Alternatives in Mobilization: Ethnicity and Religion

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The question

Observation and question
Ethnicity and religion variously mobilized across transgressive and contained contentious politics. What determines which identity is mobilized?

Literature: Explanations for why a particular identity is mobilized
Cross-cutting cleavages (Lijphart 1977, Selway 2011)
**Puzzle 1**
Violent conflict most common between groups that share religious identity (Fox 2016, Svensson and Nilsson 2018)

**Puzzle 2**
Ethnic MWC’s neither common nor stable (Borman 2019)
Our Theory

Argument: Alternatives in Mobilization

Variation in relative group size and intersection of cleavages helps explain the above and potentially other conundrums in the mobilization of identity, across transgressive and contained political settings.

Refines the idea about the effect of shared identities to suggest that, conditional on the identity group’s relative size, shared secondary cleavages mitigate or motivate political conflict. When the assumptions of the MWC do not hold, articulates where and which minority led coalition is more likely to mount a credible identity challenge.
Multiple testable implications including:

**The Challenger’s Winning Coalition**

Where demographic conditions allow, members of large minority identity groups left out of, or under-represented through identity-based MWC’s will seek access by redefining the axes of the identity competition to mobilize a potentially oversized Challenger’s Winning Coalition of an alternate identity that is shared with the majority.
New Data: A-Religion

Religion of 1200 socially relevant ethnic groups (AMAR) as mapped in GeoAMAR

- One Political Majority
- Family
  - Animist
  - Buddhist
  - Christian
  - Hindu
  - Islam
  - Jewish
  - No_Religion
  - Sikh
  - Syncretic
  - Tao
  - Yazidi

- Political Minorities
Testing the CWC in civil war

The marginal effect of changing demographic balance on the probability of religious claims in ethnic civil war

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Exploring the CWC in electoral politics: Indonesia

Several hundred language groups
15 Ethnic groups comprise 85% of pop.
Exploring the CWC in electoral politics: Indonesia

5 Official religions

Islam (87%)
Christianity (Protestant and Catholic) (10.2%)
Hinduism (1.6%)
Buddhism (less than 1%)
Confucianism (less than 1%)
Conclusions

- Significant support for the idea that large excluded minorities mobilize a shared identity in a bid for increased access.
- Transgressive politics: Civil war cross national and case narratives.
- Contained politics: Elections in Indonesia.