CULTURAL CONFLICT IN INDIA: PUNJAB AND KASHMIR

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The conflicts in Punjab and Kashmir, two of the most visible and violent in recent Indian history, provide a natural case study for the causes of cultural conflict.[1] These two regions differ in many ways—language, religion, culture, and geography, to name just a few. Yet in both states ethnicity and religion have become politicized in surprisingly similar ways. Both these conflicts involve issues of cultural identity. They are often labeled ethnic or sectarian conflicts, with the assumption that this labeling explains them.

In this chapter, I take issue with this perspective. I will examine the ways in which each state's respective relationship to the institutions of the Indian central state has served as the focal point for the creation and maintenance of cultural identity. Despite the professed goal of secularism, the Indian state has enabled and even caused ethnic cleavages to become politically charged. In the pages to follow, I treat each case independently, starting with Punjab and then turning to Kashmir. In the final section I relate and compare the two cases, especially with regard to the role of the broader economic, political, and institutional forces at work.

PUNJAB

The case of Punjab provides an excellent illustration of the central propositions guiding this volume. As I shall demonstrate below, historical policies of discrimination and privilege gradually politicized the religious and cultural identity of the Sikhs. Each time central power collapsed or weakened, that political relevance deepened under the leadership of political entrepreneurs—like Ranjit Singh in the

late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale in the 1980s. In the current period, economic factors originating in an environment of economic globalization, particularly the 1973 oil crisis, dealt a severe blow to an already weakening central regime, providing a permissive environment for the escalation of cultural conflict. Economic policies in the wake of the Green Revolution also exacerbated perceptions of injustice and served to politically mobilize the Sikh population. "Bandwagoning effects" escalated this conflict to violence.

THE HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

The history of the Sikhs, who form a significant religious group in Punjab, contradicts the view that the kinds of conflicts we observe in the world today are primarily the result of primordially motivated tribal struggle. The Sikh religion has a relatively modern beginning, in the sixteenth century, and the history of its development, the process by which it differentiated itself from other, neighboring traditions, and the resulting conflicts have been well charted.[2] As we shall see below, Sikh political identity was constructed in response to changes in external circumstances and pressures; it was never fixed and immutable. Perhaps most important, institutional constraints and incentives have been key in shaping the political relevance of ethnic identity.

Guru Nanak, considered the founder of the Sikh religion, preached in the early sixteenth century a message of inclusive and mystical salvation, wedded to a practical approach to daily living. Within a hundred years, his community of disciples (the literal meaning of *sikh*) had established its own script for the regional language, sites of pilgrimage and congregation, collective wealth, and a set of hierarchical institutions. The role of the guru took on an aspect of temporal or political as well as spiritual leadership.

The egalitarianism of the spiritual message found many converts in Punjab. This was a region that had been in the path of the Mughal and all previous invaders of India and was therefore in the capital firmly under the control of the Mughal emperors, who exercised their control through regional governors. These authorities became increasingly concerned with the growing popularity of the

Sikh religion and its potential as an alternative source of social authority. As Sikhdom grew in popularity, the potential for conflict with the central authorities grew as well.

Conflict manifested itself with the arrest and death by torture of the fifth Sikh guru. By the last quarter of the seventeenth century, another Sikh guru had been executed by the Mughals, and there began a period of almost continual conflict, often in the form of guerrilla warfare. Tradition has it that the seeds of the struggle lay in unequal treatment of Hindus relative to Muslims by the later Mughals and the rulers' attempts to aggressively proselytize their religion. (The Sikhs were a distinct community by this stage, but since the boundary of the term "Hindu" is itself vague, some would include the Sikhs of the time in that category.) The religious element of the conflict, however, cannot be the whole story because there was continued conflict among Hindu rulers subjugated by the Mughals and between them and the Sikhs as well. Indeed the conflict was equally if not more motivated by a political struggle for the control of resources. The lack of well-functioning institutions for mediating conflict implied that the conflict would often be openly violent.

The argument underlying the above narrative can be stated more explicitly. People chose to become Sikhs because it enhanced their lives in tangible and intangible ways. The more people joined this community, the greater the rewards to joining and the greater its power for collective political action. Therefore the Sikhs came to be perceived as a threat to the political authority of the center, possibly including its ability to raise revenue from the region in which Sikhs lived. The center's response was to reduce the attractiveness of being a Sikh by coercive means. Coercion and hegemony caused the Sikhs to redefine the community in a politically relevant way. This redefinition included an enhanced communal recognition of the value of martyrdom and a hardening of the boundaries of Sikhism through the adoption of a set of external symbols. Indeed this early period illustrates the bandwagoning effects that led to identity politics discussed in the introduction to this volume. In terms of cost-benefit calculus, while it might have been costlier to become a Sikh, the perceived benefits were enhanced through this process, and the costs of switching back were also raised.[3]

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Sikhs were close to their modern cultural and political identity. This evolution resulted

from a rapid decay in the power of the center. There followed a period of violence as power was contested all over India, including Punjab. Memories of persecution had solidified political unity among Sikhs, and that unity gave them the resources to set up autonomous domains in the absence of imperial power. Individual domains were later unified by the late eighteenth century by Ranjit Singh, the ruler of one of those domains, who established a Sikh kingdom in Punjab. The Sikh identity flourished, as it was associated with political power.[4]

During the eighteenth century, however, the British East India Company rapidly filled the power vacuum left by the Mughals, and the resulting shifts in the institutions of power had important consequences for the political relevance of cultural identity in India. By the time of Ranjit Singh's death in 1839, Punjab was almost the only major region of India not under British domination. Ten years later, by relying heavily on mercenaries recruited from other parts of India, the British were able to defeat the Sikhs and bring them under their control.

This period, following the collapse of the Sikh kingdom in Punjab and the consolidation of British rule over India (control of India passed formally from the East India Company to the British crown), saw a rapid decline in the prestige and value of the distinctive Sikh identity. That decline, however, did not last long; in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, members of a new urban professional class among Sikhs began to fashion a response to the challenge posed by the alien British culture, technology, and values. The response was to create a stronger collective identity that could stand up to the onslaught of superior European technology and the values that came with it. That effort was ironically facilitated by British policy as well. As part of an inducement strategy, the British actively encouraged Sikh recruits into the British Indian Army to maintain the symbols and observances of their religion.

The politicization of cultural identity in nineteenth-century India was also encouraged by British practices of divide and rule and the institutions that implemented that practice. The British based political representation of the Indian population on religious and communal identities; this naturally reinforced and politicized those identities, hardened cultural boundaries, and increased political competition among cultural groups. Muslims and Hindus were also

trying to shore up their own cultural identities in the face of European cultural, technological, and political hegemony; in colonial governance structures each group argued for representation based on its unique cultural identity. The British strategy of dividing the potentially politically powerful population seemed to succeed.

Indeed throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century, a movement for Indian independence gained momentum. The Indian National Congress (INC), as its name suggests, attempted to create a national identity rather than numerous political identities based on ethnicity or religion. But this movement was only partly successful. As would later be the case in Yugoslavia, where many Croats saw a unified Yugoslav state as a cover for Serb dominance, leaders of many smaller cultural groups in India viewed the National Congress as dominated by Hindus, with their cultural identity suppressed in the political realm only as a matter of expedience. The rise of the Muslim League and eventual partition were the consequences of this suspicion, which was certainly exploited by the British to their short-term advantage.

Thus by the beginning of the twentieth century, Sikh cultural identity had become politically relevant through the process of resistance to domination and through increasing autonomy when dominant powers weakened. Under British control and under the British policy of divide and rule, religious identities gained even more importance in the distribution of political resources. In extreme cases, economic power and prestige led to religious conversions, and Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and Christians all competed according to the logic of identity politics.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, a resurgent Sikh religious identity took hold in Punjab, centered on the contested control of Sikh religious shrines, which the British had allowed to be consolidated in the hands of corrupt hereditary functionaries.[5] The struggle to wrest control of the shrines was both symbolic and material; the shrines were associated with significant events in the lives of Sikh gurus, and control of the shrines meant control over substantial land and resources. In 1925 the British conceded, and control of the shrines passed to a newly created representative Sikh organization. The political relevance of Sikh identity was thus legitimated.

In the 1930s and 1940s the Sikh leadership followed the lead of the Muslims under Mohammed Ali Jinnah and established a Sikh political party.[6] As a political party, Sikhs were represented at autonomy negotiations with the British. But in negotiations over whether and how to carve up India to create a separate Muslim state, they comprised too small a group to really matter. Concentrated in Punjab, Sikhs amounted to only about 13 percent of the region's population. With extremely limited bargaining power and no guarantee of protection from the alternative power that was to be created—the Islamic state of Pakistan—the Sikhs were forced to throw in their lot with secular India and rely on oral promises of minority protection from the INC leadership.

Partition in 1947 and the resulting displacement of populations were a major trauma for the subcontinent. What is essential to our story here is that Punjab was divided between India and Pakistan. Sikhs in the western, Pakistani part migrated to the eastern part and to the Indian capital territory of Delhi. Viewed objectively, they flourished, doing well in agriculture, trade, and government. They were also able and willing to emigrate in search of better opportunities abroad, and they continued to be heavily represented in the Indian army.

The issue of the political relevance of their cultural identity nevertheless remained one that irritated and festered. Difficulties arose during preparations of the new Indian constitution, when framers attempted to deal with the multiplicity of religions and customs, not by separating church and state, but by attempting a balancing act. Prior identities of different groups were recognized in the political arena and either validated—as with a separate personal law in some areas for Muslims—or transformed—as with special preferences for untouchables. While one might ascribe somewhat higher motives to the leaders of newly independent India than the British divide and rule, this policy actually continued the British practice of reifying and politicizing collective and cultural identities by incorporating them into the constitution.

The Sikhs suffered as a result. The British had allowed and encouraged Sikh cultural identity to evolve and thrive in the political arena, but in independent India, where they represented only 2 percent of the population and were even a minority in the Indian part of Punjab, they found themselves (along with Jains and Buddhists)

lumped together in the category "Hindus" for all legal purposes. The practical import may have been slight, but the symbolism was galling, and subsequent related developments added to the problem.[7]

The immediate task following independence was to reorganize India administratively. Having inherited a patchwork of administrative units and designations determined more by historical accident than any logical rationale, India began to reorganize on the basis of language, with about fifteen languages recognized in the constitution. Reorganization proceeded over a decade, occurring in fits and starts prodded by regional agitations, including occasional riots, as regional populations sought to gain linguistic recognition.

Punjab presented a particular problem in this regard. The language, Punjabi, has a fairly close link to Hindi, the language of the Gangetic plain. It could be and was written in three scripts: Gurmukhi, the script of the Sikh scriptures; the Persian script of Urdu (another linguistic cousin of Hindi); and the Devanagari script of Hindi. In the first postindependence census, Hindus in Punjab were encouraged by some Hindu politicians and reformers to declare Hindi as their native language. This was a throwback to the preindependence conflict between Hindus and Sikhs in Punjab over identity and political power. For Sikhs, Punjabi meant the Gurmukhi script, with its sacred connotations, which Hindu purists found unacceptable. The result was a Punjab state in India where Sikhs were not only a minority, but also deprived of the linguistic status they saw given to other groups. The desire for a Punjabi-speaking state therefore became a major focus of Sikh political action.

Many Sikhs initially felt marginalized or excluded from the Indian political system, which was partially characterized by a system of collective rights and representation. Punjabi was recognized as one of the main Indian languages in the constitution, but a Punjabi- (and Sikh) majority state was not created when other state boundaries were redrawn on linguistic lines. Linguistically based states privileged the majority culture in each such state, often to the detriment of minorities. This exclusion within a system in which access to many political resources was granted according to ascriptive criteria further deepened the political relevance of Sikh identity.

By the beginning of the 1960s, Punjab was the only major Indian region not organized on linguistic lines. The Akali Dal, the major Sikh party, which had developed its political muscle in the campaign

for control of Sikh shrines, stepped up its agitation for a linguistic reorganization of Punjab. The tactics of agitation followed very much the model developed by Gandhi and the INC at the time of the struggle for independence, including marches and fasts by leaders. It did not become violent. At the same time, the prospects for success were slight, with the central Indian leadership resisting for a variety of reasons. In particular, Jawaharlal Nehru, prime minister until 1964, viewed the demand for a Punjabi-speaking majority state as a demand for a Sikh majority state and therefore unacceptable according to his secular principles. Furthermore, a potential Sikh majority state was viewed by the central authorities as a strategic weakness, given suspicions about Sikh loyalty to the center and Punjab's strategic position on the border with Pakistan and on the land route connecting Kashmir to the rest of India. Nonetheless, following the loyal performance of Sikhs in the Indian armed forces in the 1965 war with Pakistan, this latter reason for denying the Sikhs a state of their own seemed to lose its validity. More pragmatic and less insistent than Nehru on secularism as an ideal, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi agreed in 1966 to divide Punjab into separate Punjabi-and Hindi-speaking states. Mrs. Gandhi's own position in the ruling Congress Party was weak, causing her to welcome any reduction in outside pressures.

The specific conditions for the creation of two separate states—Punjab, now with a Sikh majority, and the new state of Haryana (with some territory going to a third state, Himachal Pradesh)—included several features that postponed conflict rather than ending or resolving it. Chandigarh, the city that had been designed especially to be the capital of Punjab, was shared between the two states, and there was no clear division of resources, including the most important one of river waters. Both the possession of Chandigarh and conflicts over river waters became part of a package of grievances used for political advantage by both Sikhs and Hindus.[8]

In the years following the division of Punjab, Sikh political fortunes did not fare well. The year 1967 saw the end of the political hegemony of the INC, with other parties coming to power in several major Indian states. The Congress Party subsequently split, and the following four years were marked by relative political instability, with fluid and repeatedly shifting alliances in state legislatures. The Akali Dal was able to share power briefly in Punjab, but it did not

enjoy the unanimous support of Sikhs, and its tenure was short-lived. In 1971, with the crisis that eventually led to the formation of Bangladesh, Mrs. Gandhi was able to substantially increase her political strength, and the Akalis were shut out of power altogether.

Mrs. Gandhi's high popularity was also short-lived, chiefly due to her inability to deliver on promises of eliminating poverty. The Indian economy was hit badly by the first oil shock, which prompted mounting unrest in many parts of India. Meanwhile, Mrs. Gandhi had created a spoils system which rewarded personal loyalty above all else. As government in India became the road to wealth as well as power, corruption flourished. In this climate, the Akalis attempted to regroup politically by passing a resolution calling for Chandigarh to be awarded to Punjab and river waters to be shared more favorably for the state. Furthermore, the Green Revolution, which had increased yields and prosperity, had also made Punjab the breadbasket for much of India. But popular perceptions were that the center, by controlling crop procurement, was reaping disproportionate gains at the expense of Punjabi, mostly Sikh, farmers. These major issues were linked to a variety of purely religious demands and also with a demand for increased Punjab autonomy.

Many states in India, especially at the country's periphery, have sought more independence from the center, with the larger ones sometimes achieving de facto autonomy over a range of matters.[9] In the case of Punjab, however, the confluence of religion and geography made the central government view demands for more autonomy with suspicion. Although it did not specify clearly what more autonomy would mean in practice, this demand was later used by the central government to label Sikhs as separatist or secessionist.

THE PRESENT CRISIS

The current period of escalating violence in Punjab has its genesis in several social and economic developments.[10] As noted above, the crop procurement system had created distrust of the center on the part of Sikh farmers, and dissent festered over the regional distribution of income. Furthermore, the central government, which tightly controlled investment decisions, had promoted agriculture in Punjab while starving the region of industrial investment. Hindus

were also perceived by Sikhs as dominant in trade and commerce in Punjab, and higher wages in the region were producing an influx of migrant Hindu workers from eastern India while Sikh unemployment remained high.[11] Finally, the central government deliberately reduced the recruitment of Sikhs into the armed forces, reversing an old tradition that in one sense had long operated as a safety valve in the region.

In 1975 Mrs. Gandhi imposed a state of internal emergency and arrested or otherwise silenced all opposition to counter the mounting unrest that had emerged in the wake of the first oil shock. In response, the Akalis in Punjab, mobilized for nonviolent resistance, courted arrest and filled the jails. Their tactics worked; in 1977 they were rewarded with a partnership in the opposition coalition at the center, which swept the Congress Party out of power in the next elections and went on to capture various state legislatures as well.

Mrs. Gandhi, seeking to regain power (which she would do in 1980), began looking for alliances wherever she could. In Punjab she tried to undermine the Akalis by covertly showing favor to a "fundamentalist" preacher, Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, thereby encouraging him in his political mobilization efforts.[12] Bhindranwale was able to capitalize on many outstanding social and religious issues, mobilizing popular opposition to Hindus and other more moderate Sikh groups.[13] When he and his followers clashed violently with Hindu and heterodox Sikh groups in Punjab, the central government responded weakly, initially doing little to restore order. It appeared that Gandhi was following in the British tradition of divide and rule.

In this chaotic environment, small groups of Sikhs, mostly young, some with military careers behind them, began to raise the issue of a separate Sikh state. The objective was typically not well defined. Though some Sikhs living in Britain and the United States had been campaigning for an independent nation of Khalistan for many years, the issue had not been taken seriously by most Sikhs in India. Indifference might have continued to characterize popular attitudes, but with the government's indiscriminate punishments for Sikh militancy, including stopping all Sikhs traveling to New Dehli for the Asian Games in 1982, sympathies began to shift.

Meanwhile, the root causes of the problems around which Sikhs were beginning to mobilize for resistance had not been addressed, and the Akalis, still the main Sikh political party, despite increasing

fragmentation, were too weak to lobby effectively for their resolution. The government refused to negotiate, under the pretext that the Akalis themselves were separatist, alternating that approach with the negotiation of agreements that it never implemented. Essentially the central government had no interest in appearing to give in to the demands of a small group when the cost might be a serious loss of electoral support in the Hindi-speaking heartland of northern India. This concern on the part of the center for the reputational effect of the measures that it took, which had not characterized earlier periods of Sikh agitation, had become very important, as evidenced by the Congress Party's rout in the region in the 1977 general election. The Akalis tended to respond in turn by becoming increasingly strident to avoid being completely sidelined by Bhindranwale. He, meanwhile, proceeded to encourage or condone guerrilla tactics to win power and to engage in a military buildup in the precincts of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the traditional seat of spiritual and temporal authority of the Sikhs. These bandwagoning effects increased the odds of violence. The situation exploded when the government used the army to attack Bhindranwale's fortified position in the Golden Temple. The move was a military success when Bhindranwale and some key followers were killed. Politically it was consistent with Mrs. Gandhi's desire to signal toughness to the rest of India's population and prevent the loss of votes to the Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Additional consequences, however, were disastrous. For Sikhs it was not unlike what Catholics might feel were the Vatican to be invaded. A whole new generation of militants was created. Then followed the assassination of Mrs. Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguard in October, the organized killings of Sikhs in cities across northern India (including the capital), and the sweeping electoral victory of Mrs. Gandhi's son Rajiv in December. The electoral campaign was marked by the use of advertisements deliberately suggesting that all Sikhs posed a threat to the nation and its unity. Hence Sikhs who had not supported Bhindranwale or even the Akalis were ascribed negative motivations and intentions solely on the basis of their cultural identity and religious preference. The message conveyed by this campaign was that if you were a Sikh, you were not to be trusted.

Subsequent events up to the present have involved a playing out of the government's strategy. Since it disposes over military and

other resources far greater than any Sikh militants could muster, even with liberal covert aid from Pakistan, the center has essentially won a war of attrition. Militants have typically been killed upon arrest in faked encounters to avoid the delays of the legal process. New laws have given the center draconian powers, essentially suspending all civil liberties in Punjab.

The center has continued to periodically negotiate with various Sikh politicians, sometimes coming to agreements, but never carrying them out. The general population, once the trauma of the attack on the Golden Temple and subsequent pogroms had faded, slowly came to prefer the organized and predictable violence of the government, which at least allowed it to go about its daily business, to the increasingly desperate and arbitrary violence of the militants. The insurgency had also become a cover for purely criminal activity, as there was no coherent leadership and no clear objectives beyond separation from India.

In 1991 state elections were held after a record-breaking stretch of direct rule by the central government (including periods of essentially military occupation). Boycotted by opposition Sikh parties, the elections nevertheless resulted in the installation of a Sikh chief minister from the ruling Congress Party. The state government doubled its already large deficit in the following year doling out money to appease as many as possible.[14] At this time, it seems that the center has succeeded in its objectives in Punjab since absolutely nothing has been conceded politically, while the level of violence, after a massive increase through the 1980s, has been greatly reduced.

In sum, while cultural conflict in India is a deeper structural problem, with its roots in discriminatory resource allocation, the present crisis was triggered by the growing instability of the political party system and the first oil shock, which strained the government's fiscal capacity, weakened its allocative and distributive institutions, and helped to undermine a social contract based on the government's taking the lead in trying to achieve economic growth as well as a more equitable distribution of income. This situation evoked widespread challenges to the elected central government that continued through the 1970s and several changes of government.

In short, the present crisis is associated with the central state's gradual loss of its grip on power. Under these conditions, an institutional analysis must focus on changing cost-benefit calculus from

the perception of the center and from the perception of peripheral cultural groups in relation to the center. In the case of Punjab, its strategic and economic importance for India and the reputation effects involved for the central government—namely, the Congress Party as it tried to maintain power—made it inevitable that the center would hesitate to make any concessions. Even concessions that were negotiated were never delivered, or they were offered with conditions that made them unacceptable. If the response of those making demands was ultimately violent, this was partly a rational negotiating strategy since the actual perpetrators of violence have been those with little to lose from such a course of action.[15] The only logical response of the central government was an even greater level of violence. This has been the consistent policy of the Indian government ever since independence since its prime imperative is its dominance over its sphere of control.

Finally, with regard to the argument that the weakening of the central state raises the odds of violent cultural conflict, it is worth noting that the executive branch of the central government in India has gradually eroded the checks and balances provided by the legislative and judicial branches. The legislature has tended to be an adjunct of the executive, and the judiciary is easily overruled, in addition to being overburdened. Thus in India institutions for the resolution of conflict through arbitration are extremely weak. When those institutions are weakened, violent conflict becomes a more rational choice.

KASHMIR[16]

The Kashmir issue, with the western and northwestern part of the area under Pakistani administration and the northeastern corner controlled by China, has intrinsically a more international character than the conflict in Punjab. The focus here is on the part under Indian administration and conflict between Kashmiris there and the central Indian government. It is a heterogeneous region, including the Kashmir Valley, which is mostly under Indian control and the center of current conflict. To the north lie the regions of Hunza, Gilgit, and Baltistan, which are mainly under Pakistani control. To the south are

Poonch and Jammu, the latter representing a Hindu majority region. To the east is Ladakh, which is primarily Buddhist.

Despite the differences, the conflict in Kashmir has many parallels to the conflict in Punjab. In particular the case illustrates how even when political entrepreneurs like Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah struggle to emphasize class and social divisions, if central regimes recognize cultural cleavages over social and economic cleavages in the political arena, those cultural cleavages are likely to become politically charged. Pakistan's involvement in the crisis has tipped the balance toward cultural (as opposed to class or ideological) conflict. Its support for Kashmir's incorporation into Muslim Pakistan mobilized Kashmiri Hindus to struggle for incorporation into India. Because opposing forces were mobilized as cultural groups, cultural conflict was assured, despite the efforts of secular politicians like Nehru and Abdullah.

POLITICAL IDENTITY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Since it is geographically more separate from the northern Indian plains than Punjab, Kashmir has also enjoyed longer periods of autonomy. It is singular among the regions of India in having a chronicle of its rulers written as long as a millennium ago, the *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana.[17] Hinduism and Buddhism flourished in early Kashmir, with Islam making substantial inroads here as in the rest of India. Kashmir retained its autonomy until 1586, when it was incorporated into the Mughal empire by Akbar. Since Indian rulers are perceived as successors to Mughal kings, it has been suggested that 1586 marks the watershed in Kashmiri history, dividing it between periods of Kashmiri and non-Kashmiri rule. This notion of a watershed continues to color relations between the region and the central Indian government.[18]

The modern history of Kashmir is of course more complicated than this simple dichotomy suggests. As the Mughal empire waned, the control of Kashmir also slipped from the center in Dehli. For a time, Ranjit Singh of the Sikhs and Punjab succeeded in establishing domination over Kashmir. Control then passed to Hindu Dogra rulers, descendants of a general in Ranjit Singh's army. Concentrated in Jammu and nearby foothill areas (now in the Indian state of Hi-

machal Pradesh), the Dogra spread their dominion over all the regions of Kashmir. In the colonial period and as was the case with other Indian princes, they were essentially subservient to British power on the subcontinent. The strategically important northwestern regions of Hunza and Gilgit were administered directly by the British.

The salient point in this context is that the Dogras were perceived by the inhabitants of the Kashmir Valley as outsiders, and rule by "outsiders" continued even after the lapse of Mughal control. The relationship between Dogra rulers and various subjects served to charge identity in the region and infuse it with political relevance. As I shall elaborate below, there was a Kashmiri identity which overlapped with but also often overrode the Muslim political identity which has come to be stressed in the current conflict.[19] This Kashmiri cultural identity was supported by a distinctive language and traditions, though such statements apply more to central Kashmir than its peripheral areas, which are somewhat distinct in their own right.

Because the rulers were Dogra Rajputs, that group was directly favored in the ruling structures over other inhabitants—Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or Sikh. For example, at one stage, 60 percent of certain government posts went to Dogras, despite lower average educational qualifications.[20] Thus, while Muslims were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, Hindus such as Kashmiri Pandits were also less favored by the rulers.

PREINDEPENDENCE AND PARTITION

In 1931 there was a Muslim upsurge against the ruler, sparked by religious and social issues. The writings of those involved suggest that the focus of the revolt was more the feudal regime than religious difference, a circumstance that became explicit in 1938, when Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah split from the Muslim Conference, the main Muslim grouping in Kashmir. He formed the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (AJKNC), which described the 1931 events as "a war of the oppressed against the oppressor . . . to seek justice and redress. If the ruler was Muslim and the subjects Hindus, the war would have been fought on similar grounds."

Not surprisingly, the Maharaja of Kashmir portrayed events differently, as a conflict between Muslims and Hindus. Thus governing bodies rather than popular groups redefined a *conflict over perceived inequality* as a *conflict over cultural identity*. The maharaja found support from both existing Hindu groups in the rest of India and new Hindu parties he encouraged in Kashmir.[21] Furthermore, a section of Muslims themselves had its own preference for using religious demarcations for political ends.

Thus we can trace the existence of two starkly competing paradigms for understanding events in Kashmir: one based on religious difference, the other on class or economic difference. While central authorities at the top stressed cultural difference as the key political division in society, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah stressed class divisions in his political mobilization efforts. While the AJKNC welcomed all cultural groups and secular membership into its ranks, Muslim landlords opposed the AJKNC because it did not support them *as Muslims* and they were criticized as one of the oppressors. Indeed the socialist ideology of the AJKNC permitted a natural alliance with the INC, dominated by Jawaharlal Nehru, himself a Kashmiri Pandit. Thus these conflicting interpretations of the source of conflict embodied a competition of two political "logics" for dominance: identity politics vs. class-based political struggle. Nevertheless, the fact that over 70 percent of the population of Kashmir (and over 90 percent of the valley) was Muslim and that it made up an even larger fraction of the less well off undeniably led to a conflation of the two sources of difference. With added encouragement from the center, identity politics came to dominate.

By 1946, when the partition of India was beginning to appear certain, the AJKNC had irrevocably parted ways with the All India Muslim League led by Jinnah, deliberately choosing to seek an arrangement with the INC that would provide for accession to India but with maximum autonomy for Kashmir. Nonetheless, identity politics seemed to dominate the struggle as it escalated to violence. At a time when the rest of India was beset by protests and fierce fighting, in Bengal, Punjab, and other areas, Jinnah's All-India Muslim League began its "direct action" campaign on 16 August 1946, and there followed a wave of violence and counterviolence.

In Kashmir, Abdullah reiterated his commitment to freedom based on opposition to princely state authority (as opposed to free-

dom based on Muslim identity). He had already called for an end to Maharaja Hari Singh's sovereignty, making references to the French and Russian revolutions. In January 1947 the AJKNC boycotted state elections because the franchise was limited and they were organized on communal lines, with seats reserved for different cultural groups. The Muslim Conference participated and established its strength in areas such as Poonch. Its policies echoed those of Jinnah, and because the AJKNC, composed primarily of Muslims, was tarred with the brush of identity politics despite its secular ideological platform, Hari Singh responded by using Hindu and Sikh troops to suppress agitation by both the Muslim Conference and the AJKNC.

On 15 July 1947, the British formally announced that British India would be partitioned into Pakistan and India. On 25 July, Viceroy Mountbatten met with India's semi-independent princes and offered them a choice as to whether they wished to belong to Pakistan or India. The criteria were contiguous borders or communication with Pakistan or India, and there was some lip service to obeying the "will of the people." By the time of partition, many princes accepted one dominion or another. Most Muslim contiguous states acceded to Pakistan, while most of the others acceded to India. Hari Singh, hoping for autonomy, delayed making a decision. He signed a Standstill Agreement with Pakistan on 15 August, the day of independence.[22] He also offered such an agreement with India, but the Indian leaders prevaricated. Thus at the time of Indian independence and Pakistan's creation, Kashmir's fate was undecided.

THE FIRST KASHMIR WAR

Especially in Poonch and other areas bordering Pakistan, the violence associated with the partition and Indian independence had also spilled over into Kashmir. In June 1947 there was the "no-tax" protest, resulting in the formation of a secessionist movement in Poonch province.[23] In mid-August martial law was imposed, accompanied by widespread violence and revolt. At the same time, attacks on Muslims in Jammu, which some said were linked to Hari Singh's government, led to the emigration of hundreds of thousands of Muslims. There was also a controversy over supplies from Pakistan to Kashmir, which were guaranteed under the Standstill Agreement but

which both Kashmir and the Indian office accused Pakistan of deliberately withholding.[24] Pakistan simply blamed shortages on the violence in the region itself.

Tribal groups from the Pakistan-Afghanistan border were already supplying arms to Poonch, as well as taking part in some of the fighting. The fighting also spread to the Mirpur District in Jammu. There is evidence that Pakistani regulars were involved, although the government of Pakistan of course denied any official involvement at that time. Apparently the military command of the "resistance" as it gradually took shape was headed by Muslim rebels, sympathizers from Pakistan, and officers who had deserted Hari Singh's government.

The revolt was fairly successful, worrying Singh's government enough to motivate concessions to both the AJKNC and Nehru, who, sharing ideological sympathies, was on friendly terms with Sheikh Abdullah of the AJKNC. Abdullah, who had been imprisoned, was released on 29 September. At the same time, evidence "makes it clear that [India and the state of Jammu and Kashmir] were heavily engaged in the planning of some kind of Indian military intervention."[25] In early October a battalion entered Kashmir from the friendly princely state of Patiala. These developments may have been viewed with fear and alarm by Pakistan and by those Muslims in Kashmir who wished to ally themselves with Pakistan. On the evening of 21 October, Pathan tribespeople, Muslims, Pakistanis, and rebellious Kashmiri mutineers took over towns in Poonch, and by the next morning they came very close to the summer capital, Srinagar. What actually happened next is not entirely clear.

The Information Service of India stated that Kashmir was simply "invaded" by foreign troops and rebels, while others claim that tribespeople helped the local forces counter a planned Indian invasion.[26] In any case, on 24 October, the state of Azad Kashmir was proclaimed, with central Indian authorities occupying Poonch, Gilgit, and surrounding areas. Hari Singh then grudgingly signed an accession order with India, allowing for the possibility that Abdullah would head the government in exchange for Indian military assistance.[27]

Nonetheless, the war dragged on, and by May 1948 Pakistani regulars were officially involved at the front. In Mountbatten's negotiations with Jinnah (Mountbatten was the governor general of

India, while Jinnah was the governor general of Pakistan), India agreed to a UN-supervised election for the whole country, but Pakistan insisted that the terms of partition settled the matter: Kashmir was a Muslim-dominated state that had a contiguous border with Pakistan; therefore Kashmir should accede to Pakistan. The war lasted until a cease-fire was signed in January 1949. On 27 July 1949, the Karachi Agreement created a border based on military positions, resulting in a de facto partitioning of Kashmir.

It is significant that the Indian leadership, in recognizing that Sheikh Abdullah was the key to the accession of Kashmir to India, realized that he had to be offered something in return. In a letter to Sardar Vallabbhai Patel (an important INC leader who became India's first home minister), Nehru wrote that Abdullah was "very anxious to keep out of Pakistan and relies upon us a great deal for advice. But at the same time he cannot carry his people with him unless he has something definite to place before them."[28] This was in fact the assurance of Indian leaders that accession would be subject to approval of the people of Kashmir, and this commitment was made a part of the Instrument of Accession.

KASHMIR IN INDIA

After the cease-fire, the Indian government had two conflicting tasks: placating demands by Hindu nationalists to integrate Kashmir fully into the Indian union and keeping Kashmiri leaders satisfied enough to maintain their support for the union. The second aspect was the progressive change in the balance between these two sides, with a long-run trend toward eroding any special status for Kashmir.

These two forces were at work right from the beginning of Kashmir's inclusion in India. Sheikh Abdullah took over the leadership of the government with a title equivalent to prime minister, emphasizing his special status. At the same time, India admitted Kashmiri representatives to discussions on the framing of the new constitution, even as the United Nations was attempting to sort out the issue of how popular approval of accession to India would be decided. In 1949 it was already being suggested in India that the will of the people might be determined by elected representatives rather than directly by a plebiscite in Kashmir.[29]

The constitution of 1950, under Article 370, did provide the state of Jammu and Kashmir several rights specific only to that state. Aside from matters of defense, external affairs, and communications, everything would theoretically be under the control of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.[30] In late 1951 elections were held for Kashmir's constituent assembly, resulting in an overwhelming majority for the AJKNC, which the Indian leadership chose to interpret as a show of support for Kashmir's inclusion in India. At the same time, Hindu nationalist groups began to demand the abrogation of Article 370 and the full incorporation of Kashmir into India. The logic of identity politics now came to dominate Kashmir's fate, even as Abdullah struggled for secularism and a recognition of class divisions.

The balance was tipped in favor of identity politics when, in 1952, Abdullah launched a major program of land reform, which was opposed by the central government on the grounds that it would adversely affect mainly large non-Muslim landholders. Despite reaffirmation by Nehru to Abdullah in July 1952 of Kashmir's special role and autonomy, relations rapidly deteriorated, and Abdullah was arrested on 8 August 1953. The Indian leadership appeared to fear that Abdullah would attempt to move toward independence for Kashmir.

Whereas India had viewed Abdullah as indispensable at the time of accession, it was now able to use its military presence and other resources to replace him with a more pliable leader of the AJKNC. There followed a period of about twenty years of manipulated elections, bribery of Kashmiri leaders through the resulting guarantee of power and patronage, and gradual erosion of Kashmir's constitutional autonomy. Article 370 was untouched in some respects (such as restrictions on ownership of Kashmiri land by non-Kashmiris), but it was attenuated significantly. Most important, on 14 May 1954, Constitutional Order 1954 was issued which extended the power of the center over more than defense, communications, and foreign affairs. Over time, then, little was left of the special status of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.[31]

Dissent simmered in the state throughout this period. Abdullah was released from prison in 1958 but soon rearrested. Further moves were made toward removing Kashmir's special status. In 1963 the sixteenth amendment to the constitution obliged all candidates to uphold the integrity of India. This and other measures made a posi-

tion supporting a plebiscite in Kashmir essentially treasonous. In 1965, tension along the cease-fire line in Kashmir erupted into a war between India and Pakistan which ended in a stalemate, as had the earlier conflict over Kashmir.[32]

Sheikh Abdullah continued to be in and out of prison. As autonomy within India receded as a possibility, the other two options, independence and merger with Pakistan, gained adherents. But India's victory in the 1971 war that created Bangladesh and the subsequent Shimla Pact between India and Pakistan, which recognized the division of Kashmir, persuaded Abdullah to negotiate an agreement with Indira Gandhi, now seemingly the undisputed leader at the center. He returned to power as chief minister of Kashmir, and in exchange for accepting Kashmir as an integral part of India, he was given assurance that all acts and ordinances issued after his arrest in 1953 would be reviewed.

THE CURRENT CRISIS

In 1977 elections that marked the end of Mrs. Gandhi's state of internal emergency saw an overwhelming victory for Abdullah over both the main national parties. These were probably the first free and fair elections in Kashmir. But there followed a period of political instability at the center that undermined these positive developments. In particular, a proposed review of acts and ordinances never took place. In 1982 Sheikh Abdullah chose his son Farooq, who was a doctor rather than a professional politician, to succeed him in power. Sheikh Abdullah died in the same year.

After 1982 the political situation deteriorated rapidly. Farooq Abdullah did not have the leadership credentials or ability of his father. Corruption increased dramatically. Political alliances in Kashmir were made and broken with rapidity. Farooq Abdullah was in and out of power. There was a return to the rigging of elections. The earlier changes in Kashmir's status allowed for increasingly direct and heavy-handed central intervention. By the late 1980s Farooq Abdullah's government was resorting to violence to control popular dissent. That dissent was blamed on Pakistan and Pakistani sympathizers.

After 1990 Farooq Abdullah was removed from power again and replaced by direct rule from the center, through the agency of the appointed governor of the state. The level of violence and repression escalated and has continued at a relatively high level until recently. Surprisingly, just as in Punjab, there is now some indication that the central government has been successful in containing the dissidents, who remain split between those still seeking independence and those who prefer a merger with Pakistan. Both of these groups are exclusively Muslim, and non-Muslims have become explicit targets for their violence, though Muslims who do not support either course of action are also attacked. However, recently the level of rhetoric has altered, and there is a good chance that violence will subside. One can only speculate as to the mechanism used to achieve this change. The experience in Punjab and elsewhere suggests that open force has been combined with secret bribes or concessions.

COMPARISONS

Punjab and Kashmir are strikingly different. Sikhs in Punjab remained a minority, while Muslims in Kashmir constituted an overwhelming majority. The class or occupational structure was also different. In Punjab, Jats, traditionally peasants, comprised the majority of Sikhs, but landholdings were relatively equal and farmers generally did well. In Kashmir the distribution of land was much more unequal, with Muslims generally at the bottom rungs of the ladder. For Muslims in Kashmir, discrimination extended to other occupations as well: they were relatively worse off in education and in the professions and government. In Punjab many Sikhs maintained a close traditional affinity with Hindus, while in Kashmir there was a clear religious cleavage between Muslims and non-Muslims, reinforced by the existence of a large Muslim community in Pakistan (in addition to the even larger world Islamic community). For Sikhs there was no external group with which to merge or to turn to for aid.

The course of events in the two regions has also differed in several respects over the last few decades. Language became a rallying point for Sikhs after independence, while it remained a nonis-

sue for Muslims in Kashmir. Punjab after partition became a full part of India on the same terms as other provinces; it contained several small princely states, but these were absorbed routinely into the Indian state of Punjab. The course of events in Kashmir, however, involved a gradual and continual erosion of initial promises of autonomy. Thus conflict in Punjab involved attempts to gain greater autonomy, while in Kashmir the issue was preserving whatever had been promised. As Kashmiri autonomy eroded, however, the two conflicts became more similar since both sought more freedom from central control and the politics of identity came to dominate the struggle.

In 1965–66 the interests of Kashmiris and Sikhs collided to some extent. Pakistan certainly had support from some Kashmiris in the 1965 war with India, though significantly less than it expected. Sikhs at this time were solidly behind India. Their heavy presence and strong performance in the Indian armed forces has been cited as a factor in the decision at the center to create a Punjabi-speaking (and Sikh-majority) state by further partitioning Punjab in 1966. The 1965 war helped to solidify Indian control of Kashmir by demonstrating that it would not be easy to wrest it away militarily.

The 1966 decision, however, carried the seeds of further problems. It gave the Akali Dal a striking success, its first perhaps since the Gurdwara Reform Movement of the 1920s. At the same time, the decision left unresolved issues which would be available in the future as political capital. In Kashmir by this time, the avowedly nonreligious AJKNC had been weakened sufficiently and its policies thwarted, so that religious groupings gained a credibility they had not had in Kashmir before and at the time of independence.[33] Thus starting from very different initial conditions, Punjab and Kashmir moved closer together in terms of the issues with which they confronted the central government and the dominance of cultural conflict. In both cases, the most useful and powerful political mobilizing dimension appeared to be religion, and the desire was for greater political autonomy for religious groups. In both cases, identity politics came to dominate all other political logics.

In searching for answers as to what underlay the desire for autonomy, primordial explanations are sometimes cited as a motivating factor. This answer assumes a desire to be separate purely on the basis of being a Sikh or a Muslim. But as we have seen, this was

not the case in earlier periods. Both Sikhs and Kashmiri Muslims to some extent chose to be associated with India. It could be that there were restrictions on the free practice of religion for these groups, but again this does not seem to have been the case: religious institutions and practices were always respected by the central state in postpartition India.

Indeed cultural identity was at issue in both cases, and religion operated as a politically powerful mobilizing force. Religious identity was the seed that grew to an overarching politicized cultural identity. In the case of Punjab, the status of the language and associated script became a major irritant in relations between Sikhs and the center. For Kashmiris, the general sense of a Kashmiri identity, which was a regional identity but also Muslim (because of the Muslim majority), was threatened by central attempts to solidify Kashmir's place in the Indian union.

It might seem that many of the demands from the regional groupings were relatively innocuous and could have been resolved with less violence. However, the fact that minority religions were the identifying characteristics of the demand groups conditioned the state response. From the center's point of view, therefore, strategic considerations in both cases militated against autonomy, while economic arguments for retaining tight control were stronger for Punjab than for Kashmir.

The conditions for potential conflict between the center and culturally defined political groups also existed to some extent in other Indian regions. There too the result has often been violent conflict. Yet the two cases studied here stand out in terms of the duration and relative intractability of the problems. Despite their initially different characteristics, the nature of the two conflicts has become somewhat parallel. Several reasons may be adduced for this development.

First, to the extent that the disagreements involve cultural groups that are avowedly different from the Hindu majority, there is less accommodation on both sides. This is true even though Hinduism itself is an amorphous entity, with significant cultural overlaps among different religious groups in the same region but great differences across regions.[34] What is significant is not only that Sikhs and Muslims stand out as different, but that this difference makes it harder for any central government to make concessions to them, as

doing so is seen as appeasing a group that glories in its separateness. This is a theme that is continually harped on by Hindu groups that have been attempting to redefine a Greater Hindu identity. In this respect, the conflicts in Punjab and Kashmir have an important common thread that can be attributed to the growing political relevance of cultural identity in both regions. Ironically the growing politicization of cultural identity that the center abhors is stimulated and maintained by institutions that politicize culture in "secular" India.

A final parallel in the two conflicts is the impact of exogenous geopolitical events. In particular, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan clearly had a major impact on the two conflicts. It took place in December 1979, capping a period of several years of instability in that country. The invasion increased Pakistan's strategic importance in the region since it became the haven for Afghan rebels and a conduit for American arms and supplies to them. Many of these arms, as well as some captured from the Soviets, found their way into Punjab and Kashmir. Pakistan also became aggressive in promoting dissidence in the two Indian states. These geopolitical changes help explain why Punjab and Kashmir erupted in more intense violence than other parts of India, where in other respects the preconditions for conflict might also have been present.

Thus starting from very different initial conditions, Punjab and Kashmir moved closer in terms of the issues with which they confronted the central government and the methods they employed. As the central state's commitment and power to enforce a secular principle deteriorated, especially in terms of the transition from Nehru to Gandhi, old cultural identities which had been quiescent for a period came springing back to political life. The most useful and powerful mobilizing tool for political entrepreneurs appeared to be religion. Whereas in earlier periods both Sikhs and Kashmiri Muslims to some extent chose to be associated with India, in the recent period sectarian struggle and the desire for autonomy became far more prominent.

In short, these two cases both illustrate the central propositions that guide this volume: institutions that embody political power can create and perpetuate identity politics and are important to our understanding of the political relevance of cultural identity. When those institutions weaken, even slowly, as is evident in the Indian case, cultural differences can become the dominant tool for political

mobilization and rationalization for political conflict. This is especially true when a third party—like Pakistan—encourages and facilitates conflict. In India institutional weakness and flawed institutions themselves have led to conflicts between the center and regions such as Punjab and Kashmir. In each of the cases, I have suggested that the inability of the center to credibly commit itself to courses of action has produced conflict. Weak institutions have led to this inability. In the case of Kashmir this is a process that began right after the constitution was framed. A constitution may be viewed precisely as a device for achieving credible commitment: it makes it hard to change agreements that have constitutional status. But the special status of Kashmir guaranteed in the constitution was rapidly chipped away through amendments and through gap-closing ordinances and legislation. Commitments became less credible. In Punjab, negotiations between Sikh political leaders and the center illustrate a similar problem of commitment. These were typically negotiations outside any legal framework, in the sense that agreements reached could not be enforced by a court. This effectively removed incentives for the center to implement the agreements ex post.

The two cases suggest that the institutional problems in India that encourage cultural conflict can be generalized. First, the constitution is too easily amended. Second, the courts have too limited a jurisdiction vis-à-vis the legislative/executive branch of the government. In either case, the inability of the center to make credible commitments reduces the range of mutually beneficial agreements that can be achieved and exacerbates the potential for conflict.[35] Thus one might argue that institutional reform which strengthens the courts and reduces the mutability of the constitution might help to reduce the likelihood of violent conflicts at the subnational level. Another way of thinking about this is that groups will invest in violence if they think that the expected payoff from more peaceful ways of pursuing their interests is relatively low. More effective mechanisms for negotiation and enforcement of agreements between a sovereign central government and constituent governments will improve this tradeoff toward less violence.

As I have indicated above, this does not mean that institutions are all that matter in explaining cultural conflict. In India, as in many countries, religious identities are often salient. When they overlap

strongly with language, class, geographical contiguity, and other dimensions of identity, that bundle is easily activated. It becomes a tool for political mobilization simply because enough dimensions of material and nonmaterial interests coincide. I would argue that the role of political entrepreneurs in such a process is merely instrumental, in that they effectively package and sell grievances but cannot do so unless they have a sufficient number of concerns to work with. Institutions can create, perpetuate, or ameliorate those concerns. In other words, without tangible resources and either the support or weakening of institutional constraints, no political entrepreneur will be able to create ethnic conflict out of thin air. Since much collective action is about access to resources, the key question is why some demands are more likely to become violent than others. Here I would suggest that this will occur when institutions for bargaining are weak, and this may apply more to such regional groups than (say) to groups organized on principles such as employment,[36] though it is also the case that the strength of identification with one's fellow workers is unlikely to match that created by religion, language, and ethnicity.

Ironically in the case of Kashmir, central political institutions created the monster of identity politics, mobilizing the population to demand accession to Pakistan. Even support of the central authorities for a secular politician like Abdullah—in order to ensure closer ties with India—could not transform cultural conflict once it had started down its slippery slope. Political entrepreneurs are essential in mobilizing cultural groups; entrepreneurs emphasizing class or ideological divisions in society are less successful where political institutions have provided incentives for the practice of identity politics.

Finally, the case comparison suggests that while economic inequalities can exacerbate conflict, they are not always the essential ingredient of cultural conflict. Even though Punjabi agriculture benefitted from the Green Revolution and farmers were subsidized in some ways, the popular perception was one of being exploited for food supplies without commensurate returns. It has been argued that industrial investment in Punjab was generally curtailed because of its strategic border position. The same point about lack of industrial investment may be made about Kashmir, though in this case the

rationale for such investment seems weaker. Economic issues mattered in both cases, but in Punjab they seemed to matter more.

In contrast to other cases in this volume, cultural conflict at least in Punjab is likely to be muted by the economic liberalization taking place there.[37] Two points are salient. First, a freeing up of restrictions on foreign and domestic investment will allow a more natural course of development to occur in Punjab and defuse some of the conflicts over how to slice the economic pie. This view is perhaps supported by the muted response to the assassination of the Punjabi chief minister in September 1995. Second, to the extent that liberalization leads to economic growth, that growth will allow the center to more effectively bribe away dissidence. It has de facto been pursuing this strategy in Punjab, despite the overall pressure on central government finances. But of course this is only a short-term solution. In fact, one might speculate that the increasing inability of the center to do this in the 1980s, as government finances came under greater pressure, may also have contributed to the increase in internal cultural conflict in India. Reversing the trends in government finances may help in defusing conflict in other spheres.

NOTES

1. Useful general and specific background readings on India include, without being comprehensive, Chopra, ed. (1982), Dasgupta (1970, 1977), George (1986), Gupta (1978), Jeffrey (1986), Kohli (1989), Kohli, ed. (1988), Manor (1988), and Rudolph and Rudolph (1986).
2. An excellent reference on the Sikhs is Hawley and Mann, eds. (1993), particularly Chapter 7, by Gurinder Singh Mann. This book also has a comprehensive bibliography, so I shall not cite detailed references on the Sikhs here.
3. Of course reducing all decision-making, including that involving nonmaterial benefits, has the danger of being tautological, but it does push one to look for explanations rather than appealing to irrationality or imponderables.
4. This was not a theocratic state: Sikhs remained a minority of the population, and Ranjit Singh followed a policy of religious inclusiveness in his government.

5. Two recent contributions to the understanding of the modern period in Sikh history are Fox (1985) and Kapur (1986). I believe neither of these is a completely accurate analysis, but each has some value.
6. Although both Sikhs and Muslims, neither of which are monolithic groupings, were represented in minor political parties on the left and in the INC, the main Sikh party could validly claim to represent the majority of Sikhs.
7. In fact, Sikh leaders involved in the framing of the constitution refused to sign a document they said did not keep in any sense the admittedly vague promises of autonomy made to them by the leaders of the INC.
8. A particularly striking illustration of this packaging effect comes from Haryana. Not only was "Haryanvi" created as a semi-official name for what had been a dialect closer in sound and spirit to Punjabi than to official Sanskritized Hindi, but an educational formula that required teaching Hindi and a regional language (or Sanskrit) in all schools was applied in Haryana by requiring Telegu, a South Indian language, rather than Punjabi! This was clearly a step beyond the postindependence language dispute in the census referred to above.
9. The best example of this is of course Tamil Nadu. The central government typically enters into an alliance with one or other of the two main Tamil parties, while the central opposition sides with the one left over. Regional autonomy at one stage extended to the Tamil Nadu government's practically pursuing an independent, albeit covert, foreign policy with regard to the Tamil rebels in Sri Lanka.
10. After this contribution was completed, I became aware of two detailed, recent analyses of the Punjab situation—Telford (1992) and Chima (1994). The reader is referred to them for additional detail beyond that presented here.
11. The Punjab rural economy was unable to absorb Sikh young people in jobs they judged acceptable, which is why unemployment as an issue is consistent with the influx of migrant labor.
12. The use of the term "fundamentalist" is problematic since it has many connotations, but it does capture Bhindranwale's emphasis on tradition, orthodoxy and differentiation, and opposition to the openness of certain reforms characterizing the Sikh resurgence of the late nineteenth century.
13. Whereas earlier leaders looked to Western models such as the British colonists or the Soviet revolutionists for ideologies that would provide coherence to their communities, Bhindranwale spoke of Sikhism in terms that emphasized its similarity to Islam (as well as Judaism and Christianity) and distinction from Hinduism.
14. The figures are in Chelliah, Rao, and Sen (1993), though the interpretation of state expenditure activities is mine and not theirs.
15. A formal economic model to demonstrate the rationality of conflict is in Grossman (1991), though his model does not necessarily capture the salient features of the cases under discussion. His paper has additional references

on formal models of conflict based on rational pursuit of material goals. See also Hirshleifer (1991).

16. The term "Kashmir" will be used as shorthand for the area contained within the boundaries of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.
17. See Stein (1979) for one translation.
18. Puri (1990) states, "A part of their distrust of Delhi is a reflection of their perception of the present rulers as successors of the Mughal kings whose role is flaunted by them in Kashmir to establish their secular credentials." This has a striking parallel in the position taken by Bhindranwale and other Sikh militants in Punjab.
19. This point is further developed in a report on a seminar on Kashmiri tradition (Puri 1990).
20. This material is drawn from Navlakha (1991).
21. Interestingly the Sikhs in Kashmir, who created their own political group on religious lines, were more aligned with the Hindus in this situation. This may have reflected history, class, and a reaction to the rise of the All-India Muslim League, rather than any religious affinities.
22. Indian princely states made Standstill Agreements with either Pakistan or India to keep relations the same as they had been with British India until the state decided to accede to Pakistan or India.
23. See Lamb (1991): 123.
24. See Information Service of India (1956): 5–6.
25. See Lamb (1991): 130.
26. Rizvi (1992) quotes Moore's analysis, "[which] establishes beyond reasonable doubt that the scheme of [Pakistani] invasion originally emerged spontaneously among the tribes as a response to [attacks] against Muslims in East Punjab and the Maharaja's [Hari Singh's] territories."
27. Again the facts are not entirely clear. Certainly Singh signed the order on 26 October. But Lamb (1991), interpreting one of the diplomatic records, finds that the actual signing of the accession agreement took place *after* Indian military support started. This weakens India's argument that its military support was justified on the basis of an accession order. The only legally binding document in place was the Standstill Agreement with Pakistan. Although this seems a technicality, it does give a feeling of the type of debate that would fill many UN volumes. The possibility that Abdullah would head the government was not in the accession document.
28. The letter is cited in Navlakha (1991).
29. See *ibid.*, p. 2954.
30. An extensive discussion and interpretation of this constitution-making process, with reference to Kashmir, as well as its broader implications, is in *ibid.*

31. Other laws were introduced outlawing activities that disputed the integrity of India, its flag, or its constitution. By 1957 a new constitution was put into place modeled on the Indian one, and accession to India was accepted by the constituent assembly of Kashmir. A complete chronology can be found in Appendix I in Bose et al. (1990).
32. Lamb (1991) views Pakistan as much more the instigator in 1965 than in 1947. He suggests that Pakistani leaders overestimated the support of the Kashmiri population in the case of such a conflict. This is consistent with the notion that the Kashmiris would prefer some form of autonomy to domination by India or Pakistan, even though the latter may be the only realistic options.
33. Both Sheikh Abdullah and his replacement, his brother-in-law Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, might be labeled "populist", but whereas the former implemented policies toward land reform and greater availability of primary education, the latter focused more on policies such as food subsidies. These were abolished by Abdullah when he came back to power.
34. An extreme position would be that the heterogeneity of beliefs and cultures across India makes the term "Hindu" an artificial construct when applied in a religious sense. Certainly the current emphasis among some political organizations in actively promoting the concept of "Hindutva" suggests that artificiality. However, the point to be made is not that Hinduism is naturally monolithic, but that there is a commonness among enough Hindus so that Sikhs and Muslims had too much otherness to have their demands easily accommodated.
35. A counterargument is that actually the flexibility is good, in the sense that it allows pressures to be accommodated and so reduces the potential for conflict. Thus if the center in India was facing increasing pressure from the Hindu nationalist end of the political spectrum, it was beneficial that it could amend the constitution easily with respect to Kashmir's special status. But it remains true that the possibility of additional commitment expands the available range of options without ruling out noncommitment options or renegotiation. If, for example, Kashmiris had veto power with respect to changes in special provisions affecting them, they could have been bribed to accept such changes. This still does not rule out the possibility of things entirely falling apart in such a situation.
36. One can trace violence in these contexts as well. See Rudolph and Rudolph (1986), for example.
37. Kerala, in the south of India, is a state that has competing minorities and has been relatively ill-treated by the center but has not erupted in violent conflict. In addition to substantial differences in strategic location and historical development (e.g., education levels) as compared to Punjab and Kashmir, Kerala in the early 1980s saw its people well placed to take advantage of their better education in jobs in the oil-rich Middle East.

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