Opposition to Ethnic Territorial Autonomy in the Indian Parliament

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ABSTRACT   Why do central governments resist regional ethnic autonomy? Is it nationalism? A fear of lost revenues? Scholars rarely investigate these questions with fine-grained data on elite behavior. The author analyzes new data on Indian parliamentarians during that country's federal reorganization in the 1950s. Legislators debated dozens of proposals for ethnic autonomy. What kinds of proposals met the most opposition? Contrary to existing theory, central legislators were not opposed to autonomy for revenue- or resource-rich areas. Religious and linguistic nationalism were influential but they did not create a direct relationship between ethnic differences and MPs' stances on autonomy. Regional ethnic rivalries were a key driver of opposition to autonomy. Parliamentarians rebuffed proposals that threatened to undermine their constituents' position relative to neighboring non-coethnics. These findings suggest new insights for the comparative study of ethnoterritorial politics.

Ethnic Conflict and Territory

Most ethnic conflict concerns territory. Of the 293 ethnic groups tracked by the Minorities at Risk Project (2009), 56% define themselves in terms of a territory where they ask for greater self-rule—they seek sovereignty, merger with a neighboring state, or autonomous subnational jurisdictions. Territorial autonomy is at stake in most ethnic civil wars and in the most protracted and deadly civil wars.

Amidst this turmoil, the number of subnational autonomous ethnic jurisdictions has grown rapidly since the mid-twentieth century (Roeder, 2007, p. 48). However, central governments vary in their willingness to grant such autonomy. This variation is not only across countries but across demands from within the same country (Anderson, 2014). Central governments give some groups autonomy and rebuff others.

Research on ethnoterritorial autonomy typically measures aggregate outcomes: whether autonomy movements materialize, use violence, or succeed (Brancati, 2006; Brown, 2009; Cederman, Weidmann, & Gleditsch, 2011; Collier & Hoeffler, 2006; Deiwiks, Cederman, & Gleditsch, 2012; Jenne, 2006; Lacina, 2014; Sorens, 2009; Toft, 2005; Walter, 2009). There is less study of why actors within the central government oppose autonomy. A few

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scholars unpack pro-autonomy movements (Cunningham, 2014; de la Calle, 2015; Staniland, 2014), but few examine the individuals behind government responses to autonomy demands.

This article explores the opposition of Indian members of parliament (MPs) to the dozens of autonomy proposals circulating during that country's federal reorganization in the 1950s. Autonomy movements existed in all parts of India. National legislators responded to autonomy proposals directly relevant to their constituencies and to proposals from farther afield, as well as to demands that varied by economic and ethnic profile. I exploit this rich variation while also focusing on a single country and time period, implicitly controlling for factors such as regime type and state military strength.

I consider central nationalism; minority inclusion; economic extraction; competing regional interests; and management of violence as explanations for MPs' views on autonomy. Central nationalism played an ambiguous role. MPs opposed religious minority autonomy but not linguistic minority autonomy. Autonomy proposals from areas aligned with the ruling party fared better with legislators, even opposition MPs.

Contrary to existing theory, members of parliament did not oppose autonomy for relatively wealthy or resource rich areas. If anything, MPs opposed autonomy for poor areas, which might not be able to cover their own administrative costs.

Opposition to autonomy often stemmed from regional ethnic rivalries. MP's championed their constituents' own autonomy proposals but were strongly opposed to competing autonomy proposals from their home region. Such local dynamics are a neglected aspect of ethnoterritorial politics.

My findings shed light on a particularly important episode of ethnofederal institutional change. In the 1950s, the survival of India as a single country was uncertain (Harrison, 1960). The 1956 reorganization has been credited with shoring up the country's territorial integrity and commended as a model for other diverse countries, including neighboring Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar (Kohli, 1997; Stepan, Linz, & Yadav, 2011; Wilkinson, 2008). India's experience can inform other experiments with ethnic federalism. India has many characteristics of countries that struggle with territorial autonomy demands. A post-colonial country with a large and very diverse population, India is an 'exemplar of the non-nation state' (Rudolph & Rudolph, 2011, p. 557).

Nationalism Versus Inclusion

The dominant perspective on ethnoterritorial politics explains central resistance to autonomy in terms of the narrowness of the central nationalist project (Geertz, 1963; Gellner, 1964; Hechter, 2000; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967). Wimmer (2012) argues that in the absence of a strong state and civil society, nationalist projects are unlikely to spread beyond a few ethnic groups. Central rulers are unlikely to share power with other groups for fear of secessionism (Wimmer, 2012, p. 33). The implication of this line of argument is that central elites—particularly those who represent a dominant ethnic group—resist autonomy for outsiders to the center's nationalist project.

The counter to exclusive nationalism is minority inclusion in central power (Deiwiks et al., 2012; Treisman, 1997; Wimmer, Cederman, & Min, 2009). Majority elites may allow minority inclusion because of ideological flexibility or out of political necessity. In either case, minorities that have access to central power through the executive (Bakke, 2015; Birnir, 2007) or party system (Brancati, 2006; Meguid, 2009) are more likely to be accommodated with regional autonomy (Bakke & Wibbels, 2006, p. 20).

Relative Wealth

Central actors may see regional autonomy as a loss of control over material resources (Gellner, 1983; Gourevitch, 1979; Horowitz, 1985; Williams, 1977). A central government can extract revenue from even poor areas of the periphery, so central governments oppose ethnic autonomy in general. For three reasons, autonomy is particularly undesirable for relatively wealthy or resource rich areas (Brown, 2009; Deiwiks et al., 2012; Hale, 2004). First, richer regions may be more likely to demand independence. Sambanis and Milanovic (2014) argue that, from the perspective of regional actors, the downsides of sovereignty are the loss of integrated markets and economies of scale in public goods. These trade-offs are less severe if a region contains a larger portion of the country's economy (1835). The incentive to seek independence is greatest for richer regions. Therefore, central actors should be particularly wary of granting autonomy to the rich areas. Second, autonomous regional governments may have veto power over central redistribution of income between regions (Bakke & Wibbels, 2006). Rich regions have the most reason to exercise that veto. Finally, Cai and Treisman (2004) argue that federal regions may compete for mobile capital by shielding 'firms from the need to pay central taxes in full or comply with central regulations' (821). If the region is relatively wealthy or contains valuable resources, the damage is greater. These logics suggest central actors should oppose autonomy for relatively wealthy regions and those with natural resources.

Regional Rivalry

A third perspective on ethnic territorial autonomy stresses local opposition from non-coethnic groups (Bakke, 2010; Cunningham & Weidmann, 2010; Lacina, 2015; Toft, 2005). Many autonomous ethnic regions discriminate against out-groups (Benedikter, 2007, pp. 66–71). New jurisdictions may also clash with neighboring governments (Roeder, 2007). Those risks are most relevant to other ethnic groups in the autonomous area and nearby. People elsewhere are less impacted. Therefore, politicians oppose autonomy for groups that share a geographic region but not an ethnic identity with their own constituents.

Managing Violence

Finally, central elites may grant autonomy as a means to prevent or end unrest (McGarry & O'Leary, 2009, pp. 6–7). If violence is underway, a grant of autonomy may satisfy or splinter the militants (Cunningham, 2014). Therefore, militancy may prompt central elites to devolve autonomy.

On the other hand, non-violent political mobilization may be as effective as violence for convincing a government to concede to popular demands (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2012). Central governments may fear setting a precedent of concessions to violence. If a government faces a large number of possible ethnic autonomy demands, it wants to cultivate a reputation for being tough on these movements (Walter, 2009). These arguments suggest militancy may not persuade elites to favor autonomy and may even backfire. Thus, the literature is ambiguous on the question of whether pro-autonomy violence makes central elites more or less receptive to autonomy demands.

In sum, literature on macro outcomes in ethnoterritorial politics suggests varied reasons why central elites oppose autonomy demands. I now explain the setting in which I investigate these possibilities.

India's Ethnofederal Upheaval

India's first constitution preserved many colonial subnational borders. When the federal constitution was inaugurated in 1950, those borders gave a few ethnic groups a majority at the state level—e.g. Bengalis were the majority in West Bengal. However, most states had only a plurality rather than a majority ethnolinguistic community.

The first constitution's non-ethnic federalism represented a reversal by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and the ruling India National Congress (INC) party. Before independence, Congress advocated language-based federalism. The party leadership abandoned the idea because of fears of instability. Many middle-tier and non-elite Congress members still supported reorganization after the constitution was announced (Weiner, 1962).

The arrangement proved unstable because the Indian constitution incentivizes the pursuit of ethnic states. Indian state governments can use ethnicity to restrict who receives public benefits. First, an Indian state sets an official language(s) for secondary and higher education, the civil service, and employment in government-owned industries. Official language policy can discriminate against minorities and discourage employment-seeking migrants from other linguistic groups. Second, states give reservations of legislative seats, government jobs, and university slots to castes and tribes.[1] 'Scheduled' castes and tribes are state-specific. State governments can target these reservations to the dominant ethnic group. Third, states have domicile requirements for government employment and services. Such requirements are often invoked against anyone who is not from the state's majority ethnic group. Finally, India's fiscal federalism reinforces the incentive to seek an ethnic fiefdom by eliminating advantages that a large but heterogeneous state might otherwise have. Indian states have limited tax authority and receive most of their budget from the center (Rao & Singh, 2005). A small tax base and diseconomies of scale are not barriers to enjoying the gains of statehood. Thus, the institutional set-up of Indian federalism encouraged activists to push for reorganization of the federal units on ethnic lines.

Reorganization Process

In 1952, pro-reorganization riots occurred in south India. The central government bowed to the inevitable, announcing a state reorganization process. A centrally-appointed States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) collected proposals for new subnational boundaries. Most of the petitions called for a specific ethnic group to be given a jurisdiction where it would have an overwhelming majority.

Table 1 gives two examples of petitions to the SRC. The first is a proposal for the Malayala-majority district of Madras to be transferred from Madras (an existing, Tamil-plurality state) to Travancore-Cochin, a Malayala-majority state. Moving Malabar to Travancore-Cochin would give ethnic self-rule to the Malayalas in Malabar. This petition was commended by the SRC and implemented in 1956. The second example is a petition for the centrally-controlled territory of Tripura to be made into a state with an elected government. Tripura's Bengali majority would gain autonomy. This proposal failed.

Table 1. Examples of proposals for ethnic territorial autonomy described in the 1955 report of India's State Reorganisation Commission

Proposal	Proposal of ethnoterritorial autonomy for	MP's constituency in proposal region if	MP's constituency coethnic with proposed autonomous group if
Malabar district of Madras to Travancore-Cochin	Malayalas of Malabar	From Madras or Travancore-Cochin	Malayala-majority constituency
Elected state government in Tripura instead of central rule	Bengalis of Tripura	From Tripura or Assam (SRC recommended merger of Tripura and Assam)	Bengali-majority constituency

The SRC's mandate was to consider proposals for redrawing state borders.[2] It did not review plans to give some or all states new powers. New states would adhere to Schedule VII of the Indian Constitution, which specifies the division of powers between the central and state governments. The central government asked the SRC to focus on borders and not division of powers because the Constitution makes the former easier to change than the latter. Ordinary legislation can redraw the borders between states or to change a centrally-governed territory into a state. However, changing the division of powers between the center and one or more states requires a constitutional amendment, with a supermajority in the national legislature and ratification by half of the states.

Ethnic autonomy proposals were almost all cast in terms of language identities. Brass's (1974) seminal study of Indian autonomy movements argues that language was in some cases a fig leaf for creating states that would otherwise represent unacceptable identities. Religious territorial movements were taboo because they were reminiscent of the partition of India and Pakistan. Therefore, autonomy mobilisations that were popular due to religious feelings encoded their demands in terms of ethnolinguistic differences instead. Brass' example of this process is from Punjab, where Sikh activists requested a state by talking about a Punjabi linguistic identity.

In fall 1955, the SRC (1955, p. ii) reported on the proposals it had received and made a recommendation on each. The report detailed 72 proposals for ethnic self-rule, 23 of which (32%) succeeded in 1956.

In December 1955, the Lok Sabha debated a motion that the SRC's report should be 'taken into consideration' (Parliament of India, 1955, p. 17). This purely advisory motion allowed a debate ranging over the whole of the SRC's report. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha, Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar, did not allow any amendments or creation of separate resolutions.

The debate ran for more than a week and was notable for very broad participation. Members who did not have a chance to speak were allowed to include written statements in the official proceedings. 268 legislators, almost 60% of the house, gave a speech or written statement. An MP could speak only once and used his or her time to cover whichever parts of the report s/he wished.

Mavalankar began the debate by asking proponents and opponents of particular autonomy demands to submit, as a group, the name of a pleader who would argue their position.

Unfortunately, there is no record of what members submitted in response. That plan was abandoned, in any event, because the opposition argued every MP should be free to weigh in on any aspect of the report.

Strategic misrepresentation of preferences was unlikely in this environment. The debate was unstructured so that issues could not be removed from consideration by early maneuvering. MPs could only speak once and therefore had no opportunity to correct an earlier misrepresentation.

Most MPs addressed their remarks to the central executive not their constituents. Ordinary Indians could not easily follow the details of the debate because only the most prominent speakers' remarks were summarized by newspapers. MPs focused on telling the executive about public sentiment. Speakers warned of public outrage and unrest if particular proposals were ignored or enacted.

Reorganization Becomes Law

After the Lok Sabha debates concluded, state legislatures took up the SRC's report and passed non-binding resolutions commenting on it. When reorganization became law in fall 1956, the proportion of Indians living in a state where one language group was in the majority went from 35% in 1950 to 52% in 1956.

The reorganization largely fell along the lines the SRC recommended. Of 72 proposals for self-rule, 60 of them (83%) were settled as the SRC suggested. Nonetheless, legislators influenced the results. For example, when Home Minister Govind Ballahb Pant closed the 1955 debates, he noted many MPs' disapproval of the SRC's suggestion to merge Tripura and Assam. Pant implied the plan would not go forward in light of that opposition (Parliament of India, 1955, p. 1416). The SRC's recommendations for Himachal Pradesh, Bombay, and Telangana were also unpopular in the Lok Sabha and ultimately abandoned. The final shape of reorganization was also influenced by continued mass mobilization between the 1955 debates and the final legislation's passage (Windmiller, 1956).

Reorganization passed the Lok Sabha in a voice vote on the entire bill. Individual MPs' votes were not recorded and Congress MPs were not allowed to oppose or abstain. Debate transcripts are the only means to observe legislators' positions on an issue-by-issue basis.

Opposition to Autonomy in India

When did Lok Sabha members oppose autonomy? This section considers how general explanations for central resistance to ethnic self-rule might apply to India.

Central nationalism is the dominant frame in works on ethnoterritorial politics in India (Adeney, 2007; Brass, 1974; Capoccia, Sáez, & de Rooij, 2012; Singh, 2000; Wilkinson, 2008). For example, Gurharpal Singh (2000) argues that the Indian central government's typical resistance to regional minority autonomy is due to ethnic chauvinism:

> The process of nation- and state-building has created a sharp divide between the core and peripheral regions. This division is better understood if India is seen as an ethnic democracy where hegemonic and violent control is exercised over minorities, especially in peripheral regions. (35)

The literature points to both religious and the linguistic nationalism as bases for New Delhi's hostility to ethnic autonomy (Adeney, 2007; Chadda, 2002; Mawdsley, 2002; Tillin, 2013). Partition convinced Indian elites that religious autonomy leads to secession (Brass, 1974; Capoccia et al., 2012; Wilkinson, 2008). For example, one Congress MP argued against the proposal for Jharkhand state by saying it threatened to become a 'Christianistan' (Parliament of India, 1955, p. 636).

Congress leadership also championed linguistic unity. Central ministries were developing and promoting Modern Standard Hindi (MSH) throughout the north of the country. MSH was meant to eclipse dozens of existing languages that linguists classify into two large categories: Eastern and Western Hindi.[3] MSH is based on Western Hindi. The central nationalists' goal was for MSH to replace English as the language of government business throughout India (Kumar, 2000).

Institutional Inclusion

Ethnic minority inclusion in the central government can be a countervailing force against central nationalism. In India in the 1950s, the preeminence of the Congress Party allowed central elites to coopt regional leaders into the political process through a mix of favors and coercion (Weiner, 1967; Wilkinson, 2000). Histories of state reorganization show that the Congress leadership gave some favoritism to its electoral strongholds (Adeney, 2007; Lacina, 2017). Congress MPs may likewise have been more receptive to autonomy demands coming from parts of the country that had a strong INC presence.

Economic Resources

If the center was evaluating potential states in terms of their likely public revenues, it would have cared about the size of the hypothetical state's economy, the value of the natural resources there, and the efficiency of tax collection. These factors determined public revenues which, in turn, determined how economically self-sufficient a region could be if it were sovereign and how much its hoarding of resources might damage the center.

The SRC and other central elites did not voice concern over rich states hoarding revenues. As noted above, the Indian central government manages most tax collection. A state government cannot withhold resources simply by setting low tax rates. State competition for capital investment was of little concern in the 1950s because India had extensive central planning of the economy. The national government controlled most mobile capital.

The SRC did argue that tax revenues collected in a state should cover the administrative costs of state government. Mohanlal Saksena, a Congress MP, argued that creating too many states would lead to a shortfall in development spending:

> We must have sufficient money for development expenditure. A lot of money is being spent on Rajpramukhs and Governors [state-level appointees] and the maintenance of their staff and other paraphernalia. You are going to have in every State High Courts and a Public Service Commission. You are going to have a separate Inspector General for police and all that. (Parliament of India, 1955, p. 811)

If self-financing was a goal, central elites should have preferred creating states in rich areas rather than poorer areas. That preference is contrary to the expectation in the cross-national literature.

Regional Rivalry

There were regional stakes at play in Indian reorganization. MPs' constituents could benefit from becoming part of an ethnic majority at the state level, for reasons explained above. MPs endorsed autonomy proposals that would include their constituents in boundaries where they would become linguistic majorities. MPs' constituents might also benefit in a small way if a new state elsewhere was dominated by their coethnics. That state's official language and reservation system would be hospitable.

On the other hand, an MP's constituents were the losers of autonomy proposals that would turn them into ethnic minorities at the state level. A state government can exclude ethnic minorities from public services. An MP's constituents were also somewhat worse off if neighboring states were dominated by a different ethnic group rather than coethnics or a multiethnic coalition. New states where another ethnic group dominated were likely to privilege that group and become less attractive as destinations for migration.

By contrast, ordinary Indians had a low personal stake in the autonomy claims in distant regions of the federation. Both houses of the Indian parliament are apportioned by population and therefore creating new states would not change states' relative power in the legislature. The financial costs of a new state's government apparatus were small on a per capita basis. The cost of encouraging further autonomy demands was abstract and uncertain to materialize. The comparatively low stakes of out-of-region autonomy movements suggest MPs were less likely to oppose a proposal that dealt with another region of India as opposed to an out-group proposal from their own region.

Violence

Finally, scholarship on ethnoterritorial autonomy in India portrays these measures as reluctant central concessions designed to prevent or end violence (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2000). There was pro-autonomy violence in multiple regions of India between 1950, when the constitution came into effect, and the Lok Sabha's debates in 1955. Below, I check whether MPs responded to that violence with changed support for autonomy.

Dataset and Variables

This section describes a dataset of MP/autonomy proposal pairs that I use to analyze central elites' opposition to ethnic self-rule.[4] There were 72 proposals for ethnic self-rule in the SRC's report. Each of the 266 MPs who gave a speech or statement is paired with each of the 72 proposals.[5] Most MPs referred to specific proposals in the SRC report and spoke for or against them. Others called for all of the proposals in the SRC's report to be resolved in favor of greater ethnic autonomy. A few MPs indicated that they supported the status quo. For each MP/proposal dyad, I coded a dummy variable for whether the MP opposed this petition for ethnic autonomy. The variable is coded as a 1 if the MP spoke or wrote against a proposal for self-rule and a 0 if the MP was in favor. If an MP did not

mention the issue or mentioned it in a neutral manner, the dependent variable is coded as missing.[6]

As noted above, the Lok Sabha had only one voice vote on reorganization and Congress MPs were obliged to vote with the government. The debate structure did not incentivise strategic misrepresentation. Thus, MPs' statements in the Lok Sabha debates probably represented their sincere positions on the issues.

Hindu and Hindi Nationalism Versus Partisan Inclusion

Did MPs oppose linguistic or religious minority autonomy? Did such opposition come from MPs representing Hindi and Hindu majority constituencies?

If religious nationalism motivated opposition to autonomy, these patterns should be evident:

Hypothesis 1a: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for areas where a majority of the population was from national religious minorities. (i.e. non-Hindus)

Hypothesis 1b: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for areas where a majority of the population was from national religious minorities (i.e. non-Hindus) if they represented Hindu-majority constituencies.

I coded a 0/1 variable named *Minority religion autonomy proposal* that indicates whether less than 50% of the population in a proposed autonomous area was Hindu.[7] For each MP, I code a *Hindu constituency* dummy, indicating whether 50% or more of the MP's constituency was Hindu. Constituency make-up can be more reliably measured than MPs' own identities. Studies of the Lok Sabha suggest that MPs' religious and ethnic identities largely correspond to the majority group in their constituency (Bhargava, 2007; Chandra, 2004; Galanter, 1979).

To study linguistic nationalism, I coded similar variables to indicate a proposal for non-Hindi area autonomy called *Minority language autonomy proposal*. I also note whether an MP was representing a *Hindi constituency*.[8] For coding purposes, 'Hindi' is equated with the multiple languages classified by linguists as forms of Western Hindi, the languages most closely related to Modern Standard Hindi. The literature on central nationalism suggests that:

Hypothesis 1c: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for areas where a majority of the population was from national linguistic minorities. (i.e. non-Hindi speakers)

Hypothesis 1d: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for areas where a majority of the population was from national linguistic minorities (i.e. non-Hindi speakers) if they represented Hindu-majority constituencies.

All of the Hindi-majority proposal areas in the data were also Hindu-majority, although the reverse does not hold. Because all Hindi-majority areas were also Hindu-majority, statistical models cannot include the religious and linguistic variables at the same time.

The 0/1 variables for religion and language are easy to interpret. In the appendix, I repeat my analysis with continuous measures of the religious or linguistic composition of

proposed autonomous areas and parliamentary constituencies (Table A9). The results are similar to what is reported in the main text.

Groups that were included in the ruling coalition may have faced less opposition to their demands:

Hypothesis 1e: MPs were less likely to oppose autonomy for areas where the INC had received a larger share of the vote in recent national elections.

Hypothesis 1f: INC MPs were less likely to oppose autonomy for areas where the INC had received a larger share of the vote in recent national elections.

Congress vote share in proposal area is the INC's vote share in the 1951 Lok Sabha elections in the proposed autonomous area. *Congress MP* is a dummy variable that takes a value of one for members of parliament from the INC.

Relative Development

Another account of government resistance to ethnic autonomy holds that central actors resist self-rule for relatively wealthy regions and for regions with abundant natural resources. Regions that have larger markets and larger public revenues have more incentive to seek autonomy and to block redistribution among states.

Hypothesis 2a: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for relatively wealthy areas.

Operationalisations of this argument in the literature include the region's share of a country's total economy or total taxable resource base (Sambanis & Milanovic, 2014), and regional per capita income relative to national per capita income (Bakke & Wibbels, 2006; Cederman et al., 2011). Creating similar measures for autonomy proposals would require data on domestic production disaggregated below the state-level. Such per capita development data would allow estimates of the total size of the economy in proposed autonomous areas and would be directly correlated to likely future tax revenues. Economists have shown that tax collection efficiency in India is best in areas with high income per capita (Rao & Singh, 2005).

Fine grained GDP measures are not available for India in the 1950s. In fact, the SRC emphasized that it did not have the data necessary to calculate per capita income or tax revenues in hypothetical new states. The SRC's discussion of the economies of reorganized states was instead based on population, population density, and natural resources (State Reorganisation Commission, 1955, Chapters IV, VI, XIX).

In the main analysis, I use relative urbanization as a proxy for economic modernization, improving on the SRC's reliance on population density. The variable *Developed area* takes the value of one for proposed autonomous territories where the urbanization rate was higher than the national urbanization rate (Central Statistics Office and Reserve Bank of India, 2012). Roughly one-third of the autonomy proposals in the data concerned areas with urbanization rates above the national average. Controlling for population, relatively high rates of urbanization indicate that a proposed autonomous area was a larger portion of the country's economy and was likely to produce a larger amount of tax revenue.

The appendix considers a variety of alternative strategies. First, I consider both non-relative measures of urbanization and a continuous measure of relative urbanization (Table A10). I also measure relative development based on population density, literacy rates, or rates of non-agricultural employment (Table A11). Table A12 considers the total size of the economy in a proposed autonomous area rather than development levels.

A second argument holds that the center resists autonomy for areas where oil or mineral resources were being extracted.

> Hypothesis 2b: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for areas with natural resource endowments.

Oil or mineral resources in proposal area is coded as a one if any of the following were being produced in the proposed autonomous territory: oil, copper, coal, zinc, lead, gold, or diamonds (Gilmore, Gleditsch, Lujala, & Rød, 2005; IndiaStat, 2013; Lujala, Rød, & Thieme, 2007). India has very limited oil and mineral resources. Any area with this kind of production is relatively resource rich.

Regressions in the appendix interact development or natural resources in MPs' constituencies with the economic status of proposed autonomous regions. I do not find evidence that MPs responded differently to autonomy proposals depending on the economic status of their own region (Table A13).

India's Regional Rivalries

Indian federalism rewards state-level ethnic majorities and penalizes state-level minorities. As a result, MPs pushed for their own constituents' autonomy proposals but opposed claims from rival regional ethnic groups.

> Hypothesis 3a: MPs were least likely to oppose ethnic autonomy for their own constituents.

> Hypothesis 3b: MPs were more likely to oppose autonomy for their constituents' non-coethnics if a proposal came from their region compared to a non-coethnic proposal from another region.

Testing these hypotheses requires determining whether an MP's constituency is in the same region as an autonomy proposal and whether the constituency and proposed autonomous area are ethnically similar. I code an autonomy petition as 'in-region' relative to a particular MP if that proposal would have changed the borders or government of (i) the MP's state or (ii) a state the MP's constituency was slated to join.[9]

Consider the first example in Table 1, a proposal to move the Malabar district from Madras state to Travancore-Cochin state. I code an MP/Malabar proposal dyad as 'in-region' if the MP was elected from Madras, the state where Malabar was in 1955, or elected from Travancore-Cochin. All other MPs are 'out-of-region' with respect to this proposal for Malabar. The second example is the case of Tripura, which was a centrally-governed state under the 1950 constitution and whose Bengali majority sought greater autonomy in the form of an elected state government. The SRC instead suggested that Tripura and Assam merge. The Tripura demand for self-rule is in-region for MPs elected

from Tripura or Assam. For MPs elected from states other than Tripura and Assam, this proposal was outside of their region.

After sorting MP/proposal dyads in terms of shared region, I identify coethnicity. Like the in-region/out-of-region distinction, an MP's constituency is coethnic with respect to some petitions for self-rule but not others. An MP represents 'coethnic' constituents if a proposal grants autonomy to the same ethnolinguistic group that was the majority in the MP's constituency. An MP represents 'non-coethnic' constituents relative to a proposal for giving self-rule to any ethnolinguistic group that was not the majority among the MP's constituents. I determine coethnicity based on language because the autonomy proposals put before the SRC were almost uniformly stated in terms of linguistic identities.

Returning to the examples in Table 1, MPs have coethnic constituents relative to the Malabar proposal if the MP represented a majority Malayala-speaking district. MPs represented coethnics of the Tripura proposers if their constituents were majority Bengali. Coethnics were not necessarily in the same region. For example, in Tripura's case, most Bengali-majority constituencies were in the out-of-region state of West Bengal.

Sorting MP/proposal dyads by regional and ethnic alignment produces four combinations: (1) *Constituency in proposal region and coethnic*, (2) *Constituency in proposal region but not coethnic*, (3) out-of-region and coethnic, and (4) out-of-region and non-coethnic. The third category, out-of- region and coethnic, has relatively few cases. In the analysis to come, I combine the third and fourth categories, considering all out-of-region MPs as a group. The resulting variable is labeled *Constituency outside proposal region*.[10]

The first category—*Constituency in proposal region and coethnic*—represents cases in which the MP's constituents were the main proponents of autonomy. MPs would be least likely to oppose autonomy in these circumstances (H3a). Parliamentarians representing in-region, non-coethnic constituencies would be the most opposed to autonomy (H3b). Therefore, I expect more opposition to autonomy when a proposal/MP dyad falls into the *Constituency in proposal region but not coethnic* category compared to the *Constituency outside proposal region* category.

Pro-autonomy Violence

Finally, I record whether there had been pro-autonomy violence in support of a proposal. I use violence data from the *Times of India*. I matched violent events with the relevant autonomy proposals in the SRC's report and considered only militancy by supporters of these proposals. The result is a dummy variable indicating whether there was pre-debate, pro-autonomy violence related to each of the proposals in my dataset. I find such violence related to thirteen of 72 proposals (18%).

The cross-national literature makes conflicting predictions about whether pro-autonomy violence increases or decreases the probability of the government conceding autonomy. The dominant view in accounts of India is that the central government tends to grant autonomy in reaction to militancy. Hypothesis 4 reflects that conventional wisdom.

> Hypothesis 4: MPs were less likely to oppose autonomy in cases of pro-autonomy violence.

The empirical analysis will reveal whether the correlation between violence and MP opposition to autonomy was negative, positive, or ambiguous.

Model Set-Up

I now proceed with statistical analysis of the debates data using ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions.[11] The unit of analysis is an MP/autonomy proposal dyad and the outcome is opposition by the MP to that autonomy proposal, a 0/1 variable. Despite the binary dependent variable, I use OLS so that I can estimate models that include fixed effects (dummy variables) for each MP and, in some models, fixed effects for each autonomy demand. Even with a large number of fixed effects, OLS produces unbiased estimates of coefficients on other variables. Non-linear models, such as logistic regression, are biased in such cases.

Fixed effects are useful because the autonomy schemes before parliament and the MPs reacting to those schemes varied on so many dimensions. Using MP fixed effects means that the regressions compare a particular MP's stances on various proposals, as opposed to comparing across different MPs. The fixed effects average out an MP's general stance on autonomy.[12]

Proposal fixed effects account for qualitative differences between autonomy demands. Consider the examples in Table 1. The Malabar proposal implied moving a district between states while the Tripura proposal would convert a centrally-ruled area into a state. MPs might have been more opposed to moving borders than to creating new states or vice versa. Proposal fixed effects compare reactions to each issue separately. The downside of the proposal fixed effects is that they can only be used with variables that are not constant for a particular proposal. Proposal features drop out but the interaction terms between MP and proposal characteristics can be estimated.

Use of fixed effects also means some models contain interaction terms without including one or both of the components of that term. For example, a model with MP fixed effects could use the interaction term *Hindu constituency * Minority religion proposal* and the variable *Minority religion autonomy proposal*. It would not include a variable for *Hindu constituency* which is instead captured in the MP fixed effects. The coefficient on *Minority religion autonomy proposal* estimates whether proposals from religious minorities were opposed more often. The coefficient on *Hindu constituency * Minority religion proposal* estimates whether that opposition was especially strong among MPs representing Hindu-majority districts. A model with MP and proposal fixed effects could include the interaction term (*Hindu constituency * Minority religion proposal*) but not the variables *Minority religion autonomy proposal* or *Hindu constituency*. These terms would be captured by the proposal and MP fixed effects, respectively. The interpretation of the interaction term would be unchanged.

In regressions without proposal fixed effects, I control for several features of autonomy demands that are correlated with ethnic autonomy and ethnic violence in cross-national studies. I measure distance to the capital (*Distance to New Delhi (Ln km)*), the total population in the proposal's region (*Ln population of proposed autonomous area*), and the autonomy seekers' population share in the proposal area (*Population share of autonomy-seeking group*).[13]

Why Did MPs Oppose Autonomy?

Table 2 analyzes the Indian Lok Sabha's debate on federal reorganization to investigate why central elites oppose ethnic autonomy. The table reports four OLS models of MP opposition to ethnoterritorial autonomy, all of which include MP fixed effects. Model 1 includes proposal characteristics and characteristics of MP/proposal dyads. Model 2 adds proposal fixed effects to the specification in Model 1. Variables for characteristics of proposals

Table 2. OLS regression models of MPs' opposition to ethnic territorial autonomy proposals

	Expectation	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Proposal characteristics:					
Minority religion autonomy proposal	+	0.40**			
		(0.12)			
Minority language autonomy proposal	+			−0.11**	
				(0.035)	
Congress vote share in proposal area	−	−0.35**		−0.37**	
		(0.13)		(0.13)	
Developed area, i.e. higher urbanization than average	+	−0.084**		−0.073**	
		(0.019)		(0.019)	
Oil or mineral resources in proposal area	+	−0.13**		−0.11**	
		(0.018)		(0.018)	
Pro-autonomy violence	−	−0.060**		0.021	
		(0.022)		(0.020)	
Distance to New Delhi (Ln km)		−0.056**		−0.048**	
		(0.0081)		(0.0091)	
Ln population of proposed autonomous area		−0.020*		−0.036**	
		(0.0084)		(0.0085)	
Population share of autonomy-seeking group		−0.19**		−0.16**	
		(0.032)		(0.032)	
MP/proposal dyad characteristics:					
Hindu constituency * Minority religion proposal	+	−0.15	−0.19		
		(0.12)	(0.11)		
Hindi constituency * Minority language proposal	+			−0.12	−0.14*
				(0.076)	(0.066)
Congress MP * Congress vote share in proposal area	−	0.23	0.13	0.24	0.14
		(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Constituency in proposal region but not coethnic	+	0.27**	0.25**	0.27**	0.25**
		(0.028)	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.026)
Constituency outside proposal region	+	0.11**	0.11**	0.12**	0.11**
		(0.027)	(0.025)	(0.028)	(0.025)
Proposal fixed effects		No	Yes	No	Yes
MP fixed effects		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations		2458	2458	2458	2458
Adjusted R-squared		0.47	0.59	0.46	0.59
Additional hypothesis tests:[†] Constituency in proposal region but not coethnic = Constituency outside proposal region	+	45**	44**	43**	43**

[†]F statistics and significance of two-tailed tests with a null hypothesis of equal coefficients.
*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$.

drop out of the model, leaving only the MP/proposal dyad characteristics. Models 3 and 4 repeat the estimations using linguistic rather than religious identity variables.

Central Nationalism: Religion and Language

Indian central elites were hostile to religious minority (non-Hindu) autonomy demands (H1a). Non-Hindu area autonomy proposals were more frequently opposed than proposals

from Hindu-majority areas. The coefficient on *Minority religion autonomy proposal* in Model 1 implies 40% greater levels of opposition to demands from religious minorities.

Contrary to expectations, however, MPs from non-Hindu areas were as averse to minority religious autonomy as MPs from Hindu areas. If MPs representing Hindu-majority areas were especially opposed to religious minority autonomy, there would be a positive coefficient on the variable *Hindu constituency*Minority religion proposal* (H1b). Instead, in both Models 1 and 2, the interaction term for MPs from Hindu constituencies and non-Hindu area autonomy proposals has an unexpected negative sign and is statistically insignificant.

Figure 1 presents this information in another way. The points represent the difference in opposition to autonomy comparing a minority religious area to a Hindu-majority area, plotted with 95% confidence intervals. The circle marks the predicted increase in opposition among MPs representing constituencies without a Hindu majority. These MPs had 40% higher levels of opposition to minority religious appeals compared to Hindu appeals. The square indicates the difference for MPs who represented a Hindu-majority area. They also opposed minority appeals more often than Hindu appeals. However, that difference was 25%, smaller than the gap for MPs without a majority Hindu constituency. The difference between MPs representing Hindus and MPs representing religious minorities (25% versus 40%) is also statistically insignificant.[14]

In Model 3, the dummy variable for autonomy proposals from minority language (non-Hindi) areas has a negative and statistically significant coefficient. That result is contrary to the intuition that MPs would be more likely to reject proposals from linguistic minorities (H1c). Instead, non-Hindi areas' autonomy proposals faced 11% *lower* rates of opposition.

Even MPs representing Hindi areas opposed minority linguistic demands less than Hindi area demands. The interaction term *Hindi constituency * Minority language proposal* is
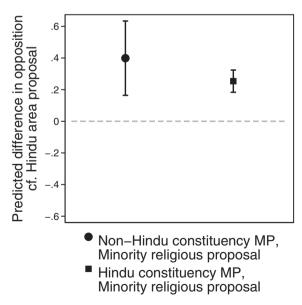

Figure 1. Predicted differences in opposition to autonomy based on the religious make-up of proposal area and MP constituency. Based on Model 1 (Table 2) and plotted with 95% confidence intervals

negatively signed in both Models 3 and 4 (contra H1d). Figure 2 shows the difference in opposition to minority language autonomy relative to Hindi autonomy as predicted by Model 3. The circle is the difference in opposition among MPs representing non-Hindi constituencies. The square is the difference in opposition for MPs with Hindi constituencies. MPs representing Hindi majority constituencies were somewhat less likely than other MPs to oppose autonomy for linguistic minorities. In the discussion section below, I explain this result by arguing that nationalists were especially worried about language identities that crosscut Hindi rather than languages that were unrelated to Hindi.

To summarize the nationalism variables, MPs rejected minority religious areas' autonomy demands. However, that opposition was no stronger among MPs representing Hindu constituencies compared to MPs from minority constituencies. MPs did not oppose autonomy for minority language areas, whether or not they represented Hindi-speaking constituents. In the discussion below, I suggest modifications to the logic of nationalism to explain these results.

Congress and Inclusion

Alignment with the ruling party eased the way for autonomy proposals (H1e). The INC's vote share in a proposal area has a negative and statistically significant coefficient in Models 1 and 3. Figure 3 shows the substantive meaning of this relationship (based on Model 1). The circle gives the predicted difference in non-Congress MP opposition to an autonomy proposal coming from an area where the INC received no votes in the 1951 election versus an area where the INC received 100% of the vote (an uncontested election). A
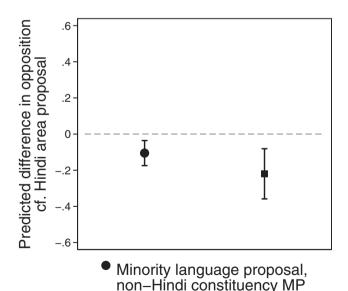

Figure 2. Predicted differences in opposition to autonomy based on the linguistic make-up of proposal area and MP constituency. Based on Model 3 (Table 2) and plotted with 95% confidence intervals
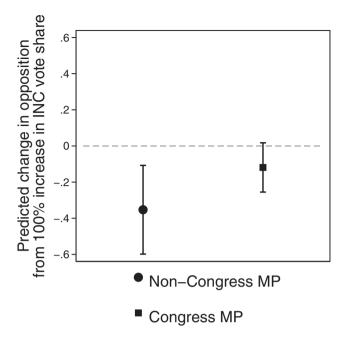
Figure 3. Predicted differences in opposition to autonomy based on Congress Party strength in proposal area and MP partisanship. Based on Model 1 (Table 2) and plotted with 95% confidence intervals

proposal from an area that voted for the INC faced 35% less opposition than an autonomy proposal from an area where the INC had no support.

The diminished opposition to autonomy was similar among Congress MPs (contra H1f). In Models 1 and 3, the variable *Congress MP*Congress vote share in proposal area* has an unexpected positive (but insignificant) sign. The net result is represented by the square point in Figure 3. Congress MPs were 12% less likely to oppose autonomy for a Congress stronghold compared to an area where Congress did not have electoral support but this gap is statistically insignificant. I cannot reject the null hypothesis that Congress MPs were indifferent to INC vote share in autonomy-seeking areas. The difference between opposition MPs' and Congress MPs' reactions to INC vote share (i.e. −35% versus −12%) is also statistically insignificant.

The partisan variables suggest minority inclusion in central power paved the way to autonomy. However, Congress MPs' favoritism toward copartisan proposals was not necessarily the mechanism.

Development and Resources

Contrary to predictions, MPs were less likely to oppose autonomy for well-off areas (contra H2a) and areas with more natural resources (contra H2b).

According to Model 1, MPs were 8.4% less likely to oppose autonomy proposals from relatively developed areas of India. In Model 3, the predicted decrease in opposition is 7.3%. These results suggests unwillingness to grant autonomy to poorer regions. In the

appendix, I explore the robustness of that correlation. The negative and significant relationship drops away or flips signs in models where a non-relative or continuous variable is used to measure development (Table A10) or if population density or non-agrarian employment is used to measure relative development (Table A11).[15] The total size of the economy in a proposal area is a statistically significant negative correlate of MP opposition to autonomy (Table A12). MPs' reactions to autonomy for relatively rich or poor regions did not differ based on the economic status of their constituencies (Table A13). Combined, the results in the main text and the robustness checks imply that MPs were either indifferent to the relative wealth of proposal areas or favored autonomy proposals for richer areas over poorer ones.

MPs were less opposed to autonomy for areas with natural resource endowments. In Model 1, the reduction in opposition for resource rich areas is 13%. In Model 3, the reduction is 11%. This correlation is consistently negative and significant across a variety of robustness checks. There is no interaction between natural resources in the MPs' constituency and in the proposal area (Table A13). MPs were more opposed to autonomy for resource poor areas, regardless of the resources of their own area.

Regional Rivalries

The variables capturing regional rivalry are two dummies characterizing MP/proposal dyads in terms of regional and ethnic alignment. The omitted category is in-region, coethnic MP/proposal dyads—i.e. dyads in which the MP's constituents are part of the ethnic group seeking autonomy.

MPs were least opposed to autonomy for their own constituents (H3a). The reference (excluded) category in Models 1–4 captures those cases. Both included categories have positive and statistically significant coefficients, which means greater opposition. As expected, MPs were least opposed to their own constituents' ethnic autonomy.

The second regional rivalry hypothesis above holds that MPs opposed non-coethnic appeals from their own region more than appeals from other regions (H3b). Testing that hypothesis requires a comparison between the two included variables: one for MPs representing in-region, noncoethnic constituencies and the other for out-of-region MPs. The regional rivalry logic suggests higher rates of opposition in the former category. In all four models, an MP was at least twice as likely to oppose autonomy for in-region, non-coethnic groups as to oppose an out-of-region proposal. F-tests at the bottom of Table 2 reject the null hypothesis that the coefficients on these two regional rivalry variables are equal.

Figure 4 presents the regional rivalry results from Model 1. The points represent the difference in opposition when an MP considered a local, coethnic proposal compared to other proposals. The circle is opposition to in-region, non-coethnic proposals, which is 27% greater than opposition to own constituents' self-rule. The square is the difference between out-of-region proposals and own constituents' self-rule. Opposition to the former was 11% more frequent. I can reject the hypothesis that MPs were equally opposed to in-region, non-coethnic proposals and out-of-region proposals. In the various robustness tests reported in the appendix, this difference between regional rivalry variables remains large and statistically significant. MPs' strongest opposition was against rival regional proposals.
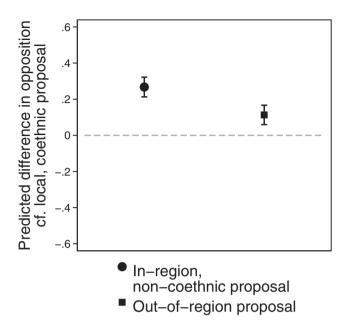
Figure 4. Predicted differences in opposition to autonomy based on regional and ethnic alignment of proposal area and MP constituencies. Based on Model 1 (Table 2) and plotted with 95% confidence intervals

Militancy

How did legislators react to pro-autonomy violence? In Model 1, violence is associated with 6% less opposition to autonomy. However, in Model 3, which uses language variables rather than religion variables, the sign on the pro-autonomy violence variable is flipped. Violence is associated with 2% more opposition to autonomy and is no longer statistically significant. The ambiguous results in Models 1 and 3 echo the ambiguity in the literature on this point.

In the appendix, I investigate whether violence was associated with more or less support for autonomy in various subsets of cases. If MPs were particularly opposed to some demands, they might have been less conciliatory in the face of violence. I model inter- actions of violence with relative development, natural resources, religious identity, and regional rivalries.[16]

The interaction between violence and regional rivalry variables reinforces the conclusion that MPs were most opposed to rival regional proposals. Violence nudged MPs to accept out-of-region autonomy proposals but not regional rivals' demands. The interactions with violence also underline partisan incentives. Congress MPs moved in favor of auton- omy after pro-statehood violence in strong INC areas but not after agitation in areas where the INC was electorally weak.

Discussion

What can we learn from these findings that might be applicable to the comparative literature on ethnoterritorial politics?

First, regional rivalries should be considered as explanations for central reluctance to create autonomous zones. Indian MPs backed their constituents' autonomy proposals. They opposed rival proposals from their home region. In comparative scholarship on ethnic autonomy, regional politics is overshadowed by central nationalism and political economy. Yet, many well-known conflicts over ethnic autonomy have involved clashes between regional interests: Northern Ireland, northern Sri Lanka, Tibet, and Darfur are examples.

Regional politics help make sense of the anomalous results on the religious nationalism variables. Like other studies of India, I find that central elites were especially opposed to autonomy for religious minorities. Surprisingly, this opposition appears at about the same rate among MPs representing Hindu and non-Hindu constituencies. Examining the data, the MPs who both represented non-Hindu constituencies and opposed minority religious autonomy were disproportionately from the Punjab region. One of the proposals put to the SRC was to divide that region, creating a state with a Sikh religious majority and Punjabi linguistic majority. Hindus in the proposed new state were largely opposed to the division, as was the national Congress leadership. The Punjab Congress party was at odds over the proposal because it was competing for votes with both Hindu nationalists and Sikh religious parties. Congress MPs representing Sikh constituencies in Punjab account for many instances of an MP from a non-Hindu area opposing non-Hindu autonomy. Meanwhile, many southern MPs endorsed ethnoterritorial autonomy everywhere, including division of Punjab.[17] Southern MPs often had overwhelmingly Hindu constituents but religious politics was less salient there. Southerners were also the most committed to linguistic federalism. Thus, the variable for religious differences is uncorrelated with MPs' views on autonomy because religious differences were more salient in some parts of India than others. Even in regions where religious differences were fraught, the logic of nationalism competed with considerations like local party competition.

Linguistic and religious cleavages are usually at least somewhat cross-cutting in large countries. Nigeria and China are examples of countries where regional and religious autonomy become entangled with questions of national language. The politics of autonomy in such areas may parallel some of the complexities of India's experience.

The investigation of nationalism produced another anomaly with respect to linguistic identity. Contrary to theory, MPs supported linguistic minority autonomy more often than they supported Hindi areas' autonomy. MPs representing Hindi-majority constituencies were the most likely to prefer minority appeals over Hindi appeals. Reading the debates suggests that concern over fissures in the Hindi identity explains these results. Linguistic reorganization was most popular in southern India, where the major languages are unrelated to Hindi. Many Hindi-speaking nationalists saw reorganization as a concession to southern opinion. They were resigned to reorganization there but feared autonomy demands infecting their states (Tillin, 2013). Autonomy for languages in the Hindi family threatened to divide the population that the government was trying to turn into a Hindi bloc.

India is typical of post-colonial countries in that its largest linguistic identity, Modern Standard Hindi, is a recent political project. In these settings, central elites fear fissures in that bloc. Such fears generate antipathy toward autonomy demands from communities that are supposed to be subsumed by the dominant identity. This logic could explain why measures of ethnic difference do not have a clear correlation with ethnoterritorial conflict in cross-national studies.

The results also provide insight into the role of minority inclusion in central government, a strong correlate of ethnic violence cross-nationally. In the Lok Sabha, autonomy

proposals coming from areas where the ruling INC was electorally strong were greeted more favorably. Unexpectedly, that favorable reaction was present even among MPs who were not in the Congress. Maybe opposition MPs accepted proposals from Congress areas because they expected those proposals would be successful regardless. Perhaps opposition MPs believed that the strength of the Congress leadership would prevent INC strongholds from becoming secessionist. These after-the-fact explanations merit further research.

The findings challenge economic models of ethnoterritorial politics. Concern over the financial viability of autonomous subunits eclipsed concerns about relatively wealthy areas being autonomous. That may have been due to India's unique political economy, such as its centralized revenue collection or limited natural resource endowments. Future work should specify conditions under which a central government prefers autonomy for poor areas over rich areas or vice versa.

Elite Preferences and Autonomy

Existing studies have correlated many features of countries and ethnic groups with whether territorial autonomy movements emerge, deploy militancy, or succeed. Yet, there is a dearth of knowledge about how actors within governments react to autonomy claims. Understanding the influences on elites' preferences toward minority territorial claims clarifies the origins of conflict.

Analysis of the legislative debates over India's 1956 reorganization into a quasi-ethnic federation suggests new avenues for research. MPs' opposition to ethnic autonomy stemmed from regional ethnic rivalries, which are given little weight in the literature. Although MPs resisted religious minorities' autonomy, that relationship was complicated by regional politics and partisanship. MPs opposed relatively poor areas becoming autonomous instead of fearing rich regions' self-rule. Finally, the MPs opposed autonomy demands that exposed faultlines in Hindi as a political project. Study of nationalism and ethnoterritorial conflict should incorporate anxiety about shoring up the dominant identity.

Supplemental Data

Supplemental data for this article can be accessed at https://doi.org/10.1080/17449057.2020.1734900.

Notes

1. 'Tribes' are hereditary groups. 'Caste' refers to two concepts. *Varnas* are tiers in the ritual hierarchy and not specific to an ethnolinguistic group. *Jatis* are ethnicity-specific. Government reservations are based on jatis. Both tribal and caste schedules can be tailored to favor particular ethnicities.
2. The SRC's mandate did not extend to Jammu and Kashmir.
3. Eastern and Western Hindi do not have a common origin (Shapiro, 2003; Singh, 2000).
4. Summary statistics for all variables are in Table A1.
5. Information on MPs from Election Commission of India (2015).
6. Not taking a stance on a particular autonomy demand is similar to an abstention in roll call data. Poole and Rosenthal (1997) suggest abstention is correlated with indifference and uncontroversial issues. MPs who spoke in the Lok Sabha had a (loosely enforced) time limit, making it likely that not speaking on a particular autonomy proposal indicates indifference. My results are similar if all non-mentions are coded as cases of non-opposition (Table A8), except that MPs were especially unlikely to mention out-of-region autonomy proposals compared to in-region proposals.

7. Based on Central Statistics Office (1951) and Election Commission of India (1951).
8. Based on Central Statistics Office (1951); Grierson (1903); and Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner (2004).
9. Slated to join under the SRC's recommendations or a slightly modified version of those recommendations circulated by the Congress leadership prior to the Lok Sabha's debate. Given the Congress parliamentary majority, either plan might plausibly have been enacted. MPs needed to take the implications for their constituency into account.
10. Results are similar if these categories are kept separate (Table A14).
11. Cross-tabulations of key independent variables and MP opposition to autonomy are displayed in Tables A3–A6. Appendix Table A7 reports models using independent variables separately and without controls.
12. I present regressions without MP fixed effects in Table A16.
13. Appendix Tables A15 and A16 add another proposal characteristic: whether the SRC recommended self-rule. That variable is tested alone and in interaction with membership in the Congress party. Including an SRC recommendation variable could disguise the importance of factors that the SRC and MPs considered in forming their opinions. For example, after including the SRC variable, the natural resources dummy has a positive and insignificant correlation with MP opposition to autonomy. The non-significant result suggests the SRC and MPs had similar preferences with regard to resource rich areas.
14. Hindu right parties were less electorally important in India in the 1950s than they are today and had relatively few MPs. Hindu right MPs were more likely than other MPs to oppose religious minority autonomy. They were no more or less likely to oppose minority language proposals (Tables A15 and A16).
15. In Table A8 MPs' non-remarks are coded as lack of opposition. Economic development has a positive and statistically insignificant coefficient.
16. See pages A.19–A.25. There was no pro-autonomy violence in a Hindi-dominated area prior to the 1955 debates. Thus, it is not possible to model an interaction between language and violence.
17. E.g. Parliament of India (1955, pp. 63–64).

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