “is not a heterogeneous party in the normal sense of that concept. It is a heterogeneous pre-election coalition of substantially homogenous parties which are rooted in salient, local conflicts” (Chhibber and Petrocik 1989, 207). Consequently, the correspondence of ethnic fractionalization, particularly inter and intra-religious divisions, and decentralized institutional incentives does not prevent ethnic politics; rather, it isolates ethnic politics to the local level while simultaneously moderating national-level politics through diverse coalitions.

Facilitating Condition: Federalism

India’s electoral decentralization is reinforced by well-developed federalism, which empowers local government with significant competencies. State governments have legislative purview over public order, public health, local government, agriculture, water, land, state public services, and taxes on income and land. The state, however,
retains superior financial powers and as well as the right dissolve state assemblies under Presidents Rule\textsuperscript{273} (S. K. Mitra and Pehl 2011). Nevertheless, bounded spheres of substantial local political power serve to fragment central power and force national-level parties to broaden their messages. Chhibber and Petrocik contend “the federal structure of the Indian polity” provides a “territorial locus of power within which social cleavages may manifest themselves” (Chhibber and Petrocik 2002, 74). This dynamic weakens the INC’s political opposition by isolating it within specific districts and states but also forces the INC to mollify diverse local demands in order to control the center.

Focused Case Study: Gujarat

The state of Gujarat has been particularly prone to ethnic mobilization and violence. Located in western India on the border with Pakistan, the state’s politics have been dominated the traditionally Hindu nationalist party, the BJP. Gujarat was the scene of the 2002 anti-Muslim riots that killed upwards of 2,000 Muslims and caused tens of thousands to flee their homes. The demographics of Gujarat favor ethnic outbidding. According to the 2001 census, the state is approximately 89 percent Hindu, 10 percent Muslim, and 2 percent other religions. Gujarat’s dominant Hindu majority combined with recent large-scale communal violence creates ideal conditions for exclusionary Hindutva politics. This dissertation’s argument, however, would predict that the BJP and the Congress should still emphasize catch-all appeals for two reasons: 1) crosscutting cleavages and candidate-centered district elections politicize sub-ethnic identities; and 2)

\textsuperscript{273} After Indira Gandhi’s excessive use of President’s Rule, the Constitution now requires the written recommendation of the cabinet and the approval of parliament for its implementation (S. K. Mitra and Pehl 2011)
the parties’ are focused on controlling national-level institutions, which requires maintaining an inclusive image that can win beyond the borders of Gujarat.

Evidence from Gujarat’s 2009 Lok Sabha election substantiates this prediction. Though often considered by casual observers to be the “laboratory of Hindutva,” extensive survey data from the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies shows that the state’s elections are defined by caste politics and policy appeals (Jani 2009). After the 2002 riots, the BJP won a big victory in the state assembly, which it continues to dominate. However, Lok Sabha elections have been significantly closer and marked by a distinct absence of religious politics. “The 2009 Lok Sabha elections did not revolve around [religious] issues” writes CSDS’s Mahashweta Jani. “Since there was no strong wave or emotional mobilisation…Caste equations and their support to political parties became the key factors deciding their political fate” (Jani 2009, 134).

The Congress Party’s strong second-place performance in 2009 (it trailed the BJP by 3 percent across the state) was driven by its support from a mix of caste and religious groups: kshatriyas, OBCs, dalits, adivasis, and Muslims. A specific candidate-nomination decision by the BJP cost it the support of a significant number of Patidar’s (a caste group), which traditionally combine with OBCs give the party 40 percent of the vote in Gujarat. The BJP’s state leader, Narendra Modi, campaigned on the state’s economic and development achievements rather than divisive campaign issues. In fact, Modi emphasized the success of Muslims in Gujarat. In response, the Congress argued Modi only worked for the rich and attacked his development agenda (Jani 2009). Ethnic appeals were strikingly absent. The BJP did not try to mobilize Hindu voters; The
Congress neither mimicked the BJP’s traditional *Hindutva* politics nor engaged in anti-BJP fear mongering to mobilize Muslims. Both parties resisted ethnic politics in order to appeal to crosscutting cleavages in Gujarat but also across the India.

Conclusion: Electoral-System Design and Multiethnic Politics in India

The Hindu-nationalist BJP challenged the political dominance of the movement-based Congress Party in the 1980s. In response, the Congress began to tolerate and even cultivate religious chauvinism for fear of alienating the Hindu majority. The long history of religious violence had made Hindu-Muslim animosity a potent political issue. However, both parties’ ethnic mobilization was restricted by logic of electoral decentralization, which in India was greatly enhanced by the unique strength of state-based, particularly caste, parties that thrived in localized, candidate-centered political competition. The narrow ethnic agenda of the BJP and the vacillating INC could not win across the country; indeed, neither party could control a majority of the seats in parliament. Therefore, the INC returned to—and the BJP discovered—catch-all, multiethnic appeals in order to accommodate diverse, state-based alliance partners.

The evolution of the INC from a dominant multiethnic party to now a leader of multiethnic coalitions has meant political space at the local level (previously occupied by Congress MPs) for ethnic parties, which must be co-opted into inclusive national coalitions. The India system is therefore not without ethnic—specifically caste—parties, but their influence is diluted within large governing coalitions. This explains the paradoxical reality that contemporary India is “transitioning away from identity-based politics, yet also returning power to identity-based parties” (B. Mitra and Killisan 2012).
But India’s contemporary identity-based caste parties play a positive role: they facilitate peacebuilding by fracturing the Hindu majority and undermining the BJP’s divisive appeals, which sought to mobilize voters along India’s primary conflict cleavage: religion.

Indonesia and Electoral Decentralization

Indonesia’s electoral decentralization is achieved through a mixed electoral system, which uses candidate-centered, multiple district elections. Unlike India, Indonesia also employs a set of strict party rules that enhance the incentives of electoral decentralization, but are not essential to its political logic. Indonesia’s dominant-majority ethnic structure is in fact splintered by a high level of ethnic fractionalization that creates significant crosscutting cleavages both within and between religious and tribal groups. As in India, the political salience of these multitudinous social identities is cultivated by electoral decentralization. Moreover, Indonesia’s significantly decentralized power-sharing structure bolsters to importance of local political power. Electoral decentralization plus strict party rules and extensive power distribution combine to incentivize catch-all political strategies to win votes across Indonesia’s sprawling and staggeringly diverse archipelago. This section first outlines Indonesia’s electoral system and then situates its incentives for multiethnic appeals within a narrative of national-level Indonesian politics. Second, it tests the dynamics institutional political incentives at the state-level with a brief case study of elections in the province of Aceh.
Causal Conditions: Candidate-Centered Elections and Multiple Districts

Indonesia has three elected institutions of national government: 1) the People’s Representative Council (DPR), which is lower house of the People’s Consultative Assembly (MPR) and holds the main legislative prerogatives; 2) the Regional Representative Council (DPD), which is the upper house of the MPR and takes up issues relating to regional autonomy and power; and 3) the presidency, which is the head of state and head of government. Each province has a local assembly called the DPRD.

The process of electing members to these institutions has changed since the first post-Suharto election in 1999. Its three national-level political institutions—the DPR, DPD, and the presidency—now operate under three separate electoral system arrangements. The DPR currently holds 560 representatives elected to five-year terms. Each representative is elected in one of seventy-seven multimember districts, with the number of seats designated for each district dictated by its population size. These elections are conducted with open-list proportional representation, which allows individual voters to choose among the candidates selected by a party.

---

274 The terminology of “upper” and “lower” houses is used for convenience. The MPR is not formally bicameral because the DPD is an institutionally weaker body.

275 The following narrative of Indonesian electoral rules and party laws comes from (Sherlock 2004a; Sherlock 2009; IFES 2012; Ellis 2005). This summary includes the most recent laws passed on Indonesian election rules (as of August 2012).

276 In 2004, the number of seats per district ranged from 3 to 12. In 2009, it was reduced to a range of 3 to 10. This created an effective threshold of 10 percent in the largest districts.
surpass a 3.5 percent threshold (recently increased from 2.5 percent) in order to win a seat and must open party chapters in all provinces as well as in no less than 75 percent of all regencies/municipalities in each of the provinces and in no less than 50 percent of all districts in each of the regencies/municipalities.\textsuperscript{278}

The regionally focused DPD currently holds 132 representatives elected to five-year terms. Using the same political boundaries as the DPR, these representatives are elected from seventy-seven four-member districts using single nontransferable vote (SNTV). This electoral system gives each voter one vote, which he or she uses to select a single candidate. The top four vote getters win the seats. In contrast to the two houses of the MPR, the president of Indonesia is selected by an absolute majority vote, using a second-round runoff between the top two candidates if necessary. The winning candidate must also obtain at least 20 percent of the vote in more than half of the provinces. Additionally, only a party or coalition of parties that wins at least 25 percent of the vote or 20 percent of the seats in the DPR can nominate a presidential ticket.\textsuperscript{279} Presidential elections are held several months after MPR elections and presidents are restricted to two terms.

Provincial elections mimic the structure of the DPR. Each of the 33 provinces has a provincial legislative assembly (DPRD), which holds between 35 and 100 members,

\textsuperscript{277} In 2004, a voter had to choose both a candidate and a party, if he or she didn’t, the ballot was ruled invalid.

\textsuperscript{278} This is the updated version of the requirement, using Law 2/2011. There has been a similar requirement in every election.

\textsuperscript{279} In 2004, only parties that won 3 percent of the seats or 5 percent of votes in the DPR election could nominate a candidate.
depending on the population of the province. The representatives are elected through open-list proportional representation. Each provincial chief executive and his deputy, called a governor and vice governor respectively, are elected through a minimum plurality vote of 30 percent, with a second-round runoff if necessary.

Within this byzantine electoral system there is an overarching institutional effect similar to what is seen in India: the consolidation of candidate-centered elections within a multi-district structure and strict party rules, which create a high level of electoral decentralization. The country began in 1999 with closed-list PR in multiple districts and an indirect election for the president. Five years later, Indonesia changed its presidential elections to direct, two-round majoritarianism and created the DPD, which uses single nontransferable vote. Both of these systems foster candidate-centered elections, but the main parliamentary body, the DPR, shifted to only weakly open lists. Voters were asked to vote for both the party list and a candidate, which made candidate choice largely irrelevant (Sherlock 2004a). However, for the 2009 elections, the constitutional court mandated that voters must choose only candidates—and not parties—on the ballot. This ruling transformed DPR elections into a fully open-list system and synchronized candidate-centered elections across national-level institutions, creating a uniform incentive for multiethnic politics across presidential, DPR, and DPD elections.

During presidential elections, Indonesia’s majority run-off system coupled with additional nomination restrictions and geographical vote distribution rules create strong incentives for broad-based, inclusive, and oftentimes coalitional presidential tickets. Majoritarian elections create strong centripetal effects that encourage parties to use catch-
all appeals to the electorate (Reynolds, Reilly, and Ellis 2005; Sisk 1996). Additionally, the system theoretically excludes small, extremist parties from the election because they lack the ability to reach a plurality of the vote. This problem is compounded by the realization among voters that these small parties cannot win, which makes voting for them irrational.

Indonesian constitutional designers undergirded majoritarianism’s centripetal effects with additional party rules. First, only parties with substantial electoral support can nominate presidential candidates. This limits presidential competition to comparatively large, national parties. Additionally, because no single party controls a majority in the DPR, parties are forced to align in order to nominate a single candidate, which inherently weakens ideological messages. For example, President Yudhoyono’s secular-nationalist Democrat Party aligned with several religious parties for the 2009 presidential election, including the Islamist United Development Party (PPP) and Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). Second, by requiring a winning presidential ticket to have 20 percent of the vote in at least half of provinces, candidates are forced to compete in less populous and more diverse provinces, which encourages multiethnic appeals.

During the DPR’s open-list proportional representation elections, parties retain the power to construct party lists; however, open lists give voters the opportunity to ignore the order and select candidates of their choosing. This creates pressure for candidates, who are competing against fellow party members, “to build a strong local profile in their districts in order to be reelected” (Sherlock 2010). This weakens centralized control over candidates and undermines party-based ethnic messaging. Party
rules for DPR elections also hurt ethnic parties. First, a 3.5 percent party threshold precludes small, particularistic parties from winning seats. Second, every party must open party offices across the country, which forces parties to demonstrate not only widespread geographic support but also requires a relatively large fundraising capacity—neither of which small parties have.\(^{280}\)

The DPD’s single nontransferable vote (SNTV) system creates incentives similar to open-list proportional representation: both force intraparty competition between candidates (Reilly 2007b). With SNTV, voters select individuals instead of parties to fill each province’s four seats. Though these candidates run formally as independents, they often unofficially represent specific parties. Consequently, SNTV creates a significant coordination challenge for parties, which need to properly gauge their support within the district so as to not over-split their vote. For example, within a four-seat district, any candidate who receives 25 percent of the vote will win a seat. If a party has 50 percent approval in the district, it should consequently run only two candidates; any more than this risks splitting its vote. Single nontransferable vote elections strongly push candidates and parties to cultivate local support rather than advocate party dogmatism based on ethnicity or specific issues.

In sum, Indonesia’s election rules incentivize broad-based, candidate-centered politics, which produce political parties that must control more than 3.5 percent of the vote and have party headquarters across the country, but that are ideologically broad so as to allow for charismatic and ideologically diverse candidates. Benjamin Reilly writes that

\(^{280}\) Aceh’s special status allows local parties to compete in the province.
Indonesia’s “political reformers have introduced majority-favouring electoral systems and political party laws that encourage nationally focused political competition and that restrict parties which base their appeals upon regional or ethnic ties” (Reilly 2007a, 43). Consequently, political parties rely on charismatic candidates and catch-all rhetoric to generate votes across Indonesia’s ethnically diverse landscape.

This institutional argument for multiethnic politics is challenged by the results of Indonesia’s first post-Suharto election in 1999, during which multiethnic parties won despite an only partially decentralized electoral system: the election used closed-list list proportional representation, which is party centered, but had multiple districts. This potentially anomalous result is explained in two parts. First, multiethnic parties benefited from multiple-district elections, which, regardless of ballot structure, force parties compete across the country thereby ensuring some degree of catch-all appeals. Second, 1999 was a transitional election dominated by the political party at the forefront of resistance to Suharto’s authoritarianism.

Megawati, the daughter of nationalist hero Sukarno, and her party, PDI-P, played a central role in the resistance movement, often invoking independence figures and symbolism. Megawati cast the PDI-P as the successor to Sukarno’s PNI from forty years earlier. Simultaneously, Islamic parties were weak and divided. The 1999 election was thus defined by resistance politics. The PDI-P and other multiethnic parties rode a wave of nationalist sentiment into power. Similar to Congress dominance during the period of 1947-1967, the characteristics of the electoral system were of secondary importance in 1999. However, the period of uncontested multiethnic dominance lasted far shorter in
Indonesia than in India. Amid widespread violence, ethnic, particularly Islamic, political actors began to coalesce and constitute substantial political power. In 2004, under a still weakly decentralized electoral system, santri-dominated PKS achieved a surprisingly large 7 percent of the vote (the winning party, Golkar, won 21 percent of the vote, making PKS only 14 percentage points behind).

The next election in 2009, however, included rule changes that fully implemented candidate-centered elections and solidified the logic of electoral decentralization. As a result, the PKS stagnated under its Islamic image: increasing its 2004 total by less than one percent. The party had apparently reached its ceiling as an ethnically Islamic party, which left it still well behind its multiethnic competitors. PKS, recognizing the electoral limits of Islamic appeals, responded by moderating its message to target more of the electorate. A PKS strategist acknowledged after the 2009 election that “there’s no future in PKS beyond 10 percent in an election if they try to be a political party on one hand and an Islamic movement on the other hand, simply because democracy has an instrument to force all political parties to behave in the same way.” He also noted the party’s new emphasis on local concerns rather than ethnic issues:

PKS really wants to separate the political party from the movement. Islam should deal with moral issues, religion in some cases, but blend[ing] these together only creates problems. …You cannot go to the mosque and make poverty disappear. You can’t jihad for public infrastructure.\(^\text{281}\)

Growing legislative Islamization was also blunted at the local level as electoral decentralization took hold. After 1999, municipal governments began to pass ordinances

\(^{281}\) Interview, November 6, 2011, Zulkieflimansyah, PKS party strategist and former member of parliament
requiring Islamic dress and instruction and prohibiting prostitution, alcohol, and gambling. However, this trend began to decline in the mid-2000s “as the constitution took hold and as competition from explicitly Islamic parties waned” (Horowitz 2013, 134). Donald Horowitz notes that even parties with an Islamist agenda are now “not content to cultivate their traditional electorates or to rail against the secular constitution; they are keen to expand their support and are able to move to the center and to coalesce with parties at other points along the spectrum” (Horowitz 2013, 277).

Facilitating Condition: Federalism by Another Name

Indonesia is formally a unitary state. Indonesians reject the term “federalism” because of its historical association with Dutch divide-and-rule policies (Ferrazzi 2000). Therefore, its power-sharing laws are called “decentralization” and have largely skipped over the provincial level—the traditional site of federal powers—and gone to the local level, where the dramatic decentralization of power since 1998 has enhanced the effects of electoral decentralization. After Suharto, a new scheme of local power sharing was implemented through a “big bang approach” that precipitously transformed center-state relations (Crouch 2010, 92). Among the notable decentralization reforms were: making regencies and cities the focal points of provincial power rather than governors; transferring a number of administrative and financial functions to regencies and cities; granting local parliaments control over their budgets; transferring personnel functions to local governments; introducing revenue sharing between central and regional governments in various issue areas such as taxation, forestry, and mining; and allowing local governments to secure loans from overseas sources (Hadiz 2010, 78–79). Through
these reforms “Indonesia has been transformed from a highly centralized state into one of the most decentralized in the world” (Buehler 2010, 268).

The reforms aimed to weaken entrenched national elites long involved in institutional corruption; instead, however, decentralized power has only shifted corruption from the national parties to local power brokers. Vedi Hadiz writes:

Rather than inducing the kind of healthy competition between localities envisaged … decentralization has produced local governments, armed with greater autonomy in various spheres, such as taxation, that provide sustenance for predatory interests. (Hadiz 2010, 37)

Individual candidates still cannot avoid money politics, but now turn for support to local elites rather than national party elites. This creates a political dynamic in which political loyalty to parties or ideologies is undermined by local power brokers who finance the campaign. The decentralization of corruption therefore perversely enhances electoral decentralization and multiethnic politics by making candidates and elected politicians less tied to parties for their survival.

Focused Case Study: Aceh

Aceh represents a partial counter-factual through which to analyze this dissertation’s institutional argument: Aceh’s elections operate without the underlying historical and social conditions and strict party rules present in other Indonesian provinces. Aceh is approximately 98 percent Muslim and 50 percent Acehnese (a regionally concentrated tribal group), creating reinforcing identities along Indonesia’s two primary conflict cleavages. Aceh was afforded special autonomous status in 2005, which absolved the province from restrictive party rules that help to prevent local ethnic parties in other provinces. Finally, Aceh had its own parallel nationalist movement,
which rejected Sukarno’s multiethnic nationalism and militantly advocated an Islamic state starting shortly after Indonesia’s independence.

Given the unique historical, social, and institutional setting in Aceh, which is significantly more hostile to multiethnic politics that in other provinces, one would expect ethnic appeals to dominate Acehnese elections. However, this dissertation’s institutional argument would predict continued nonethnic appeals from multiethnic parties that need to maintain an inclusive image during candidate-centered, multiple district national elections even while competing in Aceh. Additionally, with strict party rules eliminated, it would also predict the simultaneous success of local ethnic parties; thus creating a political dynamic similar to India: multiethnic parties dominate national elections while ethnic parties remain successful at the local level.

Evidence from the 2009 election in Aceh substantiates these predictions (Palmer 2010). Elections for the provincial parliament and district parliaments produced victories for the Aceh Party, which is an ethnic party formed around the Acehnese tribal identity. However, the multiethnic Democrat Party won a plurality (6 of 13) of national-level DPD seats and received 93 percent of the vote during the presidential election. The campaign also corresponded to election trends seen across Indonesia: political parties used vague policy platforms, ran on service delivery issues, and “did not engage seriously with issues such as the implementation of Islamic law” (Palmer 2010, 298). Even the nominally Islamist PKS campaigned in the ultra-conservative province with reminders of its service to tsunami victims. Although there was substantial evidence of attempted vote buying,
“Candidates complained about being ‘deceived’ by voters” who took their money and then voted for a different candidate (Palmer 2010, 300).

Aceh’s 2009 election corroborates the hypothesized outcome: the ethnic Aceh Party won local elections, but national-level parties, such PD, PKS, and Golkar, continued to use targeted, policy-based nonethnic rhetoric despite conditions conducive to ethnic politics. This campaign tactic successfully localized service-delivery promises to Aceh while maintaining a broad-based image for national elections. This confirms that Indonesia’s strict party rules are not part of the causal conditions creating multiethnic politics; rather, they only strengthen the outcome.

Conclusion: Electoral-System Design and Multiethnic Politics in Indonesia

The political success of multiethnic parties continued into the transitional 1999 election, but their dominance was briefly challenged in 2004 as ethnic violence spiraled out of control. However, Islamic parties were weakened by the full implementation of candidate-centered elections in multiple districts in 2009, which consolidated political decentralization. In its evolved form, Indonesia’s electoral system combined with high ethnic fractionalization is likely to continue to weaken ethnic politics. Donald Horowitz found a similar linkage between cleavage structure, institutions, and ethnic politics in Indonesia:

the specific configuration of institutions shaped by the constitution tended to soften the impact of the cleavage structure in politics. Starting with what was, at least at the national level, a cleavage endowment that could be described as generally multipolar rather than bipolar, the Indonesian constitutional reformers chose institutions that solidified multipolarity in both party politics and group relations and, at the same time, provided important, self-interested reasons for politicians to establish ties across cleavage boundaries. (Horowitz 2013, 7)
Indonesia’s electoral incentives for multiethnic politics are stronger than in India, which lacks the addition of strict party regulations that effectively prohibit regional ethnic parties. These rules were implemented in Indonesia to prevent Islamic and tribal parties from mobilizing voters along Indonesia’s primary conflict cleavages. Consequently—and in contrast with India—Indonesia has essentially eliminated ethnic politics at the local level; however, national-level party politics in both countries remain shaped by the multiethnic incentives embedded in electoral decentralization.

South Africa and Electoral Centralization

Unlike India and Indonesia, South Africa’s electoral system, which uses single-district, party-centered proportional representation, creates a high degree of electoral centralization. The ethnic fractionalization within South Africa’s dominant-majority ethnic structure is left latent, leaving unexploited the potentially conflict-reducing crosscutting cleavages within the black majority. Therefore, the salience of South Africa’s primary conflict cleavage—race—is high during centralized and nationalized election campaigns. Additionally, South Africa’s weak federal arrangement enervates the political significance of local political power. These features combine to encourage the ANC to use ethnic appeals to target the electorally essential black vote. This section first outlines South Africa’s electoral system and then situates its incentives for ethnic appeals within a narrative of national-level South African politics. Second, it tests the dynamics institutional political incentives at the provincial-level with a brief case study of elections in the province of the Western Cape.
Causal Conditions: Party-Centered Elections and a Single District

After 1990, South Africa became a test case for academic advocates of electoral system design in deeply divided countries. Arend Lijphart recommended his consociational model for South Africa, arguing that grand coalitions, group autonomy, legislative proportionality, and minority veto power would create a vibrant, stable, and multiracial democracy (Lijphart 1985). In contrast, Donald Horowitz argued for an electoral system that forced cross-racial vote pooling (Horowitz 1991). Ultimately, South Africa chose a new electoral system, which, according to Lijphart, was “clearly a consociational democracy” and was as “close to the optimal power-sharing system that could have been devised” (Lijphart 1995, 222).

South Africa uses the simplest electoral-system design of the three countries under examination. National and provincial elections use list proportional representation with half of the 400-member parliament chosen from nine regional lists and the other half chosen from a single national list. Each party produces closed candidate lists, from which members of parliament are drawn in rank-order based on the percentage of the vote the party receives. Candidates are taken from national lists based on their party’s national-level support, whereas regional lists are drawn from based on the party’s provincial support. National vote totals therefore disproportionately affect the distribution of parliamentary seats. Andrew Reynolds argues that despite the presence of regional lists, South Africa effectively uses “one nationwide constituency (with 400 members) for the conversion of votes into seats” (A. Reynolds 2005, 62). With no minimum threshold,
South Africa’s closed-list, single-district proportional representation system theoretically distributes seats to parties in direct proportion to their vote total.

Using Duverger’s classic insights, South Africa should be primed for party proliferation under proportional representation with its multitude of racial, tribal, and linguistic groups. Yet South Africa’s parliament has surprisingly few ‘relevant’ parties.\footnote{Defined as any party that wins more the 3 percent of the parliamentary seats (Norris 2004).} After the 2009 election, there were only four relevant parliamentary parties: the ANC (264 seats), the DA (67 seats), COPE (30 seats), and the Inkatha Freedom Party (18 seats). This result was similar to past elections, which produced three, five, and three relevant parliamentary parties in 1994, 1999, and 2004 respectively. Although a large number of parties compete in national elections and between seven to thirteen parties have won seats in each election between 1994 and 2009, South African party politics has resisted the rapid party fragmentation that would be expected. Rather than leading weak and unstable governing coalitions, the ANC alone has easily won control of the parliament each election by obtaining large majorities in the poll.

This anomalous outcome is explained by South Africa’s electoral centralization, which fails to utilize the country’s ethnic fractionalization and therefore fosters politics along its primary conflict cleavage: race. As Daniel Posner notes, it is rational for a party “to emphasize the cleavage that defines the most usefully sized coalitional building blocks and to ignore those that define groups that are too small to be politically viable” (Posner 2004, 538). Under single-district proportional representation, South Africa’s
large black majority (79 percent) represents a winning electoral coalition by itself: whichever party can hold together the black vote, wins the election.

Indeed, the ANC has shown almost total control over black voters across four election cycles. Proponents of PR for South Africa claimed this system would cultivate inclusivity; however, this argument is premised on coalition governments not majority rule. Instead, the South African political system has become trivially inclusive—small parties do compete in elections and win some seats—but, in reality, the country’s consensual, multiracial politics is “contingent on the behavior of the ANC as the dominant party” (Bogaards 2005, 168).

Unlike in India and Indonesia, South African elections are party-centered, which means voters select parties instead of candidates on the ballot. This gives political parties the sole power to construct ideologically and ethnically consistent lists. Combined with a single-district format, party-centered elections create highly centralized campaigns dominated by a small number of elites who can easily maintain a consistent message to mobilize an ethnic group across the country. In South Africa, only a small number of party elites participate in most of the campaign events. This setting is conducive to ethnic parties, which need a tightly controlled ethnic image to mobilize voters rather than appeals tailored to local audiences. It is the party’s image, not its candidates, that wins an election.

Furthermore, South Africa’s concurrent national and provincial elections enhance electoral centralization. The ANC is vulnerable on provincial issues regarding local service delivery, but these topics are often obscured during election fights. The ANC’s
most effective election appeal to the electorally essential black community is its role in liberating South Africa from apartheid. Holding simultaneous national and provincial elections allows the ANC to emphasize this narrative, which overwhelms local concerns. Thus, South Africa’s election-scheduling format contributes to the nationalization of elections, elevating issues of foreign policy, macro-economic policy, and national unity over local issues. The ANC has indicated its intent to fully synchronize all elections (national, provincial, and municipal), which would effectively eliminate local issues from all election campaigns.283

South Africa’s electoral system is highly centralized, which, in contrast in India and Indonesia, is defined by a focus on national-level competition and issues: political parties compete with candidates that have no independent support base in an election dominated national—as opposed to local—issues: this is because South Africa itself constitutes the most important “district” in its functionally single-district system. Electoral centralization does not itself create ethnic politics in South Africa, but it provides no institutional mechanisms to prevent it. South Africa’s dominant-majority ethnic structure is rife with ethnic divisions, but these latent crosscutting cleavages are left untapped by single-district, party-centered elections. This highly centralized electoral arrangement therefore makes racial politics rational. As the Democratic Alliance has slowly accumulated larger vote shares each election, the ANC has responded by effectively abandoning explicit multiethnic appeals while engaging in charged racial

283 Steven Friedman, “All-in-one poll will undermine local democracy,” Business Day, June 30, 2010
language. The DA has gained approximately 5 percentage points in each election since 1994. Over this time, the ANC used increasingly fewer black candidates on its party lists and used fewer bridging appeals. Although the ANC remains South Africa’s dominant party and is broadly multiethnic, the rising challenge of the DA has caused a slow turn toward ethnic politics.

This dissertation’s emphasis on the impact of electoral institutions on the ANC’s election strategy bolsters Mattijs Bogaard’s critique of the ANC as a consociational party. “If there is any trend” in South African politics, writes Bogaards, it is towards increased centralism. Closed-list proportional representation (PR) and internal reliance on appointments or elections without choice strengthens the hand of the ANC leadership. The ANC’s national party structures have extended their powers at the provincial and local levels. (Bogaards 2005, 171)

Bogaards writes, “Given South Africa’s demography, this means that minorities can always be outvoted,” which shows that South Africa’s constitutional engineers refused to recognize “the prospect of a black majority” and left South Africa “ill-prepared for the emergence of a dominant party system and the challenges it poses” (Bogaards 2005, 168–169).

Facilitating Condition: Federalism

South Africa’s weak federal system exacerbates the impact of electoral centralization. The ANC conceded to demands for a federal system during South Africa’s transition to democracy, but it endeavored to weaken local units as much as possible. Consequently, the most important polices are generated at the national level, while provinces serve as administrative units. Decisions regarding major social and economic policy, resource distribution, and taxation are made by the national government (Piombo
2005, 455). Provincial budgets and spending decisions are also decided at the national level. Constitutional Scholar Nico Steytler describes South Africa as having “a constitutional dispensation that has some federal features but ensures central dominance” (Steytler 2005, 312). The country’s nominally federal structure does little to decentralize power, which makes control over provincial legislatures minimally important. There is therefore little incentive to adapt a national-level campaign to province-specific issues. While this itself does not generate racial politics, it allows the ANC to focus its organization on national-level elections and campaigns.

Focused Case Study: The Western Cape

The demographics of the Western Cape make it a unique test case for this study. It is South Africa’s only province without a black majority: its racial mix is approximately 49 percent Coloured, 33 percent Black, 16 percent White, and 1 percent Indian. This fractured ethnic structure should produce strongly multiracial politics during simultaneous national and provincial elections. The ANC should have a strong incentive to moderate its increasingly racial appeals in order to target minority voters in the province. However, this dissertation would predict that because of functionally single-district, party-centered elections, the ANC should be more concerned about maintaining its increasingly ethnic national mobilization strategy than with altering its tactics to win a single province.

Evidence from the 2009 election suggests the ANC did little more than maintain its weakly multiethnic character in the Western Cape while continuing racially divisive attacks on the Democratic Alliance. ANC firebrand Julius Malema was active in the
party’s Western Cape campaign against the DA. In a largely coloured township, Malema said, “The DA is closing water for our people. The ANC must open this water.” He continued, “The DA’s agenda is to divide our people in terms of racial lines…Our people are tired of racially based governance.” Malema concluded, “We have tasted this racism and we need the people’s organization to lead.”

At the University of Cape Town, Malema charged, “Forces that are opposed to our revolution are still here. We must change the management of this university and also the lecturers. This is our university, we must change the look of this university (it) should reflect South Africa.”

The ANC’s unabashed alienation of white voters was coupled with intensified “racial fault-lines” between blacks and coloureds in 2009. The ANC’s Western Cape leader had perceived Africanist ties, which exacerbated long-standing concerns among coloureds that the ANC was a black nationalist party (Butler 2010). Even after the DA’s victory in the province, the ANC did not moderate its attacks. ANC officials termed the DA’s mostly white cabinet as “pale male,” has continued to claim DA leader Helen Zille is racist, and has called for black residents to make the Western Cape “ungovernable” (Daniel and Southall 2010, 269).

In spite of reports that now show the Western Cape’s capital, Cape Town, has the more effective service delivery in the country, the ANC and its allies have persisted with

284 “Malema mobbed on campaign trail in Mitchells Plain,” Cape Times, April, 15, 2009.

285 “Malema says good reception in ‘coulured’ area proves ANC will take province;” Cape Argus, April 15, 2009.

racial attacks. A COSATU press release in 2010 stated, “…we only have to look at the Western Cape, to see the nightmare we can expect if the Democratic Alliance were to gain any ground next year…The DA will always be the party of the rich and privileged, with no time for the interests of the majority” (quoted in Plaut and Holden 2012, 252). Despite the Western Cape’s diversity, the ANC has shown little willingness to target minority voters. This confirms this dissertation’s claim that South Africa’s centralized elections push the ANC to abandon multiethnic appeals in favor of ethnic rhetoric.

Conclusion: Electoral-System Design and Ethnic Politics in South Africa

The ANC is still the dominant political party in South Africa, but the Democratic Alliance and other opposition parties, which are already winning some provinces and municipalities, represent a potential future challenge to the ANC’s national rule. Despite ethnic fractionalization, South Africa’s dominant-majority ethnic structure has been solidified by apartheid violence and a centralized electoral system that does little to splinter warring ethnic groups into smaller competing parts. Consequently, South Africa’s ‘rainbow nation’ model of peacebuilding is not institutionally grounded, but is rather left to the goodwill of the ANC. This jeopardizes the long-term prospects of inter-ethnic accommodation given the strong incentive for ethnic politics embedded in South Africa’s electoral institutions.

India, Indonesia, and South Africa: Comparing Electoral Logic

In sum, India and Indonesia’s differing electoral systems (FPTP versus Mixed) feature two common institutional mechanisms—candidate-centered, multiple district elections— which create the same political logic: electoral decentralization. Candidate-
centered ballots and multiple districts force political parties to run individual candidates across the country, which fosters multiethnic catch-all strategies that use moderate and broad appeals to target crosscutting cleavages. These countries’ relatively strong power-sharing structure enhances the orientation of political parties to local concerns. In contrast, South African political parties produce candidate lists and compete for the national vote rather than within a series geographically bounded and disparate districts. This allows the ruling ANC to ignore latent crosscutting cleavages and target the dominant black majority. South Africa’s relatively weak federal power-sharing structure reinforces the orientation of political parties to the national level. This comparison yields a basic yet important insight into party competition in deeply divided societies: The more territory across which a party’s candidates are forced to compete in order to control national-level institutions, the more likely a party is to be moderate and inclusive so that it can appeal to the largest number of voters.

Table 10: Conditions for Electoral Decentralization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent Condition</th>
<th>Causal Conditions</th>
<th>Facilitating Condition</th>
<th>Electoral Logic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Dominant Majority with Crosscutting Cleavages</td>
<td>Candidate Centered</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Dominant Majority with Crosscutting Cleavages</td>
<td>Candidate Centered</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Dominant Majority with Crosscutting Cleavages</td>
<td>Party Centered</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

India, Indonesia, and South Africa share several fundamental characteristics as populous, deeply divided, and conflict-prone democracies—characteristics that should encourage ethnic politics. Yet the nature of party politics in these countries shows two clear paths. India and Indonesia’s major parties have retained broadly multiethnic appeals while South Africa’s ruling party uses declining and comparatively weaker multiethnic appeals. While various political, social, and economic arguments exist for the formation and success of multiethnic parties in these countries, none provides a systematic explanation that can account for these diverging political outcomes.

This dissertation posits that inclusive liberation movements create a soft path dependence for the formation and success of multiethnic parties, but, over time, as competitors emerge to challenge these parties, the incentives for inclusive appeals embedded in the electoral system will determine to what extent parties maintain their multiethnic character or revert to ethnic chauvinism. In India, the dominant Congress Party returned to multiethnic appeals against the Hindu-nationalist BJP because candidate-centered, multiple-district elections create a logic of electoral decentralization that encourages moderation. In Indonesia, the main multiethnic parties retained their multiethnic appeals against the Islamic PKS because the country’s electoral system features create a similar political logic. In contrast, the ruling ANC in South Africa has slowly increased its use of ethnic mobilization against the multiethnic Democratic
Alliance because single-district proportional representation creates a logic of electoral centralization that facilitates ethnic politics.

The electoral logic in these three countries is not the result of only the electoral system, however, but rather its interaction with ethnic cleavage structure. Donald Horowitz argues:

Institutions can foster movement toward multipolarity or bipolarity...The goal of constitutional engineering is not to transform such conflicts dramatically—constitutions can rarely do that—but to soften them, to rend them more tractable, to build on any preexisting malleability and permeability of group allegiances (Horowitz 2013, 164).

India, Indonesia, and South Africa’s crosscutting cleavages provide latent raw material for cooperation-inducing institutions to manipulate. However, only India and Indonesia’s candidate-centered, multiple-district elections work to politicize sub-ethnic identities; whereas South Africa’s party-centered, single-district elections do nothing to undermine its primary conflict cleavage of race. The interaction of institutional and social structures constitutes the strategic environment in which parties operate. In this environment there is a logical incentive for either multiethnic or ethnic politics from which parties might occasionally deviate, but will return to as rational political actors in pursuit of power.

Though this dissertation is not the first to notice the deleterious impact of South Africa’s electoral system design, its critique is rooted in unique longitudinal empirical data that shows the influence of closed-list PR on racial politics over time. Matthijs Bogaards’s otherwise critical study of the ANC says the party retains minimal inclusivity “at least with respect to what arguably remains the most important cleavage in South African politics and society: race" (Bogaards 2005, 178). He contends further that
minority parties (including black parties) “do not present a threat to continued ANC dominance” (Bogaards 2005, 171). The actions of the ANC, measured across elections in this project, belie both claims. The empirical evidence shows the ANC increasingly abandoning nonracialism or multiracialism in favor of direct appeals to black voters. Though the party remains minimally inclusive, this character is declining. Moreover, the evidence suggests an ANC strategy designed to blunt the rise of opposition parties, in particular the Democratic Alliance, but also of upstart black challengers, such as COPE or the newly formed party Agang.

By deepening our critical understanding of electoral system dynamics in South Africa, this project directly challenges the early proponents South Africa’s electoral system design and those who continue to promote proportional representation for deeply divided societies. Arend Lijphart predicted that the ANC’s rule “will be similar to that of the Indian National Congress, which has been so inclusive of all religious, linguistic, and regional groups in India that it has embodied the essence of a grand coalition within the party and within the long succession of Congress cabinets” (Lijphart 1998, 148). The in-depth comparison of the INC and ANC presented here refutes this claim. The ANC has used steadily fewer multiethnic political appeals while the Congress Party has maintained its multiethnic character across elections.

Echoing Lijphart, Andrew Reynolds declared shortly after South Africa’s first election: “Proportional representation has undoubtedly been an integral part of efforts at power-sharing and ethnic accommodation in…South Africa” (A. Reynolds 1995a, 90). Reynolds also extolled the virtues of national List PR. “Proportional representation has
also allowed the South African parliament to be fairly reflective of South African society as a whole,” writes Reynolds. “The national lists, which were ‘closed’ in the sense that the electorate was unable to alter or reorder them, allowed parties to present ethnically heterogeneous groups of candidates with anticipated cross-cutting appeal” (A. Reynolds 1995a, 91). The evidence presented here shows this claim was premature. The ANC has used increasing homogenous party lists over time, nominating fewer white, Indian, and coloured candidates while slowly growing its proportion of black candidates.

The “consensus on PR” (Sisk 1993, 88) that emerged in the mid-1990s has continued among its chief exponents. Reynolds belief in 1995 that “The evidence from the emerging democracies of southern Africa strongly suggests that divided societies need proportional representation (PR) rather than plurality elections, and a parliamentary rather than a presidential form of government” (A. Reynolds 1995a, 86) continues to inform his constitutional advice. Writing on emerging democracies in the Middle East, Reynolds has continued to promote power sharing in the form of proportional representation (A. Reynolds and Carey 2012; A. Reynolds 2007; Carey and Reynolds 2011). Reynolds and John Carey write, proportional representation “lowers the stakes of the first free election and thus makes free elections likelier to continue” (A. Reynolds and Carey 2012, 168).

By rebutting (both empirically and theoretically) the long-term sustainability of multiethnic politics in South Africa under proportional representation, this dissertation affirms the core insight of Donald Horowitz, Ben Reilly, and other centripetalists: electoral system design can induce multiethnic parties and conflict-reducing moderation.
However, electoral decentralization is mechanically distinct from the centripetal approach, which focuses on preferential voting arrangements (Horowitz 1991; Reilly 2001). Reilly identifies three preferential electoral systems—alternative vote, supplementary vote, and single transferable vote—which, through rank-ordering, “enable electors to indicate how they would vote if their favoured candidate was defeated” (Reilly 2001, 18). The rank ordering of candidates, along with distribution requirements that force parties to pass a minimum vote threshold across regions, is claimed to encourage areas of bargaining for vote pooling deals between parties.

In her critical examination of centripetalism, Allison McCulloch argues majoritarian-preferential elections and electoral distribution requirements are the core of the centripetal approach (McCulloch 2013). Yet in twenty-four elections across eight countries, McCulloch finds little evidence for the success of centripetalism. In all but four elections, increased instability occurred during extremist victories or despite the victory of moderate parties. Notably, two of the four successful outcomes under centripetalism identified by McCulloch were in Indonesia (2004 and 2009), which possesses distribution requirements for its majoritarian presidential elections. However, Indonesia, which uses both proportional and mixed proportional arrangements for its bicameral parliament—does not use preferential voting.

The institutional instruments of electoral decentralization are therefore different from centripetalism. It relies on candidate-centered, multiple-district elections rather than preferential voting and distribution requirements to explain the development of multiethnic political parties. While Indonesia uses distribution requirements, which
doubtless contribute to the persistence of multiethnic strategies, presidential election outcomes are closely linked to the result of parliamentary elections, which have no centripetal features. Only political parties that meet a minimum threshold of seats or votes during the parliamentary election can nominate a presidential candidate. This makes the moderation of presidential elections reliant on the ethnic or multiethnic character of the parties in parliament, which is determined by a non-centripetal arrangement. Additionally, India’s multiethnic Congress Party has thrived under a FPTP system. Though majoritarian, it features neither distribution requirements nor preferential voting.

In sum, while electoral decentralization and centripetalism are related, their mechanical emphasis is both substantively and theoretically different. Horowitz and Reilly focus on the need for micro-level institutional mechanisms that force cooperation through distribution requirements and/or preferential voting. The evidence from India, Indonesia, and South Africa suggests that macro-level institutional design is more important to conflict management. The success of multiethnic political parties in India and Indonesia has been achieved through a plurality/majority system and mixed system respectively, each ensuring one simple premise: that political parties are forced to run candidates across many and disparate districts to control national-level institutions. In deeply divided countries, this will produce a natural tendency toward catch-all parties.

The argument derived from this dissertation’s comparison also contributes to our empirical and theoretical understanding of political parties and electoral system design more generally. It validates the claim of Duverger and his successors that electoral-
system design effects the formation of parties and party systems; however, it also highlights the importance of a country’s social and historical setting in shaping the outcome of institutional incentives. India, Indonesia, and South Africa all defy conventional understandings of electoral system design and party systems: South Africa and Indonesia’s proportional systems have not produced significant party proliferation while India’s FPTP structure has paradoxically spawned a deeply fragmented party system. These outcomes can only be understood through the prism of each country’s ethnic cleavage structure, liberation history, and contemporary elite interaction.

The policy implications of this argument are important, but constrained by the selection of cases. It does not provide a one-size-fits-all electoral model for producing multiethnic parties in deeply divided countries. However, the evidence indicates that deeply divided, conflict-prone countries can be stabilized through decentralized electoral systems, which naturally foster sub-ethnic identities that undermine the primary conflict cleavage or cleavages in a society. It is possible that population size is important to this insight. Large and populous countries are more likely to have ethnic and sub-ethnic groups with distinct identities, which creates diverse and disconnected pockets of local interests that must be incorporated into the mobilization strategy of a political party. Therefore, a party seeking national office cannot rely on an ‘ethnic census’ election, but must instead build a multiethnic consensus. Despite differing conclusions, this project provides further evidence confirming the argument of Horowitz, Reilly, and others who view multiethnic political parties as essential to conflict mediation and stable postconflict governance in divided societies. The insights generated from this comparison of India, Indonesia, and
South Africa help us understand the conditions under which such parties form and succeed.
REFERENCES


377


### APPENDICES

**Appendix A: Survey Data Used for Coding Rubric, South Africa**

Most important problems at time of the election, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Non-Black</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing/no problems</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of the economy</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wages, incomes and salaries</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty/destitution</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rates and Taxes</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loans/credit</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming/agriculture</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food shortage/famine</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure/roads</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>89.4%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphans/street children/homeless children</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services (Other)</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Security</td>
<td>31.7%</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corruption</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political violence</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination/inequality</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy/political rights</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (CNEP 2009)
## Appendix B: Interview List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Democrat Party</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Democratic Alliance</td>
<td>Party Strategist</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anwar, Ali</td>
<td>Janata Dal United</td>
<td>MP Professor of Political</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armando, Ade</td>
<td>University of Indonesia</td>
<td>Communication Deputy Party Chairman</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arya, Bima</td>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>MP and Secretary General</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakiri, Hanif</td>
<td>PKB</td>
<td>Deputy Secretary General</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djani, Luky</td>
<td>Indonesia Centre for the Study of Democracy</td>
<td>Director South Africa</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friedman, Steven</td>
<td>Indian National Centre for the Study of Democracy</td>
<td>Director South Africa</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshi, Mahesh</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalita, Bhubaneswar</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kapyee, Mohinder Singh</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP Party Strategist and Former Candidate</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madur, Sunil</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP, Zila Parishad</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nirguni, Rangeet</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajagopal, L.</td>
<td>Indian National Congress</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thakur, CP</td>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>MP</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahid, Yenny</td>
<td>PKB</td>
<td>Party Official</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zulkiflimansyah</td>
<td>PKS</td>
<td>Party Strategist</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>