

From the Chair: Rethinking American Democracy

Adam Sheingate
Johns Hopkins University

I study democracies, or at least I thought I did.

As a scholar of the United States, the past three years have forced me to examine some basic assumptions I held about the character of American democracy. The election of Donald Trump in 2016 initiated a kind of stress test on the body politic. Thus far, the results are not good. Our political norms and institutions are not as robust as I thought, nor are the commitments to democratic principles as broad or as deep as I hoped.

My evolving understanding of American democracy has benefited greatly from the scholarship of this section, especially work on comparative politics. Recent developments in the United States are consistent with a process of democratic backsliding.¹ Increasingly, it seems, the country resembles other hybrid regimes that are nominally democratic but display the characteristics of authoritarianism.² At the same time, the illiberal tendencies of the Trump Administration are playing out in a particular institutional and historical context specific to the United States (especially regarding race). This sensibility to the importance of place combined with an appreciation for how political struggles reflect “larger historical processes that have analogues in cross-national experiences” is a distinguishing feature of our section’s work.³ ([continued on p. 3](#))

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¹ Nancy Bermeo, “On Democratic Backsliding,” *Journal of Democracy* 27 (2016), 5-19.

² Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

³ Robert C Lieberman, Suzanne Mettler, Thomas B. Pepinsky, Kenneth M. Roberts, and Richard Vallely, “The Trump Presidency and American Democracy: A Historical and Comparative Analysis,” *Perspectives on Politics* 17 (2019), 476.

Call for Nominations: 2019 Section Awards

J. David Greenstone Prize

An award for the best book in politics and history published in the last two calendar years

Award Committee:

David Bateman
Jessica Trounstine
Lisa Baldez

To nominate a book, please arrange to have a copy sent to each member of the award committee by March 1, 2020.

Mary Parker Follett Prize

An award for the best article on politics and history published in the last year

Award Committee:

Peter Swenson
Isabel Perera
William Adler

To nominate an article, please send an electronic copy to each member of the award committee by March 1, 2020.

Walter Dean Burnham Dissertation Award

An award for the best dissertation in politics and history in the last two calendar years

Award Committee:

Joe Lowndes
Didi Kuo
Jody Laporte

To nominate a dissertation, please send a copy to each member of the award committee by March 1, 2020, and arrange for a supportive letter from the advisor or another member of the dissertation committee.

Best Paper Award

An award for the best Politics and History paper presented at the previous annual meeting

Award Committee:

Patricia Strach
Quinn Mulroy
Kurt Weyland

To nominate a paper, please send an electronic copy to each member of the award committee by March 1, 2020.

Contact information for award committee members is available on the [Politics and History Section's page on the APSA website](#)

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an organized section of the

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CLIO is the biannual newsletter of the Politics & History section. It is edited by Shamira Gelbman, Associate Professor of Political Science, Wabash College, 301 W Wabash Ave., Crawfordsville, IN 47933.

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Section membership is \$10.00 annually for APSA members. Membership information is available on the APSA website, <http://www.apsanet.org>.

(Sheingate, [continued from p. 1](#)) Politics and History scholars offer great insight into the current political moment because democratic resilience is a temporal phenomenon concerning the sources of institutional durability and decay. The theoretical debates and conceptual advances of the past three decades afford us with a rich vocabulary to understand the unraveling of political orders. Our commitment to richly detailed empirical research enables us to identify how institutions persist, as well as how previously stable arrangements of authority gradually erode. Here, I summarize some of the work by section members (and those I think of as fellow-travelers) I find especially helpful for understanding the United States in a broader comparative-historical context.

Delayed Democracy

It is common to think of the United States as a mature democracy when, in fact, it is a country characterized by an ongoing and uneven process of democratization.¹ Assumptions of a uniformly liberal democracy overlook the coercive powers of the American state, limiting our ability to understand important aspects of the contemporary condition such the growth of mass incarceration. Research traditions based on “images of the American polity as a representative democracy” focus on questions of participation and interest group struggle rather than the instruments of social control—from policing to social welfare programs—that are the principal ways poor communities of color interact with the state.² From this perspective, U.S. policies regarding family separation and deportation are part of a long history of muscular state action against marginal populations that rely on racialized appeals to a white political base.³

Current U.S. immigration policies are also a reminder that political institutions establish boundaries of inclusion and exclusion that determine who has access to the rights of citizenship.⁴ Federalism looms especially large in this regard as an important institutional feature for understanding the United States in a broader comparative perspective. The gradual demise of authoritarian enclaves in the American South during the twentieth century illustrates how federalism perpetuated a racial caste system and shaped the paths of the Deep South states toward formal democratic rule. Approaching the United States as a late democratizer rather than a precocious one further prompts us to rethink our comparative referents, drawing our attention to Latin American rather than European trajectories of democratization.⁵

Informal Institutions and Democratic Norms

An important insight from scholarship on Latin American politics is that informal institutions play a critical role in the performance and durability of democratic regimes. In particular, informal institutions support key elements of democratic politics such as representation, accountability, and the rule of law. Where formal institutions are weak or ineffective, informal institutions can serve as an important bulwark of democratic stability.⁶

Scholars of U.S. politics have also noted the importance of informal rules and conventions. Norms operate in conjunction with formal institutions in ways that “embody and reconcile core democratic concerns” such

¹ David Bateman, *Disenfranchising Democracy: Constructing the Electorate in the United States, United Kingdom, and France* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

² Vesla Weaver and Joe Soss, “Learning from Ferguson: Welfare, Criminal Justice, and the Political Science of Race and Class,” in *The Double Bind: The Politics of Racial and Class Inequalities in the United States*, ed. Juliet Hooker and Alvin Tillery (Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, 2016), 94.

³ James Morone, *Hellfire Nation: The Politics of Sin in American History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004).

⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁵ Robert Mickey, *Paths Out of Dixie: The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America's Deep South, 1944-1972* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

⁶ Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky, “Introduction,” in *Informal Institutions and Democracy: Lessons from Latin America*, ed. Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 1-32.

as balancing majority rule and minority rights.⁷ Violations of these norms can have destabilizing effects, particularly in periods of widening polarization. This is because informal institutions operate as restraints on no-holds-barred political conflicts, preventing political competition from spiraling out of control.⁸ Erosion in the norms of restraint often accompanies regime breakdown--and why the deterioration of similar norms in the United States is so troubling.

Because historically oriented scholars are focused on the long *durée*, it is possible to trace the gradual evolution (and erosion) of democratic norms. Historical transgressions may be especially useful for understanding this process. Andrew Johnson violated 19th century proscriptions against demagogic appeals and presidential advocacy of a policy agenda (these became grounds for his impeachment). However, Johnson's transgressions contributed to long-term changes in American politics: today that same behavior is "a prescribed norm, not a deviant exercise."⁹ As we contemplate Trump's behavior in office, norm violations that establish precedents for future presidents take on particular relevance.

Ethno-Nationalism and Right-Wing Populism

The 2016 election laid bare a nativist strain that has long existed in American politics. However, the potent mixture of nativism, authoritarianism, and populism that fuels Trumpism is not unique to the United States. This is because right-wing populism is an extreme (and extremist) set of views common to most Western polities: a racialized view of political community, a belief in an ordered society, and a valorization of *vox populi*.¹⁰ Donald Trump's pledge to "build a wall" or "make America great again" resembles right-wing politicians elsewhere who focus on a trinity of issues—immigration, security, and corruption—to mobilize voters.

The growing appeal of right-wing populism also reflects a global economic transformation whose ripple effects are evident across Europe and the United States. Trump's supporters in parts of the Midwest have more in common with voters in the British Midlands than the wealthier precincts of Manhattan. This "global Trumpism" is the product of a common set of economic causes marked by de-industrialization and rising inequality.¹¹ It also reflects a resurgent nationalism that rejects neoliberal, technocratic elites who tout the benefits of free movement of people, capital, and goods. The unexpected victories for Brexit and Trump in 2016 reveal more than a failure of polling, they also highlight the cost of treating elements of a global phenomenon as isolated cases.

Democratic Careening

Democracy is not a story of steady advance, in the United States or elsewhere. Instead, democracies are frequently "careening," buffeted by competing impulses of democratic responsiveness and elite accountability.¹² The separation of powers may encourage ambition to check ambition, but it does not prevent elite collusion. High levels of political corruption fuel populist movements, but efforts to return power to the people often give rise to a charismatic leader. Democracies lurch back and forth between these Madisonian and Machiavellian poles; failed democracies deteriorate into their oligarchic and authoritarian alternatives.

Trump's rhetoric and the actions of his administration are understandable in terms of a populist-fueled contempt for a system many believe is corrupt. Equally understandable is the reaction to Trump as a demagogue whose actions call for a restoration of constitutional balance (see impeachment). Trump's attempts to push the boundaries and the capacity of the system to push back is indicative of democratic careening. Reassuring as this may be, one wonders whether this bandying back and

⁷ Julia Azari and Jennifer Smith, "Unwritten Rules: Informal institutions in Established Democracies," *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (2012), 49.

⁸ Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt. *How Democracies Die* (New York: Crown, 2018).

⁹ Jeffrey K. Tulis and Nicole Mellow, *Legacies of Losing in American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 186.

¹⁰ Cas Mudde, *On Extremism and Democracy in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2016).

¹¹ Mark Blyth, "Global Trumpism: Why Trump's victory was 30 years in the making and why it won't stop here," *Foreign Affairs*, November 15, 2016.

¹² Daniel Slater, "Democratic Careening," *World Politics* 65 (2013), 729–763.

forth will weaken the restraints that keep our politics from deteriorating into something less democratic. One of the “perils of presidentialism,” is that a separated system mixed with extreme polarization can undermine regime stability. Separate elections for the executive and legislative branches generate rival sources of democratic legitimacy as each lay claim to be the one, true voice of “the people.” Democracy becomes more fragile when ideologically polarized parties that map on to deep societal cleavages control different branches of government. As partisan conflicts turn into constitutional standoffs, presidents are tempted to push the boundaries of their unilateral authority even further.¹³

Enhancing the potential for unraveling is the fact that Trump’s political lodestar is a virulent ethno-nationalism that embraces white supremacy. Apart from the normative implications for American democracy, Trump’s political strategy is an accelerant to a U.S. party system polarizing along racial lines. As we approach the 2020 election, this takes on greater significance. Trump’s repeated claims of widespread election fraud is more than a rhetorical move to mobilize his base. It is part of a broader campaign to consolidate and protect Republican electoral gains through gerrymandering, restrictive voter registration rules, and overt voter suppression. These developments have deep historical roots to be sure, but they also raise important comparative questions concerning racial cleavages and democratic stability.

The End of American Politics?

As I noted before, norms, practices, and conventions loom large in explanations of the durability of democratic regimes. Especially important in this election year is a belief in the integrity of the electoral process and a

willingness to abide by the results. With the exception of the Civil War, elections have long been a source of stability in the American political system, especially when compared to shorter-lived democracies. Although a great deal separates today from the racial and sectional crisis of the 1850s, our tragic past is instructive. Once elections no longer served as a viable form of power sharing, the United States experienced one of the most catastrophic episodes in its history. Trump questioning the legitimacy of the electoral process combined with his willingness to invite and abide foreign meddling in our elections is a significant threat to American democracy. Indeed, a widespread belief on both the left and right that elections are no longer free or fair could be the spark that turns American politics more violent and decidedly less democratic.

Despite an increasingly polarized electorate and growing ethno-nationalist impulses, there are reasons to be hopeful. Organized protest against government policies, electoral success for the opposition party, and a steady supply of media criticism and satire are all hallmarks of a healthy democracy. Yet, a key question remains, what actually holds a large, diverse polity together (or not, as the U.S. Civil War reminds us)? Formulating an answer will require the continued efforts of our section members to advance comparative-historical research on the sources of democratic resilience, in the United States and elsewhere.

It is hyperbole to suggest we have reached the end of American politics, as we know it. However, the past three years have prompted a reexamination of our democracy. In this respect, there has been a transformation of American politics, at least as we study it.



¹³ Juan Linz, “The Perils of Presidentialism,” *The Journal of Democracy* 1 (1990), 51-69.

Section News

Summary of the 2019 Business Meeting | August 29, 2019 | Washington, DC

Nancy Bermeo called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. She noted that the section's membership has been rapidly growing, and the Politics & History is now the third-largest APSA section. This speaks volumes about the quality and importance of the section's work. She recognized the high quality of the section's APSA panels and introduced next year's program chairs: Lisa Blaydes and Eva Bertram.

Bermeo announced an update to the rules for the section's article award in light of new publishing technologies: articles are eligible for the award based on their formal date of publication in a journal rather than 'first look' or 'online first' availability dates.

Bermeo introduced a proposal to create a new award for the best Politics & History conference paper. She noted that this could serve junior scholars and others who are not well-networked well, and that it would entail the creation of a new award committee. A robust discussion ensued, as section members sought clarification and suggested possible rules for award eligibility and nomination procedures. It was proposed that a vote be taken to endorse creation of the new award and appointment of the first best paper award committee, which could subsequently formulate eligibility criteria. After further discussion, the vote was called and passed by acclamation.

Bermeo introduced the nominees for chair elect and council members. The slate was elected by acclamation.

Shamira Gelbman and Rob Mickey reported, respectively, on *Clio* and the section's financial health.

Kimberly Johnson announced that she, Marie Gottschalk, and Paul Frymer will be the new editors of *Studies in American Political Development*.

Suzanne Mettler reported that the section had sponsored a pre-conference short course on the topic of teaching introductory American politics in turbulent times. It was well attended by faculty representing a wide distribution of institution types and teaching experience.

Awards were presented to the winners of the Mary Parker Follett Prize, the Walter Dean Burnham Award, and the J. David Greenstone Prize.

Bermeo thanked the award committees and passed the gavel to Adam Sheingate. Sheingate thanked Bermeo for her leadership of the section and stated that he hopes to keep using the section as a vehicle to help emerging scholars.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Call for Papers: 2020 APSA Annual Meeting

September 10-13, 2020 | San Francisco, CA | Proposal Deadline: January 15, 2019

Program Chairs: Eva Bertram & Lisa Blaydes

The Politics and History Division invites panel and paper submissions on topics related to politics and history broadly conceived, including political development, state formation, and historical institutional analysis as well as research on the history of political ideologies and social movements. Panels and papers addressing theoretical and conceptual issues are welcome, as are empirical papers using qualitative and/or quantitative approaches to the study of history. The Division encourages submissions related to the conference theme of Democracy, Difference, and Destabilization, including papers focused on the development of and contestation over democratic political institutions and practices, as well as threats to democracy throughout history both in the United States and around the world. Marginalized groups are often the last to be fully incorporated into democratic polities and the first to suffer at the hands of anti-democratic movements. What lessons does history offer about the relationship between inclusive democratic institutions and the health of democracy? The Division particularly values work that makes interdisciplinary connections across the broad field of politics and history.



2018 Section Awards

Mary Parker Follett Prize for the Best Paper in Politics & History

The award committee, Jason Wittenberg (chair), Jennifer Dixon, and Nicole Mellow, presented the award to:

Peter Swenson for **“Misrepresented Interests: Business, Medicare, and the Making of the American Healthcare State”** in *Studies in American Political Development* 32: 1-23.

Amidst an impressive group of innovative articles, Swenson’s piece merits particular commendation for the depth of its historical contextualization and, as a direct result, its methodological significance and counterintuitive findings. Against conventional wisdom of unified business opposition to the welfare state, Swenson finds significant business support for the development of U.S. health care. His discovery of a disjuncture between the actual opinions of businesses and their representative organizations is methodologically significant, serving as a caution against the ways that our work as scholars can habitualize erroneous assumptions and inferential leaps. Though a challenge to the prevailing sense that capitalism is hostile to the welfare state, Swenson’s findings contribute to recent scholarship that shows majoritarian interests in the U.S. to be advanced primarily when they converge with the preferences of elite economic actors. For the depth of his historical research, the significance of the interpretations, and the importance of the topic, the committee is delighted to present this year’s award to Peter Swenson.

and an honorable mention to:

Shivaji Mukherjee for **“Colonial Origins of Maoist Insurgency in India: Historical Institutions and Civil War”** in *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62: 2232-2274.

Mukherjee’s piece stands out for documenting the importance of colonial legacies, in particular British indirect rule, for patterns of Maoist insurgency. Both the article’s methods – which include a novel instrument and an original dataset – and its argument relating a contemporary outcome to a decision made deep in the past exemplify the section’s emphasis on the importance for politics of understanding history. At the same time, it identifies an important omitted variable in studies of civil war onset.

Walter Dean Burnham Dissertation Award

The award committee, Margaret Weir (chair), Jason Brownlee, and Hillel Soifer, presented the award to:

Matthias Dilling (*Oxford University*) for **“Organizational Choices and Organizational Adaptability in Political Parties: The Case of Western European Christian Democracy”**

This dissertation examines a topic of critical importance: the ability of political parties to adapt successfully to economic and social change over time. Focusing on the Christian Democratic parties that dominated centrist politics in postwar Europe, Dilling brilliantly reveals why these parties have collapsed in some countries and why they endure in others.

Dilling rests his argument on an original/insightful analysis of factionalism. Parties that allow for a moderate degree of factionalism, he contends, are able to adapt to major social and economic shifts. By contrast, party organizations that allow too much or too little factionalism collapse when confronted with the pressures of change. Historical analysis is central to this argument: early organizational choices about how to select party leadership reverberate through the decades, by allowing some parties to absorb new claimants and others to fail.

Dilling skillfully develops his argument with a mix of quantitative and qualitative historical analysis. His meticulous use of process tracing relies on primary documents to show how leadership decisions and subsequent party factionalism explains the distinctive trajectories of Christian democracy in Austria, Italy, and Germany. The argument is tested in a set of well-chosen additional comparisons.

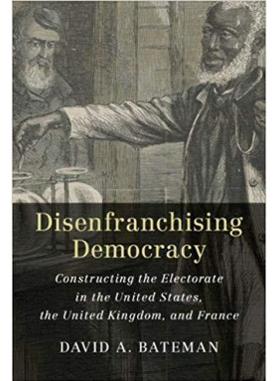
Dilling’s work provides an important and lasting contribution to our understanding not only of Christian Democracy, but also of the development of political parties and European politics over the past century.

J. David Greenstone Prize for the Best Book in Politics & History

The award committee, Paul Frymer (chair), Eleonora Pasotti, and Jeffrey Selinger, presented the award to:

David A. Bateman for *Disenfranchising Democracy: Constructing the Electorate in the United States, the United Kingdom, and France* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)

Disenfranchising Democracy challenges fundamental assumptions about democratization in the nineteenth century, and does so with a fresh new framing that should alter the way scholars approach the resurgence of “populism” in institutionalized democracies. Bateman’s featured case calls attention to a curious pattern that should concern all scholars interested in the lineage of democratic institutions in the United States: that the rapid expansion of white male suffrage in antebellum America was coupled with measures that systematically disenfranchised free blacks. This co-occurrence, Bateman shows, was no coincidence. In this exhaustively researched and conceptually imaginative study, Bateman demonstrates that these contrary developments were functionally related.



Indeed, slaveholders seeking to secure their material interests led the effort to politically organize northern racism with a white supremacist story of national belonging. The idea of the United States as the “White Man’s Republic” yoked together measures that cut in two directions at once, disenfranchising free blacks just as it advanced universal suffrage for white men. To make this case, Bateman provides a meticulous and exhaustive account of the strategic contexts that prompt legislators to elevate one narrative of peoplehood over others. Bateman’s painstaking effort to detail the ways in which ideas of peoplehood are leveraged for tactical, coalitional purposes, yields fresh insights into the micro, mezzo, and macro level machinations that made nineteenth century democracy “work” for white majorities.

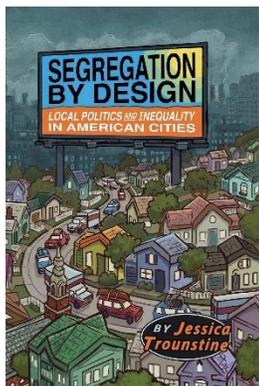
Bateman’s assessment of disenfranchising democratization exhibits the qualities we’ve come to expect of the very best scholarship in American political development. But *Disenfranchising Democracy* takes this analysis one significant step further: he leverages his featured case to advance more general claims about the process of disenfranchising democratization and the contexts in which expansions of the electorate are paired with new exclusions. Bateman turns readers’ attention to episodes in the U.K. (1828-1832) and France (1870-1877) where new narratives of national belonging were intimately tied to significant electoral reforms. In the U.K., a diverse coalition advanced a set of reforms that enfranchised middle class Catholics and dissenters just as it excluded working class voters that were enfranchised under the sectarian, Protestant Constitution. In a comparable manner, manhood suffrage was achieved in France in 1875, but it was tied to the establishment of a new institutional check—an upper chamber of the legislature—that would be constituted via a more restricted electoral base.

In both the U.K. and France, legislators mobilized new conceptions of peoplehood to promote reforms that cut in inclusionary and exclusionary directions at once. Bateman persuasively shows that contrasting coalitional formations—and the narratives of peoplehood mobilized to bind these coalitions together—account for the mix of inclusions and exclusions embedded in each country’s electoral arrangements.

The historical accounts featured in *Disenfranchising Democracy* are all the more noteworthy because they resonate with recent political developments in striking ways. Bateman’s study is a timely reminder that exclusionary narratives of national belonging are, and have been for some time, vital strategic assets that economic and political elites deploy when it is in their interests to do so. Bateman persuasively argues that threats facing democratic institutions today are not likely to come from mass constituencies “below.” “We should instead expect the denigration and corruption of democratic institutions to be undertaken by political elites” seeking to build popular coalitions to advance own interests (xvi). This remarkable book might be read as an extended meditation on this vital historical insight.

and to:

Jessica Trounstine for *Segregation by Design: Local Politics and Inequality in American Cities* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)



Segregation by Design investigates a vexing issue in American politics: the quality of services one experiences in the United States is largely a function of the neighborhood in which a person resides, and it remains highly variable. The impact of this differentiated access is huge and spans across many health, economic, social and political dimensions determining the overall life quality of a citizen. And we learn from Trounstine's carefully crafted argument that this outcome was not inevitable, nor was it even predictable. Rather, it is the result of intentional and strategic choices made by policy makers at the behest of powerful interests, and specifically white property holders, determined to maximize and maintain the value of their assets.

The argument is supported by elegant quantitative modeling of multiple facets of segregation, for which Trounstine proposes a novel measure that captures the phenomenon simultaneously at the local and at the regional level. This is an important (and broadly applicable) methodological move, which allows Trounstine to show that the optimism that met 2010 census data, identifying the end of segregation, grossly missed the point. Trounstine uncovers the nested dimension of segregation as – starting in the late 1890s - it moves from block, to neighborhoods and wards. By the 1970s, when and where (due to both local and federal pressures) white elites begin to lose control over racialized policy making within the city, segregation finally moves across city boundaries. This is consequential, because parallel, segregated communities increasingly lose access to public services, and when the move is across city lines, they also lose the electoral voice to redress their lack of representation.

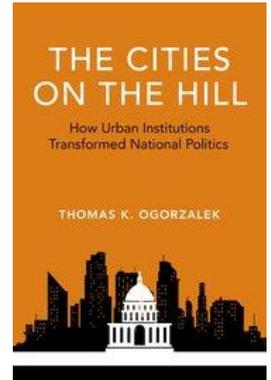
The argument is supported by extraordinary – even gripping - historical evidence, which includes demographic and neighborhood-level indicators (going back to the late 1800s!) that surprise the reader at every turn. Trounstine collects and systematically analyzes historical evidence that affords her a granular portrait of socio-political change from the neighborhood up. Indeed, the evidence she excavates reveals the range of institutional processes that link local decision-making to the reproduction of racial, economic, and political inequalities over time. This remarkable research effort sets this work apart. Just to offer one example, Trounstine provides data on sewage construction and overflows to build the case for inequality in service delivery – a compelling and innovative approach to identifying valence policies in service provision. The committee feels that future scholars and graduates students will be inspired by the creativity and tenacity with which Trounstine faces her inquiries, and the passion for historical inquiry that so vividly transpires and is so effectively communicated in this true page-turner.

This book is an excellent example of research that transcends the boundaries of urban politics in tracing the *designed* nature of inequality. Jessica contributes to this national level conversation by alerting those operating with a bird's-eye view of the importance of looking at the *neighborhoods*, where these phenomena find entrenched and transformative expression. She alerts national level scholars to not lose sight of the fact that the defense of white neighborhoods is a *necessary* piece of the puzzle if we want to understand the persistence and in fact growth of minority disenfranchisement in this country. But she does not simply alert other scholars of this connection: after grounding her research at the neighborhood level, she herself takes us to the national level by showing how polarization and racial politics can be explained in important ways by mechanisms of segregation that start in neighborhoods and are then *amplified* to the national level.

and an honorable mention to

Thomas Ogorzalek for *Cities on the Hill: How Urban Institutions Transformed National Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2018)

Cities on the Hill is a tour de force, which will have great influence on the field of urban politics. He argues that northern urban partisan regimes transformed themselves in the aftermath of the civil rights revolutions of the 1960s, and in the process, helped participate in a transformation of the cities in which they were embedded. City leaders and their congressional representatives were remarkably supportive of civil rights in the 1960s, for instance, despite representing quite ideologically diverse and politically divided constituencies. In contrast to the conventional wisdom that urban political coalitions have been crumbling under decades of low resources and both racial and ethnic competition and tension, he uses a combination of new datasets, some archival and some quantitative, to show that urban political coalitions, and particularly their congressional representatives, managed to secure a striking amount of resources for their constituents, as well as keep urban issues on the political agenda. The book is a new and fascinating engagement with the qualities and authoritative influence of urban cities at a time when the conventional wisdom sees them as weak and bordering on irrelevant. It makes a very sophisticated and nuanced argument about the power of urban institutional spaces that I have never seen before—the diversity of these urban spaces, he argues, compels people and specifically politicians to work together to problem solve in a manner that more rural areas do not. And once situated within such an environment, the institutional networks sustained a political agenda despite the frequent absence of public endorsement.



The book is also exciting because it offers a narrative that has been missing from the scholarship on the civil rights era: the longstanding and robust power of urban coalitions to promote civil rights despite the mixed reaction from its community of constituents. Local organizations are the critical entities that keep these coalitions in line, and he powerfully suggests the importance of institutional networks in promoting public policy in the midst of a mixed to ambivalent public. Moreover, it offers yet another alternative argument in a vibrant ongoing debate within the field about the roots of our current day polarization and implicit political realignment; the eventual weakening of the urban core which, he distinctly argues, importantly drove the victories of the civil rights and Great Society eras. For these reasons, and for the excellent GIS maps, the outstanding historical digging, and the great writing, this is an exciting book that demands engagement, and it promotes a normative vision of urban spaces that is strikingly powerful, especially in contrast to so many studies that bemoan diversity as a political and collective impossibility.



Frances Perkins and the Limits of New Deal Racial Liberalism

Steven White
Syracuse University

On September 16, 2019, Elizabeth Warren gave a major speech in New York City near the site of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. Warren brought up Frances Perkins, Labor Secretary in the Franklin Roosevelt administration, who had witnessed the fire firsthand and been immensely affected by it. She described Perkins as someone who “worked the political system relentlessly from the inside, while a sustained movement applied pressure from the outside” in pursuit of “[b]ig structural change.”

As I saw Perkins' name in the news, I was reminded of a section in my dissertation (White 2014) that didn't make it into the eventual book. Towards the end of her life, Perkins sat down for an extensive oral history interview at Columbia University with the historian Dean Albertson. Among a range of other topics, she briefly discussed civil rights advocacy during the Roosevelt administration and offered a strikingly negative opinion of the recently decided *Brown v. Board* case that has been widely overlooked by historians and biographers.

Albertson was asking Perkins about James Byrnes, who had served in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. By the time of the interview, though, Byrnes was Governor of South Carolina and Albertson mentioned his opposition to integration. “Well, I wouldn't like to tell you what I think of the Supreme Court decision on the matter,” Perkins said, unprompted. When asked if she disagreed, Perkins said it was “terrible,” a “purely political decision” that “should never have been made” (Reminiscences of Frances Perkins 1955: 335). When Albertson said that he felt it was “so darned long overdue,” Perkins replied:

Oh my dear fellow, now look here. No - it's not overdue. It's just begun to loom up as due - as nearly due. No, wait! Nobody ever heard that segregation was wrong until about five years ago. I never heard such a thing. I never heard of such a thing. Certainly we should be nice to



the Negroes. Certainly we should treat them right. (Ibid.: 335-36)

Albertson brought the subject back to the World War II era, which they had been discussing. Segregation “began to come up then,” Perkins admitted, stating that after NAACP leader Walter White “began to agitate, it began to be raised. See, he was a smart agitator.” “Gosh, he's been agitating for twenty years,” Albertson said. “No, not for twenty years,” Perkins replied. “He didn't have a chance to. He didn't do any agitating until well into the Roosevelt administration. It was well into the Roosevelt administration before the word 'segregation' was mentioned. Yes, it was” (Ibid.: 336).

When Albertson noted that “during the war it was a boiling point,” Perkins acknowledged that “it was being raised.” She again said that Walter White had been “agitating” and “was putting his finger on the places where it mattered,” like military recruiting. Albertson clearly became frustrated at this point. “So help me,” he interjected. “I had never heard of Walter White. All I saw was two drinking fountains side by side, and I got the word.” Perkins acknowledged that she “always used to feel queerly” in segregated facilities like waiting rooms for trains. When Albertson brought up the issue of

“get[ting] in the back of the bus,” Perkins said, “Yes, but they got on the bus after all. The bus hauled them where they wanted to go” (Ibid.: 337-38).

A bit later, Albertson asked Perkins bluntly whether she meant “to tell me in all your life you've never considered the proposition that there was something perhaps a little awry about this system of separate schools, sitting in the back of the bus, separate drinking fountains--?” Perkins said that it was “a way of life in the South.” When asked if she accepted it, she said she did not but that she “didn't live in the South.” Albertson pushed her on this point, noting that she traveled the region during the 1948 campaign and “saw these things” (Ibid.: 342). Perkins replied:

Yes, and they didn't vote, and we knew they didn't vote. I went there. When Eugene Talmadge told me that in the state of Georgia, we had a hundred percent Anglo-saxon population, I did say, “Well, what were those strange black things I saw walking around the streets? If they weren't population, what were they?”

I mean, that startled me a little bit. But, the way I regarded it, the laws of the South are quite separate in their way of thinking, and it's the way we've gotten along, and I always regarded it as not my function to tell the South what to do. It was my function to do what I thought was right, where I lived, and not try to solve the problems that they had. (Ibid.)

Perkins' forthright opposition to *Brown* and her more general comments on the Jim Crow South are striking coming from someone generally considered one of the more liberal members of Roosevelt's cabinet. Indeed, some historical scholarship has painted Perkins as a friend of civil rights (Guzda 1980). Perhaps this is less surprising, though, when placed in the context of the limits of New Deal white racial liberalism. Political actors could simultaneously be supportive of civil rights activists on some issues while opposing them in other areas. Roosevelt's economic policies helped pull black voters away from the Republican Party, but he was famously reticent to speak out against lynching because he feared upsetting his awkward but successful electoral coalition of northern liberals and southern segregationists (Katznelson 2013). And while Truman went further than Roosevelt with concrete policy actions like integration of the armed forces, he was not always sympathetic to civil rights activists after his presidency. Commenting on the sit-in movement, Truman told reporters that if “anyone came into my store and tried to stop business I'd throw him out,” adding that “[t]he Negro should behave himself and show he's a good citizen” (Turner and Johnson 1960). Many white New Deal liberals like Perkins were comfortable with certain parts of the mainstream civil rights agenda in the 1930s and 1940s. The more extensive civil rights demands in the next two decades, though, were often much more difficult for them to accept.

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Courting Black Voters in 2020: What the Candidates Should Know about an Increasingly Diverse Community

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Columbia University

When I learned algebra in school, my teacher taught us that sometimes you have to solve the equation by working on both sides. There's a political analogue in Democratic politics challenging normative views of the black community and forcing candidates engaging black voters to realize the community has long been skilled at attacking issues from multiple perspectives. [Recent reporting](#) suggests that while Elizabeth Warren has struck stronger tones in her outreach to the black community, she's still [struggling to attract Black voters. Sanders has also had difficulties](#). South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg, while surging in the polls, has done so [without much black support either](#). The legacy of reductive thinking toward African American power and policy interests deeply informs voter evaluations of candidates – particularly those who lack familiarity and history with black residents. And while divergent voices within the Party have traditionally been drowned out by interests aligned with long-standing partnerships and electoral coalitions, both establishment candidates and new faces are now grappling with the long-standing political acuity of black voters.

From the end of the Civil War until the 1930's black voters supported Republican candidates but thereafter and across major shifts during presidencies of FDR, Truman and LBJ, black voters became decidedly loyal Democrats. Even black conservatism during the Reagan era caused consternation due to lack of opportunity for African American economic empowerment.

From the 1970s to early 1990s, leaders from Shirley Chisholm to Jesse Jackson championed inclusion within the Party that produced a marked increase in black elected representation and simultaneously produced enduring political and cultural heuristics -cognitive or emotional shortcuts that dictate both descriptive and substantive leadership. Biden's support among older black voters, for example, may be the continuity of political lineage among voters connected to Jackson and Clinton-era alliances. They played heavily in Hillary Clinton's campaign which initially attracted the lion's share of black votes before they were siphoned away by

Obama's hope and change message in 2008. Black voters stayed with her in 2016 throughout the primary against Sanders and against Trump in a general election. With that framing, Biden is the third iteration of the *experience* and *establishment* candidate.

Over time, black voters, particularly black women, have been the Party's most loyal voters, but adherence to Party orthodoxy turns into conformity, and any differentiation that may lean too [liberal at times and too conservatives at others](#) could be penalized.

The gift of the Obama candidacy was not so much the [end to modern black politics](#) but the construction of a new lens through which the rest of America could view a new cohort of black voter whose political activism simultaneously promotes "[heterogeneous politics...alongside homogenous voting patterns.](#)"

Young African American voters [are articulating their dissatisfaction](#) with the old guard and with [Biden](#) specifically while [fewer black women feel the party best represents their interests](#). The backlash of white voters that propelled the Trump candidacy opened the door for young African Americans to articulate a more aggressive program that could exist outside of the Democratic Party, which they see as more an anachronistic vehicle for candidates rather than a platform to launch a new sweeping ideology. More so than ever before black donors, [particularly black women](#), are stepping up to provide financial support to this new generation of leaders.

How black candidates engage race is changing as well. Older cohorts of black elected officials historically eschewed race-specific policy in favor of more egalitarian themes. These post-civil rights messages forged effective coalitions with liberal white voters but often required that blacks support the agenda of their partners. Black neoliberals in the Obama era entertained stronger relationships with corporate interests which was once anathema to liberal Democratic coalitions and often played down race to promote marketization and privatization approaches to policy problems. [Some in the](#)

[old guard were quick to condemn this radical departure](#), intimating the black community was being sold out to monied interests.

Now in the Trump era, race neutrality has no place among a “woke” electorate. Black candidates with varying ties to the old guard are noticeably espousing race-based policy so much so that Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) who represents JFK’s old district reportedly told an audience at the 2019 Netroots Nation event that [“Democrats don’t need “any more black faces that don’t want to be a black voice”](#). New reporting suggests even [white liberals](#) have taken notice and are being pushed to vocalize racial disparities more openly.

Furthermore, continued attacks on corporate America fail to capture the nuanced relationship African Americans have to the private sector. Black businesses and black economic power through corporate employment or contracting have been critical to wealth creation, middle class expansion and the inclusion of black Americans in exclusive corporate spaces. Maynard Jackson, Atlanta’s former Mayor, famously strengthened the black middle class in that City through business connected to airport construction and welcomed black leaders into his governing regime.

Icons of business like Reginald Lewis, Earl Graves, Ed Lewis, and Tyler Perry who recently opened the first independent black-owned film studio in Atlanta, are viewed as individuals who succeeded within the rules set by white power structures and overcame barriers erected to prevent inclusion and advancement. Today, [Black women are the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs](#). Robert Smith, an African American hedge fund leader, currently the richest black man in America, famously announced at Morehouse College’s graduation that he will pay off their student loans. Some progressive proposals feel like attempts to change the rules in the middle of the game. Black voters just don’t want the game to be rigged.

The good news is that median income is [rising beyond pre-recession levels](#) but the [acute gap between black and white wealth](#) is forcing many [African Americans to move to other states for better jobs](#) as representation in corporate America remains vexingly low.

Biden’s strong hold on older voters for the time being belies the real momentum among black voters toward political sagacity as venue shoppers with the savvy and resources to seek paths to electoral and economic success through proprietary networks of their own creation. In terms of Party politics, black voters are building their own political and social capital by employing an inside and outside strategy to work both sides of the problem.

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For more information or to submit a proposal, please visit the [conference website](#).



Colonial Legacies and Insurgency in India: Developing an Instrument for Colonial Choice of Indirect Rule Based on Historical Wars

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Do historical institutions created during colonial times play a role in creating the conditions for current insurgency and civil war? Much of the canonical literature on civil war onset, like Fearon and Laitin (2003), Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Sambanis (2001, 2004), Hegre et al. (2001), Cederman, Wimmer and Min (2010) use cross national data and focus on the importance of state capacity, rebel opportunity, democracy, or ethnic exclusion to explain civil war. However, the role of colonial institutions of various types, whether through colonial policies of direct vs. indirect rule, or exploitation of labor and land, or missionary activity have been ignored by the civil war literature. This is surprising given that a large literature using both comparative historical analysis (Mahoney 2010, Lange 2009, Kohli 2004) as well as econometrics (Nunn & Wantchekon 2011, Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson 2001) have documented the effects of different types of colonial institutions on development, state capacity, and ethnic identity, which are intermediate mechanisms on the path to rebellion.

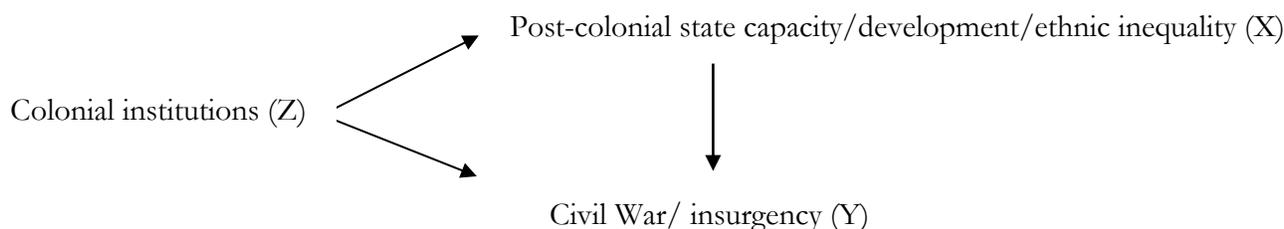
In a recent article published in *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, and a book manuscript that I am currently writing, I analyze the possible long-term effects of colonial institutions on insurgency. I do this by exploring the historical legacies of British colonial indirect rule on sub-national variation in the Maoist insurgency in India.¹ I try to explain the peculiar spatial variation of the Maoist insurgency and find that different forms of colonial indirect rule and revenue collection create conditions of weak state capacity and land inequality that are later exploited by Maoist rebels.

Historical institutions as omitted variables for analysis of civil war onset

Overlooking the role of historical institutions creates potential *omitted variable bias* in the civil war literature, because these colonial institutions affect sub-national variation in levels of post-colonial state capacity, economic development, and ethnic inequalities, which then become proximate factors that affect the ability of rebel leaders to start and sustain insurgency. This could create the problem of *omitted variable bias* because past historical institutions *could jointly determine both state capacity/income/male literacy/ethnic exclusion and inequalities on the one hand, as well as the chance of insurgency on the other.*

Miguel, Satyanath and Sergenti (2004: 726) recognize that “omitted variables—for example, governmental institutional quality—may drive both economic outcomes and conflict, producing misleading cross-country estimates.” Extending this analysis to the potential role of historical institutions, it is possible that colonial institutions of different types are one such omitted variable (Z) which is driving both post-colonial state capacity, ethnic inequalities, natural resource extraction (X), as well as conflict occurrence (Y). ([continued on p. 21](#))

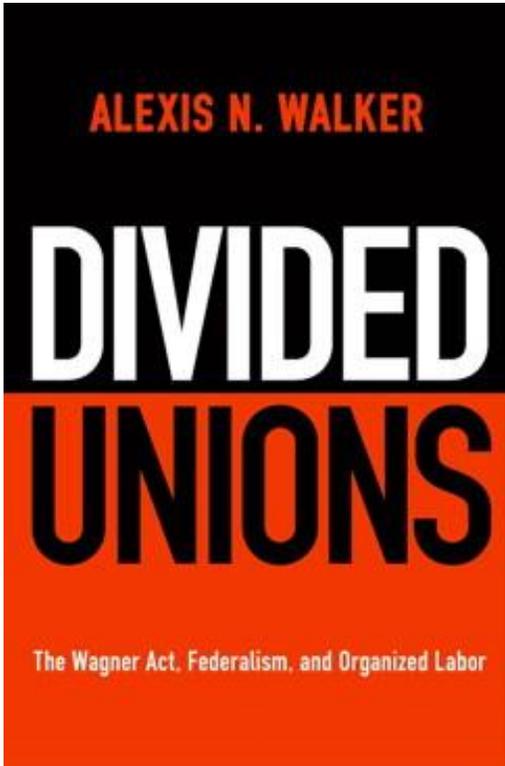
Figure 1: Colonial institutions as omitted variables to explain civil war



¹ Shivaji Mukherjee. 2018. “Colonial Origins of Maoist Insurgency in India”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 62 (10): 2232-2274

First Books

Alexis N. Walker, *Divided Unions: The Wagner Act, Federalism, and Organized Labor*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019.



The 2011 battle in Wisconsin over public sector employees' collective bargaining rights occasioned the largest protests in the state since the Vietnam War. Protestors occupied the state capitol building for days and staged massive rallies in downtown Madison, receiving international news coverage. Despite an unprecedented effort to oppose Governor Scott Walker's bill, Act 10 was signed into law on March 11, 2011, stripping public sector employees of many of their collective bargaining rights and hobbling government unions in Wisconsin. By situating the events of 2011 within the larger history of public sector unionism, Alexis N. Walker demonstrates how the passage of Act 10 in Wisconsin was not an exceptional moment, but rather the culmination of events that began over eighty years ago with the passage of the Wagner Act in 1935.

Although explicitly about government unions, Walker's book argues that the fates of public and private sector unions are inextricably linked. She contends that the exclusion of public sector employees from the foundation of private sector labor law, the Wagner Act, firmly situated private sector law at the national level, while relegating public sector employees' efforts to gain collective bargaining rights to the state and local levels. She shows how private sector unions

benefited tremendously from the national-level protections in the law while, in contrast, public sector employees' efforts progressed slowly, were limited to union friendly states, and the collective bargaining rights that they finally did obtain were highly unequal and vulnerable to retrenchment. As a result, public and private sector unions peaked at different times, preventing a large, unified labor movement. The legacy of the Wagner Act, according to Walker, is that labor remains geographically concentrated, divided by sector, and hobbled in its efforts to represent working Americans politically in today's era of rising economic inequality.

For more information or to purchase this book, see: <https://www.upenn.edu/pennpress/book/16036.html>

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(Mukherjee, [continued from p. 15](#)) Djankov and Reynal-Querol (2010) try to control for such possible omitted variables, and building on Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson (2001), they include different proxies of colonizer strategy in the model, like log of European settler mortality rates, population density in 1500, and European settlement in 1900, in cross-national models of civil war onset.¹ They find that the effect of state capacity as measured by *per capita income* on civil war disappears, which hints at the possibility of omitted variable bias.

Endogeneity concerns with the cross-national civil war literature

Another reason why it is important to analyze effects of colonial institutions, is because the cross-national literature on civil wars and insurgency suffers from

possible endogeneity and reverse causality of socio-economic factors to the process of conflict (Hegre & Sambanis 2006: 513-514). According to Hegre and Sambanis (2006: 513-514) the challenge to find good instruments for the main socio-economic determinants of civil war has prevented scholars from addressing this issue well. Miguel, Satyanath and Sergenti (2004: 726) also point out that “the existing literature does not adequately address the endogeneity of economic variables to civil war and thus does not convincingly establish a causal relationship.” By analyzing the effects of historical institutions which are themselves not the result of current conflict, and developing instruments for such historical institutions, it is possible to address this problem of endogeneity.

My study does this by focusing on the historical legacies of colonial indirect vs. direct rule institutions

¹ Djankov and Reynal-Querol. 2010. “Poverty and Civil War: Revisiting the Evidence”, *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, November 2010, 92(4): 1035–1041

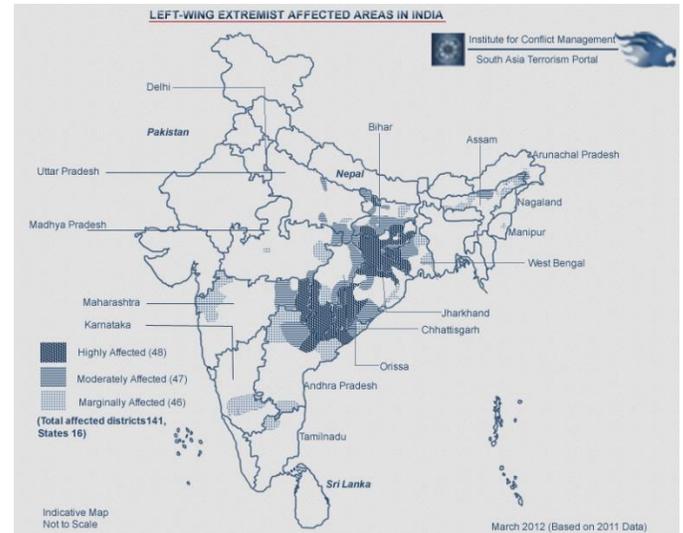
in India on the Maoist insurgency, and developing a new instrument for the choice of colonial indirect rule. This allows my study to address the possibility that the British administrators intentionally chose those areas which had bad terrain, and poor quality soil for indirect rule, which creates *selection bias* in the causal effect of colonial indirect rule on Maoist insurgency. It also allows my study to address potential endogeneity of current socio-economic determinants of insurgency to conflict, by studying historic institutions are not endogenous to recent Maoist conflict, and using an instrument to address potential *selection bias*.

Using IV2SLS analysis to address selection effects and endogeneity concerns in the case of the Maoist insurgency in India

The Maoist insurgency started in 1967 and was crushed by 1973-74 by the Indian government. However, it re-emerged in different parts of India like Bihar and Andhra Pradesh in 1980s. Following a period of low intensity conflict, in which the Maoists tried to apply their ideology of Leninism-Maoism to fight for the rights of politically and socially deprived ethnic groups like lower castes (*Dalits*) and *scheduled tribes (adivasis)* in certain regions in India with high poverty and land and natural resource exploitation, the insurgency escalated and expanded to almost one-third of India's districts in the 2005-2012 period. It was called India's "number one internal security threat" by the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2006.

What explains the spatial concentration of the Maoist insurgency in India along the central-eastern corridor of the country? Why are other regions in the west and south which also have scheduled castes and tribes not affected by the insurgency? In my article in *JCR*, I theorize that different forms of colonial indirect rule, through *princely states* or through *zamindaris* or landlord tenure system, created structural conditions of land inequality and weak state capacity, which persisted into the post-colonial period through path dependence (Mahoney 2000), and were later exploited by Maoist rebels in 1980s to foment successful rebellion.

Figure 2. Map of Maoist insurgency affected areas in India, 2011–2012 (total 141 districts affected)



Source:

http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/sair/images/10_35/Maoist_2012map.html

However, there is a valid concern that the British intentionally chose the worse off regions/states of India for indirect rule which creates *selection bias*. I address this issue by developing an instrument which is correlated with the colonial choice of direct versus indirect rule, but has no direct effect on post-colonial outcomes of insurgency, except through its effect through direct/ indirect rule institutions.

Within the econometrics based literature on civil wars, there are only a few studies like Miguel, Satyanath and Sargenti (2003) that deal with the issue of endogeneity of economic variables to the process of civil wars by using an instrumental variable strategy that relies on the effects of weather induced shocks like the effect of rainfall on income in rural areas and its effects on insurgency. The only econometric analysis of Maoist insurgency in India that uses instrumental variables to deal with the endogeneity of economic variables to civil war process is Gawande, Kapur and Satyanath (2015), which uses the same instrument as the Miguel et al. (2003) paper in the Indian context, and relies on "variation in rainfall" to instrument for changes in natural forest resources which in turn is supposed to affect patterns of Maoist recruitment in India.

There have been some criticisms of the use of rainfall as an instrument. For example, discussing the Miguel et al. (2003) paper which analyzes the effects of economic growth on civil war, Dunning (2008, p. 297) discusses that variation in rainfall may only influence economic growth in the agricultural sector, and the effect of civil war may be quite different than the effects of growth in the urban sector.² Another criticism is that that rainfall variation could have a direct effect on conflict by washing away roads and preventing soldiers from fighting, so it violates the exclusion restriction (Dunning 2012, p. 96).³ In their paper on Maoist conflict in India, Gawande, Kapur and Satyanath (2015) use rainfall as an instrument for changes in forest cover in tribal areas, and it is possible that rainfall could directly affect counter insurgency efforts, as well as Maoist strategy in some states in India like Chhattisgarh. This would imply that the instrument is directly related to the dependent variable of conflict, and the exclusion restriction is violated.

Instead of using weather induced shocks as an instrument for institutions which finally lead to conflict, it would be better to delve deeper into history to develop an instrument for the choice of colonial indirect rule based on historical contingencies which randomly prevent the British from being selective in their choice of indirect rule.

Problem with existing instrument for indirect rule through princely states

Such an instrument does exist in well-known study, but unfortunately suffers from some problems. In a study of the impact of indirect rule through princely states on economic development at the all India district level, Iyer (2010: 693) tries to deal with selection bias, by developing an instrument which exploits the fact that random deaths of certain Indian rulers led their princely states to be annexed by Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) using the controversial Doctrine of Lapse. Under

this policy, the kingdom of any Indian ruler who died without a male heir would lapse into British direct rule. This is a clever instrument since deaths of rulers is plausibly random and not related to the qualities of the Indian states or to Maoist rebellion.

However, closer analysis reveals that there are potential problems with this instrument since it does not cover the entire time period of British annexation from 1757-1856 but only for the 1847-56 period for a truncated sample, which casts some doubt on the validity of the IV-2SLS results in Iyer (2010). The Doctrine of Lapse policy of Lord Dalhousie occurred only in the 1847-56 period, and so Iyer (2010) leaves all districts annexed between 1757-1846 out of the IV2SLS analysis, thus reducing the sample size as compared to her OLS analysis. While this is not necessarily a problem when using *princely states* to explain developmental outcomes which is the focus of the Iyer (2010) paper, it is a more serious problem when explaining *Maoist control* as the dependent variable. This is because the entire northern epicenter of the insurgency in Bihar/ Bengal/ Jharkhand was annexed into direct rule after the Battle of Buxar in 1764, and is left out of the IV2SLS sample, so the IV2SLS sample in Iyer (2010) does not address selection issues for large chunks of territories in India which later got affected by Maoist insurgency.

To overcome the problem with the instrument in Iyer (2010), I develop a new instrument which covers the much longer time period from 1764-1857 and thus addressed selection into direct or indirect rule of most districts which are today part of the Maoist insurgency zone.

Novel Instrument for indirect rule through princely states

The instrument I develop is based on the idea that during the time period of major wars between European Great powers, there were budget constraints on the ability of the British to fight wars of annexation

² Dunning, Thad. 2008. "Model Specification in Instrumental-Variables Regression." *Political Analysis* 16 (3): 290-302.

³ Thad Dunning. 2012. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences: A Design-Based Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

into direct rule in colonies like India. During these periods, the British colonial officers also perceived threats from France and Russia to their Indian territories. These exogenous financial constraints during the periods of major European wars prevented the British officers in India from fighting wars and annexing territories into direct rule in India. It also increased the chances of the British signing treaties of indirect rule with those princely states which were adjacent to the territories they already controlled in India, as buffer regions for geo-strategic protection.

Thus, during these periods of European Great Power wars, like the Napoleonic Wars, the American War of Independence, and the Great Game with Russia, those Indian native states that were contiguous to British direct rule territories, had higher chance of getting treaties of indirect rule. Since the timing of war in Europe was exogenous to politics in India, and the location of these particular states near the frontiers of British rule was random and not related to the possibility of leftist rebellion in the future, the geostrategic location of Indian states on frontiers of British direct rule, at the onset of major wars between Britain and other European Great Powers in the 18th - 19th century can be used as an instrument for indirect rule.⁴

There is a two-fold logic behind the instrument. Firstly, during the time periods of major wars in Europe that involved Britain like the Napoleonic wars (1792-1815), the resources available to the British Empire were constrained and this influenced British ability to fight wars of annexation in India. Secondly, during these European wars, the British also perceived threats from France & Russia to frontier regions in India. Such resource constraints and perceived threats led the British policy makers to sign treaties of indirect rule with Indian rulers in frontier areas contiguous to

British territories, at the onset of major European Great Power wars

This instrument draws on the fact that while scholars like Banerjee & Iyer (2005), Iyer (2010), and Lange (2009), have correctly pointed to the *selection bias* in choice of colonial indirect rule and land tenure institutions in India, historical contingencies and geo-strategic necessities and financial constraints often influenced the decisions of British officers, rather than the revenue potential or governability of a territory. An example of this is the policy of *ring fence* from 1765-1813 (Lee-Warner 1910), during which the British East India company preferred signing treaties with Indian rulers to create a buffer ring around the territories it already controlled. Ramusack (2004, p. 65) notes that this policy started when Robert Clive, after defeating the state of Awadh in 1765 did not annex it, despite its high agricultural potential, because he wanted it as a buffer territory between the British province of Bengal and the Maratha threat from the west. External factors like warfare between Britain and other Great Powers like France and Russia in the 18th and 19th centuries, can similarly be treated as an exogenous determinant of signing treaties with and annexations of Indian states, and hence an instrument for the *princely state* variable.

Conclusion: Using instruments based on historical events

The well-known paper by Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson (2001) use *settler mortality* to instrument for European settlement patterns and their effects on type of institutions developed in colonies. Another instrument based on colonial policies but which analyzes the effect of colonial indirect rule on insurgency in Africa and Asia is in a recent paper by Wucherpfennig, Hunziker & Cederman (2016).⁵ In this paper, Wucherpfennig et al. (2016) find that British used colonial indirect rule over peripheral interior areas

⁴ For details of the coding procedure and data sources see the Online Appendices of my *JCR* article.

⁵ Wucherpfennig, Julian, Philipp Hunziker, and Lars-Erik Cederman. 2016. "Who Inherits the State? Colonial Rule and Post-colonial Conflict." *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (4): 882–98.

(far from coast) which gave more autonomy and political power to pre-colonial era chiefs. These chiefs later became important players in post-colonial electoral politics and had to be included in political power, and so there was lower chances of conflict. In contrast, the French used more direct rule in their colonies which did not allow much autonomy and prevented strong chiefs from emerging in interior areas, and so post-independence these pre-colonial chiefs representing peripheral ethnic groups did not have much autonomy and ended up being excluded from power in the post-colonial period. Such ethnic exclusion created grievances and higher chances of conflict later.

This paper tries to address the possibility that while ‘ethnic exclusion from power’ is a cause of civil war, it is also affected by reverse causality from conflict. To address such endogeneity issues, they use the interaction term of the type of colonial power (French

or British) with the continuous measure of remoteness of the ethnic group from center of power as an instrumental variable for ‘ethnic inclusion’ in postcolonial states (Wucherpfenning 2016: 888) The logic behind the instrument seems to be that the geographic location of the ethnic group is random and not related to the type of colonizer, and that the British had a higher tendency to include geographically peripheral ethnic groups in power than the French.

Searching for such historical events or colonial choices which are exogenous to current socio-economic factors or conflict, allows us to go beyond the usual IV2SLS strategy of relying on rainfall or weather shocks to predict conflict, and find more innovative instruments that can help us estimate the causal effects of historical institutions on current insurgency. This will help us address the problem of endogeneity of socio-economic and ethnic factors to conflict and insurgency.