

A descriptive study on Decolonization with Political Influence in India



Mamta Kumari

M.Phil, Roll No: 150332

Session: 2015-16

University Department of History

B.R.A Bihar University, Muzzaffarpur

Abstract

This paper contrasts the economic results of regions of India that were directly colonized by British officials with those that were indirectly colonized. I provide an instrumental variable estimate of the effects of colonial authority by using a unique annexation strategy of the British known as the "Doctrine of Lapse." There is evidence that colonial annexation strategy was very selective and focused on regions with strong agricultural potential. In addition, places that were directly ruled by the British have far lower levels of public goods now than those that were not. Data from past times show that the disparities in public goods in the post-Independence era are becoming less with time.

Keywords: colonial rule, development, public goods, Decolonization.

Introduction

The end of the British Indian Empire as a colony India under Nehru Due to the partition and establishment of two distinct nation-states, India and Pakistan, the decolonization of British India became a very complicated process. The separation of Muslim-majority districts on the western and eastern parts of British India into two wings of Pakistan was primarily motivated by religion (East Pakistan and West Pakistan). The reasons of division are explained in a large amount of literature. Sharp religious divisions were caused by colonial

attitudes toward various communities in Indian society, social movements within the Muslim and Hindu communities, economic grievances, a perception of relative deprivation among educated Muslims compared to their Hindu counterparts, growing political rivalry between the two communities, and the Indian National Congress's resistance to Muslim political demands. A Boundary Commission headed by British attorney Sir Cyril Radcliffe was given little over a month to determine the border between Pakistan and India. Mass migration and severe intergroup conflict occurred after partition. The infamous "Great Calcutta Killings" of August 1946 are the beginning of partition-era bloodshed. Violence gripped Calcutta on August 16, when the Muslim League called for a "Direct Action Day" to seek a separate homeland (Kolkata). After starting in Calcutta, riots moved to Noakhali in Eastern Bengal, where Hindus were persecuted, then to Bihar, where Muslims were more severely affected, and lastly to Punjab, Delhi, and Sind, where they killed many Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. 200,000 to 1 million individuals were murdered in these riots. Women were especially vulnerable since thousands of men from other religions would abuse, rape, and kidnap them. People hid in places where there were more members of their own faith to avoid the disturbances. Due to the Scheduled Castes Federation's (an important Dalit political party) support for the Pakistan demand and the fact that their leader from Bengal, Jogendra Nath Mandal, joined the Pakistan cabinet after partition, Dalits in some areas were initially less affected by the violence of the partition. But many of them left for better prospects economically, out of fear of conversion, or because their caste identity was eclipsed by their religious identity. Although Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's first president and the unchallenged leader of the Pakistan Movement, both pledged to protect the rights and interests of religious minorities in their respective nations, violence and exodus persisted. Approximately 9 million Hindus and Sikhs travelled from India to Pakistan between 1946 and 1965, whereas 5 million Muslims made the opposite journey. Compared to East Pakistan and India, West Pakistan and India had a significantly distinct pattern of migration. The process of removing Muslims from Indian Punjab and Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan's Punjab was carried out in cooperation between the governments of India and Pakistan. As a result, there was virtually a complete demographic shift in a short period of time. However, movement between East Pakistan and India, although officially prohibited by the respective governments, persisted for decades after partition as a result of recurring sectarian fighting, bureaucratic indifference, and economic challenges. Numerous factors led to the destabilisation of the subcontinent, including sectarian bloodshed and widespread migration, which made it very difficult for both Pakistan and India to become nation-states.

The Unique Case of Pakistan and Bangladesh

Pakistan was "uniquely experimental" when it was founded in 1947 for a number of reasons, according to van Schendel (2009: 107) Like Israel, which would be founded in 1948, Pakistan was envisioned as a Muslim homeland and was a political concept that was based on religion. This concept's geographical form rendered Pakistan's situation even more unusual. It was divided into two sections, East Pakistan and West Pakistan, by more than 1000 kilometres of Indian territory. It was difficult for Pakistan right from the start. Though efforts were made to fairly divide the British Indian Empire's assets and obligations between India and Pakistan, the former was in many respects the true successor of colonial India. For instance, only around 80 of the 1400 people who worked for the Indian Civil Service before to 1947 chose to work for the Pakistani government. The capital of British India, Delhi, also became the capital of India. India had significant port cities, economic centres, and governmental centres including Bombay (Mumbai) and Calcutta (Kolkata). Since the late 1930s, Karachi has served as the provincial capital. Pakistan's capital had to be established relatively immediately. It lacked the infrastructure required to host the nation's government and ruling class.

Perhaps worse was the state of Dacca (Dhaka), the capital of East Pakistan. Dacca, a peaceful hamlet of 7.8 miles², lacked both a cantonment and a commercial bank. Dacca lacked any assets that might set her apart from other mufassil towns of Bengal, except from a respectable university, a few modest businesses, and a Mughal-era urban legacy. Indeed, Pakistan has some of the most productive locations for generating raw materials. For instance, West Pakistan was one of the world's top cotton-producing regions, but 75% of the world's jute-producing territories were in East Pakistan. However, East Pakistan had no jute mills at the time of partition and was mostly reliant on the Calcutta port for the sale of its raw jute.

However, just 11 of British India's more than 400 cotton mills were located inside West Pakistan's boundaries. It was clear that industrialization and quick infrastructure development were essential for efficient national administration and the growth of a self-sufficient national economy under both Pakistan's wings. However, in the two decades that followed Pakistan's founding, the western wing's growth surpassed the eastern wing's in large part due to state policy. Even though East Pakistan had a larger population than the West, the government only committed around 25% of its yearly budget to that region. Additionally, West Pakistanis were all the wealthier Pakistanis, while the East's education and communication systems progressed far more slowly. Unsurprisingly, this unequal growth gave rise to conflict between the two wings. But the issue of the national language was where the rifts between East and West Pakistan first surfaced.

Conclusion

In this study, I use an exogenous source of variation to adjust for the selection of states into the British empire and compare the long-run outcomes of territories in India that were directly colonised by the British with those that were indirectly colonised. The findings for the instrumental variable show that the British selected annexed regions based on their agricultural potential and that, in the post-Independence era, British-ruled regions lag behind in the provision of public amenities. These variances, which are gradually reducing, most likely represent colonial-era variations. Since the outcomes cannot be entirely attributable to the British's excessive extraction or to variations in particular institutions, they are likely the product of different administrative incentives in the two sorts of territories. Depending on the motivations we attribute to native rulers, the conclusions have different policy consequences. For instance, policies aimed at promoting decentralisation or grass-roots democracy (like the village-level Panchayati Raj system in India) would be expected to produce better public goods provision if native rulers were able to pursue better policies due to their superior local knowledge or because they felt a greater commitment to the progress of their area. The policy ramifications call for fostering long-term ties between decision-makers or administrators and the populace if native rulers had a longer time horizon than administrators in British territories (because they had no term restrictions or might leave the state to their descendants). The policy consequence would be to provide for stronger monitoring and harsher penalties for decision-makers and administrators, on the other hand, if the fear of being ousted was the primary driver of improved performance. It is intriguing that there have been noticeable disparities for up to forty years after colonial control ended. This may be because former princes have continued to hold prominent positions in politics. This suggests that even while colonialism's effects may ultimately fade, they might linger for a very long period.

References

1. Alamgir, J. & D'Costa B. (2011). The 1971 Genocide: War Crimes and Political Crimes. *Economic and Political Weekly XLVI* (13), 38–41.
2. Ankit, R. (2016). The accession of Junagadh, 1947–48: Colonial sovereignty, state violence and post-independence India. *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, 53(3), 371–404. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0019464616651167>.
3. Bandyopadhyay, S. (2012). *Decolonization in South Asia: Meanings of freedom in post-independence West Bengal, 1947–52*. London: Routledge. Bandyopadhyay, S. (Ed.). (2016). *Decolonisation and the politics of transition in South Asia*. New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan.

4. Bandyopadhyay, S., & Basu Ray Chaudhury, A. (2014). In search of space: The scheduled castes movement in West Bengal after partition (Policies and Practices) (Vol. 59). Kolkata: Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group.
5. Begum, N. S. (1950). Indo-Pakistan Trade Relations. *Pakistan Horizon*, 3(3), 165–179.
6. Betts, R. F. (2012). Decolonization: A brief history of the word. In E. Bogaerts & R. Raben (Eds.), *Beyond empire and nation: The decolonization of African and Asian societies, 1930s–1970s* (pp. 23–37). Leiden: Brill. Retrieved from
7. Bose, S. (2012) Fragments of Memories: Researching Violence in the 1971 Bangladesh War. *History Workshop Journal*, 73(1), 285–295. <https://doi.org/10.1093/hwj/dbr057>.
8. Butalia, U. (1993). Community, state and gender: On Women’s agency during partition. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 28(17), 12–24.
9. Chakrabarty, D. (2007). “In the name of politics”: Democracy and the power of the multitude in India. *Public Culture*, 19(1), 35–57.
10. Chakrabarty, D., Majumdar, R. and Sartori, A. (Eds.). (2007). *From the colonial to the postcolonial: India and Pakistan in transition*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
11. Charney, M. (2009). *A history of modern Burma*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
12. Chatterjee, P. (2004). *The politics of the governed: Reflections on popular politics in most of the world*. New York: Columbia University Press.
13. Chatterji, J. (2007). ‘Dispersal’ and the failure of rehabilitation: Refugee camp-dwellers and squatters in West Bengal. *Modern Asian Studies*, 41(05), 995–1032.
14. Cohen, S. P. (2012). *The idea Pakistan*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
15. Das, S. (2001). *The Nehru years in Indian politics: From a historical hindsight*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, Centre for South Asian Studies.
16. Devji, F. F. (2013). *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a political idea*. London: Hurst & Company
17. Kamal, A. (2007). Peasant rebellions and the Muslim League government in East Bengal, 1947-54. In Chakrabarty, Majumdar and Sartori (eds.), *From the colonial to the postcolonial: India and Pakistan in transition* (201–220). New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
18. Kamtekar, I. (1999). The fables of nationalism. *India International Centre Quarterly*, 26(3), 44–54
19. Kudaisya, G. (2017). *A republic in the making. India in the 1950s*. Corby: Oxford University Press.
20. Kumarasingham, H. (2006). A democratic paradox: The communalisation of politics in Ceylon, 1911–1948. *Asian Affairs*, 37(3), 342–352