Elite Parties and Poor Voters: Theory and Evidence from India

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*W*hy do poor people often vote against their material interests? This article extends the study of this global paradox to the non-Western world by considering how it manifests within India, the world's biggest democracy. Arguments derived from studies of advanced democracies (such as values voting) or of poor polities (such as patronage and ethnic appeals) fail to explain this important phenomenon. Instead, I outline a novel strategy predicated on an electoral division of labor enabling elite parties to recruit the poor while retaining the rich. Recruitment is outsourced to nonparty affiliates that provide basic services to appeal to poor communities. Such outsourcing permits the party to maintain programmatic linkages to its elite core. Empirically, I test this argument with qualitative and quantitative evidence, including a survey of more than 9,000 voters. Theoretically, I argue that this approach is best suited to elite parties with thick organizations, typically those linked to religious social movements.

*W*hy do poor people in poor countries often support parties that do not champion their programmatic interests? How do parties that represent elite policy interests win mass support? Conventional explanations to these questions have emphasized one of three expansionary strategies: programmatic shifts, patronage, or "distracting" appeals to a voter's moral values or social identity. Yet each of these arguments is limited in its ability to explain elite party success among poor voters, especially outside the universe of wealthy Western democracies. First, the powerful and privileged bases of these parties often constrain them from pursuing redistributive programmatic shifts that would undermine the elite interests. Second, most elite actors in the global south have primarily operated as opposition parties. Consequently, unlike the longtime incumbent parties common to these regions (notably catch-all parties of independence), elite parties have never enjoyed the sustained incumbency needed to develop extensive patronage networks among the poor. Indeed, winning office requires the prior support of these vote-rich electorates, creating a chicken-and-egg dilemma for elite parties in opposition. Third, for reasons I describe later, poor voters in poor countries are especially unlikely to be distracted by identity-based appeals. How then do elite parties recruit the poor while retaining the rich?

In this article, I present a novel strategy through which such a balance can be struck: Elite parties deploy an organizational division of labor, in which they outsource the task of mobilizing poor voters to their nonelectoral organizational affiliates. The latter recruit the poor through the private provision of local public goods—mostly basic health and educational services. Such outsourcing provides a material mechanism for appealing to poor voters (contra identity-based appeals), circumvents the need for prior incumbency (contra a patronage-based strategy), and permits the party to maintain economic and cultural policies favored by its elite supporters (contra programmatic shifts). If successful, such a strategy implies that rich and poor voters will support elite parties for very different reasons. Rich voters will support elite parties because of their programmatic affiliation with those parties' economic and ideological commitments. By contrast, poor voters will support elite parties because of material benefits they receive from those parties' nonelectoral organizational affiliates.

I test the observable implications of this strategy with evidence from India, home to the world's largest poor electorate. I specifically examine how the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has used such an approach to retain its traditional upper caste core, while winning unexpected support from poor Dalits (the former "untouchable" castes) and Adivasis (indigenous tribals) in several Indian states. I build on earlier research on the local welfare activities of Hindu nationalists (Froerer 2007; Thachil 2009; 2011), providing a broader explanation of how these activities fit within the overall strategic efforts of an elite party. I also draw on new quantitative and qualitative data to test the implications of my division-of-labor theory. First, I use a national sample of more than 9,000 Indian voters to examine the determinants of BJP support among elite and non-elite voters. Next, I draw on 15 months of fieldwork, conducted between 2007–11, to substantiate the mechanism through which poor voters were recruited. This unique data include elite and household interviews; the private, previously inaccessible records of Hindu nationalists; and a panel dataset of major Indian states. I conclude by considering the

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broader implications of the BJP's experience beyond South Asia, including an illustrative discussion of support for Islamist politics in Yemen.

ELITE PARTIES AND POOR VOTERS

Disadvantaged voters routinely cast their ballots in favor of parties that represent the policy interests of wealthier citizens. They do so across a variety of political contexts—in rich and poor countries, in plurality and proportional electoral systems, and in parliamentary and presidential regimes. The prevalence of this paradox in advanced industrial democracies has been extensively documented (De La O and Rodden 2008; Gelman et al. 2008; Huber and Stanig 2009; Roemer 1998; Walsh 2012) and perhaps most compellingly framed by Frank's (2004) well-known question—"What's the matter with Kansas?"—prompted by the robust support he observed for Republicans among poorer residents of his native state.

Instances of poor citizens voting against their policy interests are seen as paradoxical because they cut against the expectations of both sociological and instrumental theories of party politics. In sociological accounts of European party formation, the organization of politics around deep social cleavages was understood to produce enduring class-based partisan divides (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Lipset and Rokkan 1967). By contrast, instrumental frameworks anticipate that self-interested poor citizens will support progressive, redistributive parties, because the former's individual preferences closely align with the latter's policy positions in any given election (Downs 1957; Meltzer and Richard 1981). The frequency with which this shared expectation is contradicted has therefore understandably attracted a great deal of scholarly and popular attention.

To date, the "poor voter paradox" has been exclusively studied within wealthy Western democracies. The possibility of similar puzzles existing outside these regions has gone largely unacknowledged, far less explored. Principally, this neglect stems from conventional views of how politics in the global south is organized. Countries in these parts of the world are home to mostly poor and poorly educated electorates, limited technologies of communication and information, and weak party organizations (Hagiopan 2007). It has been argued that such contexts facilitate a politics centered on personalist or ethnic group-based appeals that are heavily reliant on discretionary flows of patronage to win support. The Western left–right ideological spectrum, premised on programmatic differences in policies of redistribution and regulation, is therefore not seen to order political life for most of the world (Linzer 2010).

Yet the reduced salience of left–right distinctions should not blind us to the emergence of broadly similar electoral puzzles among poor voters in the global south. These regions are scarcely devoid of low-income electorates or of elite parties, which are defined here as those whose core constituencies—the groups most

influential in providing them financial resources and shaping their policy profile—come from the upper strata of a national electorate (see Gibson 1996).[1] Historically, elite parties have emerged in developing countries to defend the concerns of relatively wealthy citizens, including large landowners resisting the redistribution or nationalization of landholdings (the PAN in Mexico in the 1940s or ARENA in El Salvador in the 1970s) or middle class and business communities advocating market reforms (the FIS in Algeria, UCEDE in Argentina, Partido Liberal in Brazil, or Movimiento Libertad in Peru).[2]

The specific poor voter paradox motivating this article is arguably even more dramatic in India than its better known analogs within wealthy Western democracies, because the antipathy of Dalits and Adivasis toward the upper caste BJP is not simply a function of class-based divides. The party emerged in the 1920s as the electoral arm of a Hindu nationalist social movement founded by upper castes, which sought to entrench a set of standardized Hindu traditions as the basis for Indian citizenship (Golwalkar 1966; Savarkar 1923). Yet despite its pan-Hindu aspirations, the movement's elitist interpretation of Hindu praxis (including its defense of caste hierarchies) primarily appealed to the privileged co-ethnics of its founders.[3]

By contrast, non-elite communities were separated from the BJP's upper caste[4] core by economic inequities and social hierarchies. Although cultural and economic cleavages often crosscut in Western polities, India's "ranked" ethnic system of caste ensured that the two overlapped.[5] Accordingly, Dalits and Adivasis—a quarter of all Indians—were seen as especially unlikely supporters of Hindu nationalism (Brass 1993; Rudolph and Rudolph 1987; Yadav 2004).

Indeed, the Indian paradox can be simultaneously seen as an instance of poor voters supporting an elite

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[1] I depart here from definitions of elite parties based on their organizational structure (such as Duvergerian "cadre" parties).

[2] On ARENA in El Salvador, see Paige (1996); on the UCEDE, see Gibson (1996); on the FIS, see Chhibber (1996); and on the PAN, see Middlebrook (2001).

[3] For example, the movement's founders approved of the controversial Laws of Manu, a second-century tract by an influential Brahmin philosopher that included a doctrinal defense of caste-based divisions, thereby legitimating economic and social hierarchies (Savarkar 1923, 85; Golwalkar 1966, 36).

[4] The term "upper castes" refers to members of the first three tiers (*varnas*) of Hinduism's four-tiered internal hierarchy. Members of these three categories (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas) are collectively referred to as *dvija* or "twice born," because they were permitted to undertake a ceremony indicating a second ("spiritual") birth. Members of the fourth *varna*, known as Sudras (also as backward castes or OBCs), were excluded from this ritual privilege. Dalits and Adivasis rank even lower in this ritual hierarchy and are called *avarnas* ("without caste"). I list all the subcastes counted as upper caste within my empirical analysis in Footnote 31.

[5] In 2004–5, the rate of poverty (according to India's low official poverty line of $10/15 per month in rural/urban India) was 36.8% (rural) and 39.8% (urban) for Dalits, and 47.7% (rural) and 33.9% (urban) for Adivasis. The rate among all other castes was 17.86% and is likely even lower among upper castes (Planning Commission 2011, 116). These figures matched those in the 2004 National Election Study used here, in which 41% of Dalit respondents and 40.02% of Adivasi respondents came from households earning less than $1 a day (all other castes: 18.12%).

party, of low-ranked ethnic communities backing high-ranked politicians, and of an ideological party winning over voters who dislike its core doctrine. Thus, non-elite support for the BJP is puzzling through either the lens of class, caste, or religion. Each of the perspectives also suggests a possible explanation for this puzzle. A class-based perspective suggests the BJP may have increased its appeal among poor voters through redistributive programmatic shifts. An emphasis on ethnicity indicates the party may have won over lower castes by increasing their representation within its ranks. A religion-based perspective suggests Hindu nationalists may have used communal appeals to distract poor Hindus from their material concerns.

However, this section outlines why none of these strategies has been able to balance elite voter retention and poor voter recruitment. First, because upper castes dominated the BJP's leadership ranks, activist cadre, and core partisan support base, they ensured that the party's economic platform consistently reflected elite interests: from support for market reforms (Chhibber 1997), to opposition to ethnic quotas for non-elite castes (Jaffrelot 1993), to a reduced commitment to pro-poor public spending (Teitelbaum and Thachil 2012). The party was unable to sufficiently modify its programmatic orientation to overcome its upper crust "partisan image" (Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). This reputation is reflected in the BJP's lingering colloquial label as a "Brahmin-Bania party" (two upper caste communities) and in the continuing preponderance of upper castes within its partisan base.[6]

Skeptics will counter that few parties of any kind establish programmatic linkages with low-income voters in developing country settings. Instead, political actors in such arenas rely on patronage networks to incorporate poor voters whose precarious livelihoods render even small payoffs highly valuable. Yet, most accounts of successful machines—the PRI in Mexico (Magaloni 2006), Christian Democrats in Italy (Chubb 1981), NDP in Egypt (Blaydes 2010), or the Congress in India (Chhibber 1999; Kothari 1964)—have focused on successful incumbents. By contrast, elite parties have rarely won office in non-Western arenas, let alone enjoyed the sustained victories required to compete against dominant patronage machines. To acquire the ability to use patronage, elite parties must first find a way to win over poor voters without it.

Of course, even opposition parties can signal their intentions regarding the distribution of patronage should they come to power. Chandra (2004) argues that ethnic parties such as the lower caste-led Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) sent positive signals to poor voters by including candidates from non-elite ethnic backgrounds in their

party lists. Yet the Indian case, where Chandra's argument was developed, itself illustrates why elite parties cannot mimic their ethnic competitors. When the BJP considered replicating the BSP's approach in the early 1990s, it faced a virulent backlash from the upper castes whom this strategy would necessarily displace. BJP insiders confessed that upper castes warned against being "stifled" within the party,[7] that "such efforts to disturb the party's upper caste character were not worth it,"[8] and that this approach "risked losing our loyal base."[9] One BJP operative explained his party's disadvantage this way: "When these smaller caste-based parties first mobilize lower castes they are only looking to that section to build a base . . . we can't do what they do as we already have our base."[10]

Electoral evidence confirms the BJP's failure to mimic non-elite ethnic parties: Hindu nationalists rarely field lower caste or tribal candidates outside of constituencies where they are required to do so by India's ethnic quota laws.[11] In the next section, I present survey data confirming that such an approach does not underpin the BJP's success among poor voters.

Given the difficulties of pursuing policy- and patronage-based approaches, one obvious alternative for elite parties is to distract the poor through faith-based appeals to their moral preferences. However, Hindu nationalists confessed that upper caste calls to "defend" Hinduism held little appeal for lower castes marginalized by the faith's internal divisions.[12] One influential reframing of the distraction argument posits that overcoming extreme divisions requires equally extreme distractions, namely religious violence. Wilkinson's (2004, 165–67) study provides the clearest articulation of the electoral incentives driving communal conflict in India. He notes that Hindu nationalists planned preelection violence against Muslims, hoping to polarize electorates along religious lines and thereby uniting Hindu voters across caste divisions.

Did conflict sufficiently distract marginalized voters into supporting the elite party they had traditionally shunned? Data from two different sources suggest not. First, Hindu nationalist leaders confirmed the failure of ideological agitations in personal interviews, such as the following:

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[6] Election surveys conducted between 1996 and 2004 asked voters to identify a party they particularly liked. Among respondents identifying the BJP, upper castes outnumbered lower caste and tribal voters by a ratio of between 2:1 and 6:1 across the surveys, despite constituting a far smaller proportion of the population (National Election Study 1996; 1999; 2004). The equivalent ratio among those identifying the Indian National Congress, India's party of independence and the BJP's major national rival, was almost exactly 1:1 on each of these surveys.

[7] Author interview with Murli Manohar Joshi, New Delhi, June 1, 2008.

[8] Author interview with K.N. Govindacharya, New Delhi, May 15, 2008.

[9] Author interview with BJP Member of Parliament (name withheld on request), New Delhi, June 8, 2008.

[10] Interview with Satya Narayan Jatiya, New Delhi, April 30, 2008.

[11] Roughly one-quarter of all seats are reserved for members of former untouchable (Dalit) and indigenous tribal (Adivasi) communities, in proportion to their share of India's population. Across the country's 17 major states, the BJP fielded only 6 Dalit and Adivasi candidates to more than 300 nonreserved posts in 2004. The party thus clearly did not follow the BSP's strategy of ethnic representation to win lower caste support. For reference, the BSP fielded 49 such candidates across the same sample of seats. Data from state elections held between 2004–9 tell a similar story (see Figure S.6). In fact, the proportion of such candidates fielded by the BJP was slightly lower (2.3%) in the 7 states where it did well with disadvantaged voters (>30% of votes) than in the 10 remaining states (3.6%).

[12] Author interview with S. N. Jatiya, New Delhi, April 30, 2008.

In 1991, I mentioned during the Ram Mandir agitations [the signature Hindu nationalist ideological campaign] that *lower caste participation in the movement was largely ceremonial . . . no one could ignore it* [emphasis added]. We needed a new mechanism to succeed with lower caste populations.[13]

Second, the number of Hindu–Muslim riots in a state between 1950 and 1995, taken from the Varshney-Wilkinson dataset, does not positively correlate with the BJP's state-level vote share among marginalized lower caste and tribal voters in any of the national elections held in 1996, 1999, or 2004 (Figure S.7A). Further, data from the Indian government show that the pattern of improvements in the BJP's performance in these communities between 1996 and 2004 is negatively correlated with the number of communal incidents in a state (Figure S.7B).[14] Finally, in the next section, I test and find no support for the voter-level implications of distraction arguments within electoral survey data.

Thus, existing explanations cannot satisfactorily account for how elite parties such as the BJP can recruit the poor. Yet elite parties must achieve some modicum of success among the poor, especially in low and middle income settings where they are especially rich in votes. And despite its strategic limitations, electoral evidence suggests the BJP has recently increased its following among its least likely supporters. In the 1996 national elections, the BJP garnered only 14.89% of the combined vote share from Dalits and Adivasis across India's 17 largest states and exceeded 30% in only a single state. By 2004, this percentage increased to 21.54% (nearly a 50% increase), and it exceeded the 30% threshold in seven states (see Figure 1). Across these seven states—mostly in central India—the party *doubled* its average vote share among these electorates from 17 to 34% (see Table S.33). How was this unlikely and uneven success achieved? To paraphrase Frank (2004), what's the matter with central India?

I demonstrate that such unlikely success was won through an electoral division of labor in which the BJP's movement affiliates won over poor voters by privately providing them basic social services. Dalits and Adivasis were specifically targeted under this strategy, because Hindu nationalists believed their recruitment efforts were less likely to succeed among better organized "intermediate" caste groups.[15] Outsourcing recruitment allowed the BJP itself to continue rep-

resenting elite interests in its policies and leadership positions.

Before empirically substantiating this argument, it is worth asking whether such a strategy is idiosyncratic to India or is likely to be observed elsewhere. To answer this question, it is helpful to focus on two criteria common to most party typologies: the social profile of a party's core constituencies and the depth of its organizational resources (see Table 1). The first criterion influences the demand that a party has for a division-of-labor approach. Parties with less privileged cores—most obviously leftist, populist, and low-rank ethnic parties—can craft redistributive platforms without the risk of alienating their loyal supporters. The approach discussed here thus only holds appeal for parties whose elite core constituencies prevent them from courting disadvantaged communities through such programmatic appeals (Figure 1's top row). However, not all elite parties are equipped to bear the supply-side costs of providing basic services. Parties that arose as agglomerations of local notables ("cadre" parties) or as champions of liberal economic policies (such as UCEDE in Argentina, Movimiento Liberal in Peru, or Swatantrata Party in India) often lack the organizational heft to privately provide welfare.

Thus, only those parties that combine an elite social base with "thick" organizational assets are likely to mimic the BJP's approach (Gunther and Diamond 2003). Yet such organizationally thick elite parties (Figure 1's top right quadrant) may seem like an empirical oddity, especially to conventional typologies based on Western European experience. Do such parties actually exist? The BJP's own roots point us to an important "family" of organizationally thick elite parties across Asia and Africa: those emerging out of religious social movements (Mair and Mudde 1998). Although not all faith-based formations are elite, many of the most influential examples enjoy their strongest support from relatively privileged urban voters. These include Egypt's Freedom and Justice Party (a Muslim Brotherhood affiliate), Front Islamique du Salut (FIS) in Algeria, Jordanian Islamic Action Front (IAF), Islah in Yemen, and Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) in Indonesia, (Chhibber 1996; Clark 2004; Masoud 2010; Robinson 2004).

The relatively privileged profiles of these parties reflect the social contexts from which they emerged. The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood was made up of culturally elite urbanites during its early years under founder Hassan al-Banna (Mitchell 1969). The "most dynamic motors" (Wickham 2002, 115–116) of growth for both the Brotherhood and Indonesian PKS operate on college campuses: the *gama'at* (Islamic student associations) and *tarbiya dakwah* ("missionary" Islamic education) movements, respectively (Machimudi 2008; Wickham 2002, 115–16). The Jama'at-e-Islami in Pakistan similarly built its base among the *mu'assir tabqa* (influential class), disproportionately drawn from elite *ashrafiya* migrants from India who left after the subcontinent's partition in 1947 (Iqtidar 2011). Islamists networks in Yemen are also strongest among urban middle

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[13] Author interview with K. N. Govindacharya, New Delhi, May 15, 2008.

[14] Instead, four of the six states in which the BJP saw double-digit vote share gains among the poor had some of the lowest rates of communal conflict across the sample. At the other end of the spectrum, the BJP actually lost ground among disadvantaged electorates in five of the six states most wracked by such conflict.

[15] As a BJP leader from the southern state of Kerala noted, "We have to concentrate on these SC/ST [Dalit/Adivasi] people . . . not on Ezhavas [an 'intermediate' caste group] because they already have their own groups." Interview with O. Rajagopal, Thiruvananthapuram, August 4, 2008.

FIGURE 1.   BJP Performance with Dalit and Adivasi Voters (2004)

Map by Abraham Kaleo Parrish, Yale Map Department, 2012.
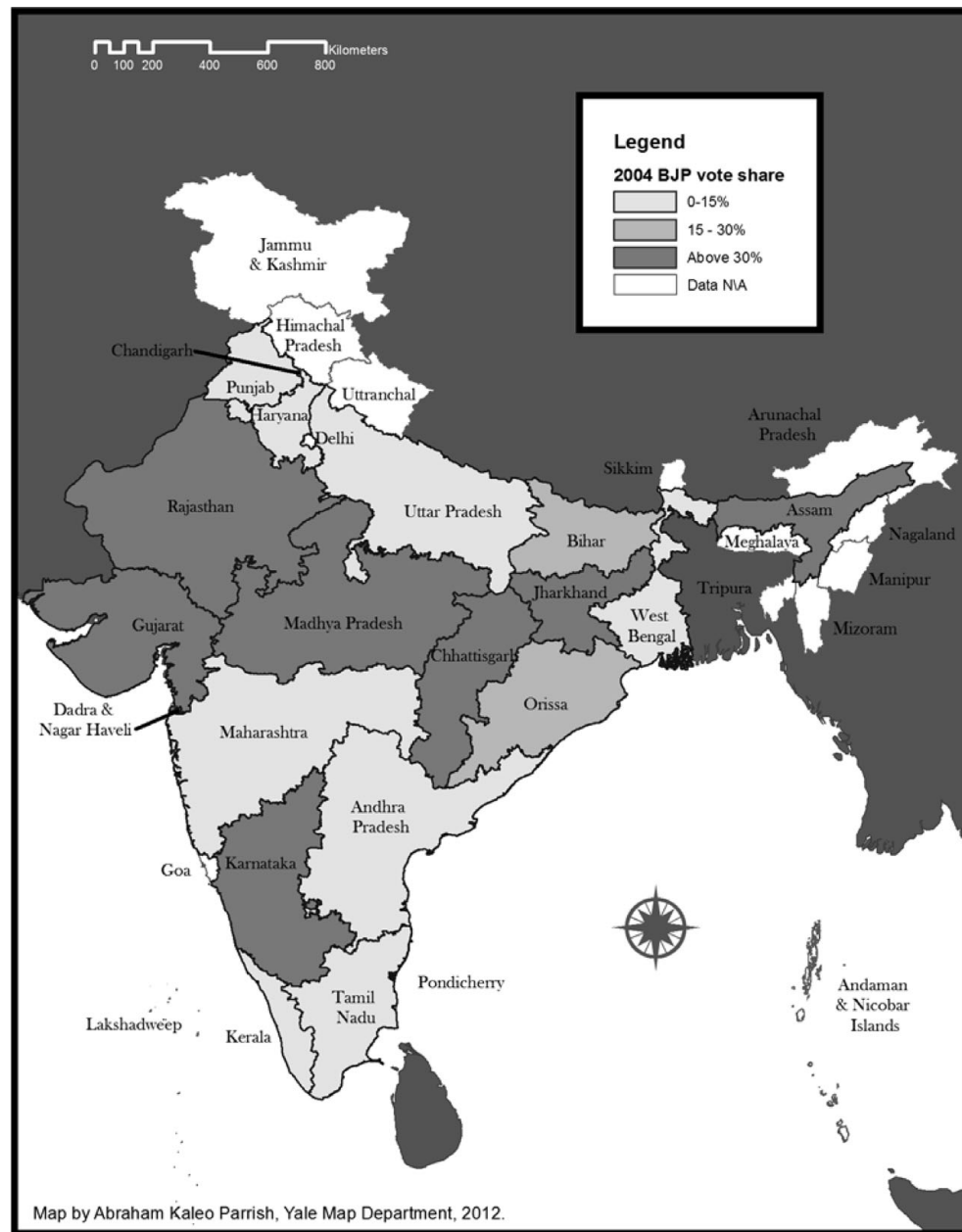
classes, and the Islah party is stocked with university-educated professionals (Clark 2004, 17).

Like the BJP, these elite parties with religious roots are constrained in their ability to win over poor voters through policies or patronage. The Egyptian Brotherhood has been described as "a movement of the middle classes" (Masoud 2010, 180) whose policy platforms consistently represent the interests of relatively privileged voters (Wickham 2002, 2, 209). Chhibber (1996) reveals a similar commitment to middle class preferences in the policies advocated by the Algerian FIS. Wedeen's (2008, 189–91) study of Yemen notes that even the visions of social justice offered by Islamists are elite-friendly, "avoid[ing] the radical land reform language of old while lending approval to private property and entrepreneurial profit." Further, few of these parties have enjoyed any time in office and primarily compete against longtime incumbent regimes with far deeper pockets of patronage.

Finally, these parties are also unlikely to be able to distract the poor through symbolic appeals. Empirical evidence of religion's strength as a political opiate has been mixed at best, even within advanced industrial democracies (Bartels 2008; Gelman et al. 2008). There are three reasons to be even more skeptical of religion's capacity to drive the electoral decisions of poor voters in non-Western settings. First, recent data from the World Values Survey indicate that whereas poor

TABLE 1. Which Parties Are Most Likely To Divide Electoral Labor?			
		Organizational Resources (Supply-Side)	
		Thin	**Thick**
Social Profile of Core Constituency (Demand-Side)	**Elite**	**'Cadre'/Landlord Parties** (Duverger 1954, Baland and Robinson 2007): *ARENA* (El Salvador) *Conservative Party* (Chile) *Ganatanta Parishad* (India) **Middle Class Market Reform Parties** (Gibson 1996): *Swatantra Party* (India) *UCEDE* (Argentina) *ML* (Peru)	**Elite Religious Parties:** *FIS* (Algeria) *Freedom and Justice Party* (Egypt) *Islah* (Yemen) *PKS* (Indonesia) *BJP* (India)
	Non-Elite	**Electoral Populist Parties** (Roberts 2006): *Fujimorismo-affiliated parties* (Peru) *Indian National Congress under Indira Gandhi* (India) *Muslim League- Nawaz* (Pakistan) **Ethnic Patronage Parties** (Chandra 2004): *Bahujan Samaj Party* (India) *Parmehutu* (Rwanda)	**Leftist Parties** (Heller 1999): *Communist Parties of India* *Worker's Party* (Brazil) **Ethnic/Religious Populist Parties** (Madrid 2008): *UNMO* (Malaysia) *MAS* (Bolivia) *Pachutik* (Ecuador) *Al Nour Party* (Egypt)

respondents from Western countries are systematically more religious than the nonpoor, the inverse is true of respondents from Asian and African countries.[16] Second, the especially harsh poverty experienced by poor voters in low and middle income countries makes them even less likely to be able to afford values voting than their counterparts in wealthier contexts.[17] Third, even if disadvantaged voters in the Global South did politically prioritize "social values," it is unlikely that doing so would drive them to support elite parties, even those with ties to religious movements. Numerous studies have found that the poor have largely been neglected or even excluded from the "social and political vision" of these actors (Clark 2004, 39).[18]

Given these highly similar constraints and capabilities of elite parties with religious orientations, an explanation of how the BJP constructed a diverse social coalition should prove especially helpful in advancing our understanding of these increasingly important actors.

TESTING A DIVISION-OF-LABOR ARGUMENT

This section empirically tests my explanation for how Hindu nationalists recruited the poor through their movement affiliates, thereby remaining free to maintain programmatic linkages with their core elite supporters. In the first part of this empirical section, I test individual-level implications of my division-of-labor argument, drawing on data from an all-India citizen survey. My model predicts that poor voters support elite parties because of material benefits they receive from the their organizational affiliates, not because of their ideological or economic affinity for the party's platform. Conversely, among elites the relative salience of these determinants should be exactly reversed. These expectations yield the following two voter-level hypotheses:

H1: Receiving basic goods and services from organizations affiliated with elite parties increases (does not affect) the likelihood of marginalized (elite) voters supporting these parties.

H2: Programmatic preferences for an elite party's policy platform do not affect (increase) the likelihood of marginalized (elite) voters supporting these parties.

Concepts and Measures

To test H1 and H2 at the broadest level possible, I drew on data from the 2004 National Election Study (NES) conducted by the Center for the Study of Developing Society (CSDS). CSDS has regularly conducted surveys of voter opinion since 1996, and the 2004 NES

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[16] In the Western sample, 55% of wealthier respondents (those self-reporting as upper or upper middle class) identified themselves as religious compared to 59% of the less privileged sample. In the sample of Asian and African states, 81% of the more privileged sample identified as religious compared to 74% of less well-off respondents (World Values Survey, 2005–2008).

[17] Ingelhart (1971, 992); see also Ingelhart and Flanagan (1987).

[18] Also see Masoud (2010, 183), who quotes Gamal al-Banna, the younger brother of the founder of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, acknowledging a "natural affinity" between the individualism of middle-class sensibilities and that of the Brotherhood's Islamic ideology.

was the largest survey of Indian voters available at the time this study was conducted.[19] The non-elite sample used here includes roughly 5,500 marginalized Dalit (lower caste) and Adivasi (tribal) respondents. The elite sample includes 3,200 upper caste Hindus. Both samples are drawn from respondents across 17 major Indian states, which are home to 95% of the country's population.

To test these hypotheses, I estimated logistic regression models where the binary dependent variable identified supporters of the BJP in the 2004 national elections. Each model included three key explanatory variables associated with H1 and H2:

1. Associational Membership: Within the non-elite sample, the key explanatory variable *(Associational Member)* is a binary measure identifying respondents affiliated with nonparty associations. The survey classified respondents based on their membership in such associations, which included the religious associations and welfare organizations that typify Hindu nationalist organizations.[20] If such associations did in fact build a comparative organizational advantage responsible for driving the BJP's success among poor voters, we would expect non-elite members to be more likely to vote for the BJP than non-members.[21] However, we anticipate no such differences among elite voters.

2. Ideological Orientation: I argue that ideological support for Hindu nationalism is a key predictor of elite support for the BJP, but not of non-elite support. However, even among non-elites, ideological views might confound the key relationship between nonparty associations and support for the BJP. After all, respondents who are more supportive of communal political agendas might be more likely to join nonparty affiliates of the party. Equally, non-elites who view such agendas more favorably might reasonably be expected to support the BJP itself at higher rates than their less sympathetic counterparts (Hansen 1999; Jaffrelot

1993; Rajagopal 2001). The variable *Communalism* measures support for Hindu nationalism, notably the movement's signature (and controversial) demand for a Hindu temple to exclusively replace a mosque demolished by Hindu mobs in the northern town of Ayodhya.

3. *Economic Policies*: I argue that the BJP's elite backers, but not its non-elite supporters, are driven by programmatic preferences for the party's economic platform. Yet such preferences must be accounted for within analyses of the non-elite sample as well. In India, one major axis of disagreement between the BJP and its nonparty affiliates concerns support for economic liberalization. Movement ideologues remain wedded to economic nationalism and see deregulation measures as enabling Western infiltration. However, the BJP broke dramatically with its movement partners as it became clear that many upper caste voters benefited from and supported market reforms (Chhibber 1997; Lakha 2007). Consequently, it is possible that a non-elite respondent favoring liberalization measures would be more likely to support the BJP electorally but less likely to join one of its partner organizations. Not accounting for this influence may therefore result in an underestimation of membership's impact on Dalit and Adivasi voters. My measure of support for market reforms (*Liberalization*) is an index based on opinions regarding four broad reforms aimed at shrinking the public sector and broadening private sector activities.[22]

The models also include a number of carefully selected control variables, each of which is not simply an important potential determinant of BJP support but also a plausible confounder of the key relationship between membership and BJP support (Achen 2005; Ray 2003).

1. Religiosity: I distinguish here between a commitment to a religious political ideology (measured by communalism) and spiritual devotion: To be a devout Muslim or Hindu is not equivalent to being an Islamist or Hindu nationalist. Disadvantaged voters might support an elite party if their religiosity shifts the determinants of their vote choice away from material concerns and toward social issues (Manza and Brooks 1997; Scheve and Stasavage 2006). Yet higher levels of religiosity might also plausibly lead poor citizens to join the organizational affiliates of an elite party such as the BJP. To control for this dual influence of piety, I construct an index variable, *Religiosity*, using component analysis based on how often voters pray, how many times they go to temple, how frequently they keep religious fasts, and how often they attend religious services.[23]

2. Ethnic Leader Influence: Although the upper caste BJP might benefit from politically activated religious identities, it is conceivable that the party will do less well with non-elite voters for whom caste identities are especially electorally salient. At the same time poor

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[19] For further details on the survey, including sampling techniques, response rates, and survey team profiles, see section 8 of Supplemental Online Appendix, "Further Details about the 2004 National Election Study."

[20] Membership was based on responses to Question 18 and Q19 on the 2004 NES. For details on the construction of all variables used in the analysis see Tables S.3 and S.31.

[21] The survey instrument only identifies members of these organizations, yet is membership conceptually appropriate for testing my argument? After all, beneficiaries of private welfare need not formally affiliate with the providing organization. Yet for the specific case of Hindu nationalist welfare organizations, I believe the concept of "membership" is sufficiently appropriate. As my qualitative findings indicate, welfare providers strongly encouraged their beneficiaries to attend the weekly meetings, workshops, and festivals that they organized. In short, in return for the services they provided, Hindu nationalists encouraged their beneficiaries to behave more like members than like passive recipients. My own research found many, if not most beneficiaries fulfilled these participatory requests out of a feeling of voluntary gratitude. Finally, the membership variable might well understate the extent to which welfare organizations encompass non-elite supporters of the BJP. After all, the number of beneficiaries will necessarily be greater than the subset of beneficiaries who identify as active members. Although the membership measure identified a significant proportion (30%) of poor BJP supporters, this figure would likely be higher if we used a less constrictive measure.

[22] This measure is constructed using responses to Q30b-e on the NES 2004. The component analysis was conducted separately for elite and non-elite samples, and so the weights within the index vary across the two groups.

[23] Q34a-b, and Q34aa, ac from the NES 2004.

voters who are strongly politicized along caste will plausibly be less likely to join Hindu nationalist organizations, which often subsume intra-faith caste distinctions within their flock. To account for this possibility, I include a measure (*Ethnic Influence*) identifying voters who cited co-ethnic (caste) community leaders as the most important influence on their vote choice.[24]

3. Income: One possible explanation of non-elite support for the BJP is that the party primarily recruits the economically elite strata within largely non-elite caste communities. In India, mandated ethnic quotas in legislative and public administrative institutions have enabled a small number of lower caste and tribal citizens to attain relative prosperity (Chaudhury 2004). As they ascend the class hierarchy, members of this "creamy layer" might see the BJP's elite-friendly platform as increasingly programmatically appealing (Shah 1994). Sociologists have noted that upwardly mobile non-elites often also seek greater social status through assimilative mimicry of elite practices (in India, this process was dubbed "Sanskritization"; see Srinivas 1956). Such a process might include efforts to join organizations historically associated with elitist traditions of cultural practice, such as those run by Hindu nationalists. I therefore include a categorical variable *Income*, measuring the household monthly income of the respondent.

The general specification of the models tested in this section can be written as

$$logit(\pi) = \alpha + Associational\ Member + \beta 2 Liberalization$$
$$+ \beta 3 Communalism + \beta 4 Income$$
$$+ \beta 5 Ethnic\ Influence + \beta 6 Religiosity + \varepsilon,$$

where $logit(\pi)$ is the logit function of probability that a voter supports the BJP.[25] The models are estimated with heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors clustered by state. Because the analysis is interested in assessing the determinants of individual voter choices, all four models also include state fixed effects to account for unobserved, stable, state-level differences that influence patterns of BJP support. The coefficients for each explanatory variable therefore indicate its impact on distinguishing supporters of the BJP from nonsupporters within the same state.[26]

Determinants of Non-Elite Support

Columns 1–3 of Table 2 report the results of testing the general model specified earlier within the sample of non-elite respondents. Model 1 reports a bivariate model with only associational membership included as an explanatory variable. Model 2 adds the two policy-related measures, as well as the three major control variables. Model 3 then adds standard demographic controls measuring a respondent's age, gender, and level of education. The results indicate strong support for H1 among marginalized voters, because affiliating with nonparty associations significantly increases the likelihood of supporting the BJP in each specification.[27]

Associational membership also exerts a strong substantive impact on electoral preferences. The simulated probability of a member voting for the BJP ranged between 30 and 32%, more than double that of a non-member supporting the party (14%).[28] The impact of membership was also more than 50% greater than that of the next most influential factor (religiosity).[29] Further, these effects were not restricted to a small number of voters, because 3 in 10 poor BJP supporters were incorporated within nonparty networks (30%). This was nearly twice the average proportion of members within all other parties (16%).

The results also find support for H2 among marginalized voters, as Models 2 and 3 find weak evidence of a programmatic linkage between non-elite voters and the BJP. Neither support for the BJP's economic policies (liberalization) nor cultural agenda (communalism) emerges as significant in distinguishing supporters of the party among non-elite voters.[30] This latter result may especially strike many readers as surprising, but the impact of communal values was consistently low (2 to 3 percentage points). All three major control variables—ethnic influence, income, and religiosity—were statistically significant and returned coefficients in the theoretically anticipated direction.

Determinants of Elite Support

To assess H1 and H2 among elite voters, I replicated the models reported in Columns 1–3 within the upper caste sample of the same 2004 NES.[31] The results, reported in

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[24] Unless otherwise noted, I refer to "ethnic identities" in terms of caste, because that is what is theoretically relevant for my analysis. This is not to deny the existence of other politicized categories of ethnic identification in India, such as those based on language or region.

[25] The data were cleaned of observations with high levels of influence on parameter estimates (defined as three times the mean value of the Pregibon's delta-beta statistic). Results are robust to using twice the mean value (Tables S.7 and S.8). Collinearity was not an issue within either sample (the variance inflation factor of each covariate was barely over 1).

[26] However, all results are robust to excluding fixed effects (Tables S.24 and S.25) and to using constituency-level fixed effects (Tables S.26A and S.26B).

[27] Both Wald and likelihood-ratio tests corroborated that nonparty membership has a nonzero impact at the .001 level. In line with Achen's (2005) recommendation, the effects of each confounder on the relationship between membership and voting were separately tested (see Tables S.9 and S.10).

[28] Predicted values were obtained using 1,000 simulations for each predicted value estimate, holding other variables constant at their mean values.

[29] For a list of all the substantive effects, see Table S.4.

[30] Other measures used in this analysis capture alternative aspects of the BJP's platform, such as its opposition to caste-based reservations for employment and support for banning religious conversions. However, these measures also failed to significantly distinguish non-elite BJP supporters (Table S.11 and S.12).

[31] The respondents were from the following 16 major elite *jatis* (subcastes): Brahmins, Bhumiar, Rajput, Kayastha, Punjabi Khatri, Sindhi, Jat, Reddy, Kamma, Nair, Patel, Kapu, Vaishya, Jain, and a residual "Other upper castes" category from the 2004 NES.

TABLE 2.   Determinants of Support For an Elite Party in India

	DV: Voting for the BJP (2004)						
	Non-Elite Supporters			Elite Supporters			Elite Core Supporters
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Associational Member	.536***	.491**	.466**	.370	.315	.271	.234
	(.188)	(.178)	(.176)	(.201)	(.183)	(.177)	(.196)
Liberalization		.052	.051		.045**	.045**	.064***
		(.029)	(.029)		(.018)	(.018)	(.164)
Communalism		.033	.032		.136*	.135*	.147*
		(.048)	(.047)		(.069)	(.067)	(.076)
Control Variables							
Income		.072**	.059*		.088***	.052*	.057
		(.027)	(026)		(.019)	(.024)	(.030)
Ethnic Influence		−.422**	−.408**		−.527**	−.477**	−.288
		(.152)	(.151)		.188	(.176)	(.164)
Religiosity		.057*	.060**		.049***	.048***	.040**
		(.023)	(.023)		(.012)	(.015)	(.015)
Age			−.002			.005	.005
			(.002)			(.004)	(.004)
Male			.150*			.022	−.010
			(.075)			(.053)	(.046)
Education			.021			.088***	.088**
			(.025)			(.029)	(.030)
Constant	−2.909***	−4.077***	−4.081***	−2.225***	−3.780***	−4.056***	−3.841***
	(.035)	(.382)	(.398)	(.035)	(.268)	(.238)	(.275)
State Fixed Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of States	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
N	5226	5177	5177	2649	2637	2637	2637
% predicted correctly	81.04	81.09	81.11	72.97	72.81	72.63	74.94
Log Likelihood	−2302.914	−2248.567	−2244.95	−1471.981	−1441.612	−1435.384	−1442.351

*** = $p < .001$ ** = $p < .01$ * = $p < .05$ Note: Logistic regression models with robust standard errors corrected for clustering by state.

Columns 4–6 of Table 2, reveal several striking differences between the two constituencies. First, in accordance with H1, nonparty membership did not significantly distinguish elite backers of the BJP in any of the specifications. Second, the results fail to reject H2, because variables measuring programmatic attachments to the BJP's platform were influential in determining elite support. Liberalization, which did not distinguish Dalit and Adivasi supporters of the BJP, proved to be a highly significant predictor of upper caste backers of the party. Moving from strongly opposing to strongly supporting market reforms increased the simulated probability of an upper caste voter supporting the BJP by nearly 40%, from 35 to 49 percentage points. Support for Hindu nationalist ideology also emerged as a comparably significant predictor of elite support for the BJP, increasing the likelihood of voting for the party from 35 to 45 percentage points.

Finally, I argued that the BJP's cultural and economic platform enabled it to retain core elite supporters. To identify elite loyalists, Model 7 used a dependent variable coded 1 only for upper caste respondents who supported the BJP in both the 1999 and 2004 national elections. The results indicate that, in accordance with my argument's expectation, liberalization and communalism significantly distinguished these ardent elite supporters of the party.

Comparing Elite and Non-Elite Support

A direct comparison of results for upper and lower caste samples helps sharpen the division-of-labor argument put forward in this article. Figure 2 highlights the striking contrast in how organizational and ideological factors affect Dalits and Adivasis (the top panel) and the upper castes (bottom panel). Within the former sample, membership increased the likelihood of BJP support by roughly 15 percentage points regardless of a respondent's ideological position (the gap between the two solid lines). Meanwhile moving from extreme opposition to support for Hindu nationalism (the slope of these lines) increased the likelihood of BJP support by less than 3 percentage points irrespective of membership status. In fact, the simulated probability of a strongly secular member supporting the BJP (point A) was roughly twice that of a strongly communal nonmember (point B).

By contrast, among upper castes the weight of these influences was completely reversed (Figure 2's bottom panel). Highly communal upper castes (members and

FIGURE 2.   Organization Vs. Ideology
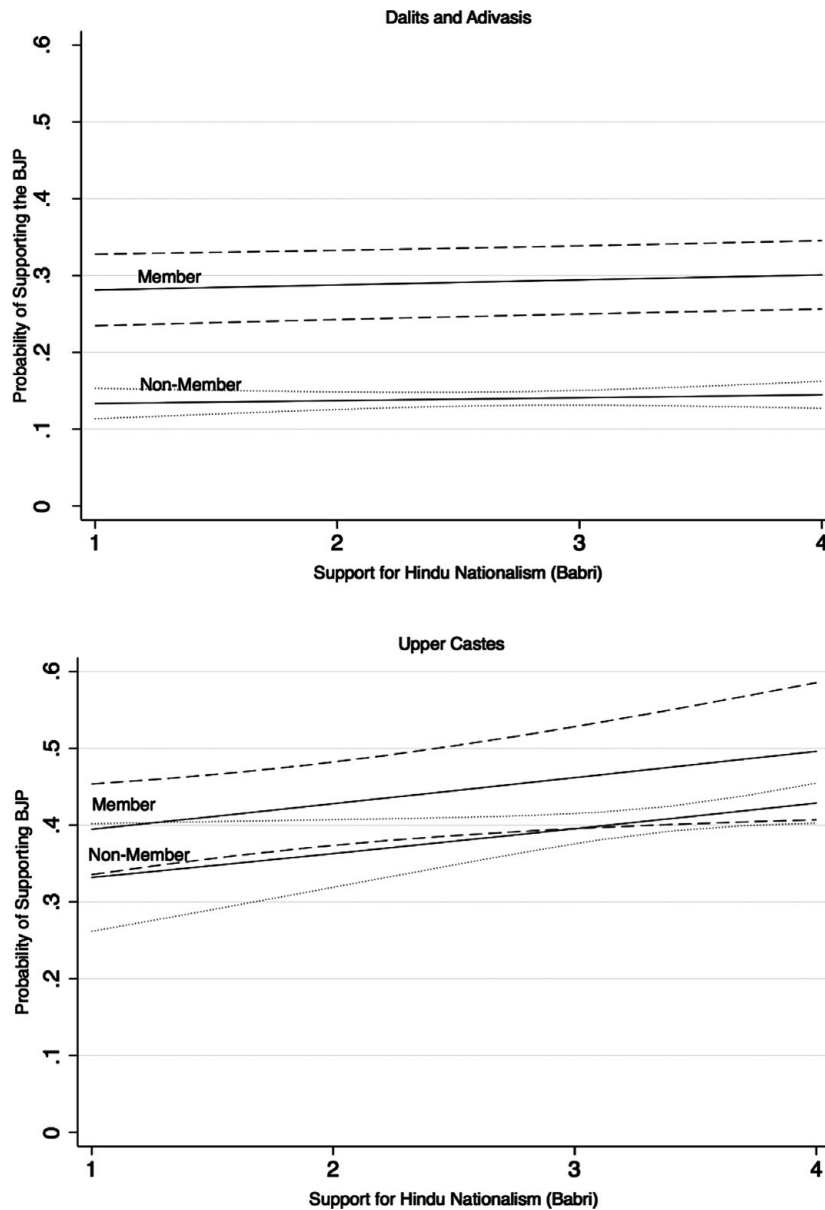
Dashed lines in Figures 2 and 3 indicate 95% confidence intervals for members
Dotted lines in Figures 2 and 3 indicate 95% confidence intervals for nonmembers

nonmembers) were 10 percentage points more likely to support the BJP than secular co-ethnics, whereas the impact of membership was less than half that. Figure 3 depicts a similar picture when comparing the substantive effects of nonparty membership and support for economic liberalization. Membership effects are substantively larger and statistically significant only among non-elites, whereas support for liberalization is more impactful and statistically significant only among upper castes.

These striking divergences are consistent with a strategy in which an elite party recruits poor voters through nonparty networks, enabling it to continue direct programmatic linkages with rich voters. At the same time, evidence from India also suggests hard limits beyond which this strategy cannot win over poor voters. Replicating the tests used in Table 2 on the survey's sample of poor Muslims and Christians finds that nonparty membership does not exert the same positive effect on support for the BJP among poor respondents of either faith.[32] Further, relatively few poor Muslims or Christians are incorporated within nonparty

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[32] Full results are shown in Table S.23. "Poor" religious minorities were defined as those within the bottom two income categories on the survey, which was roughly half of each sample.

FIGURE 3.   Organization versus Economic Preferences
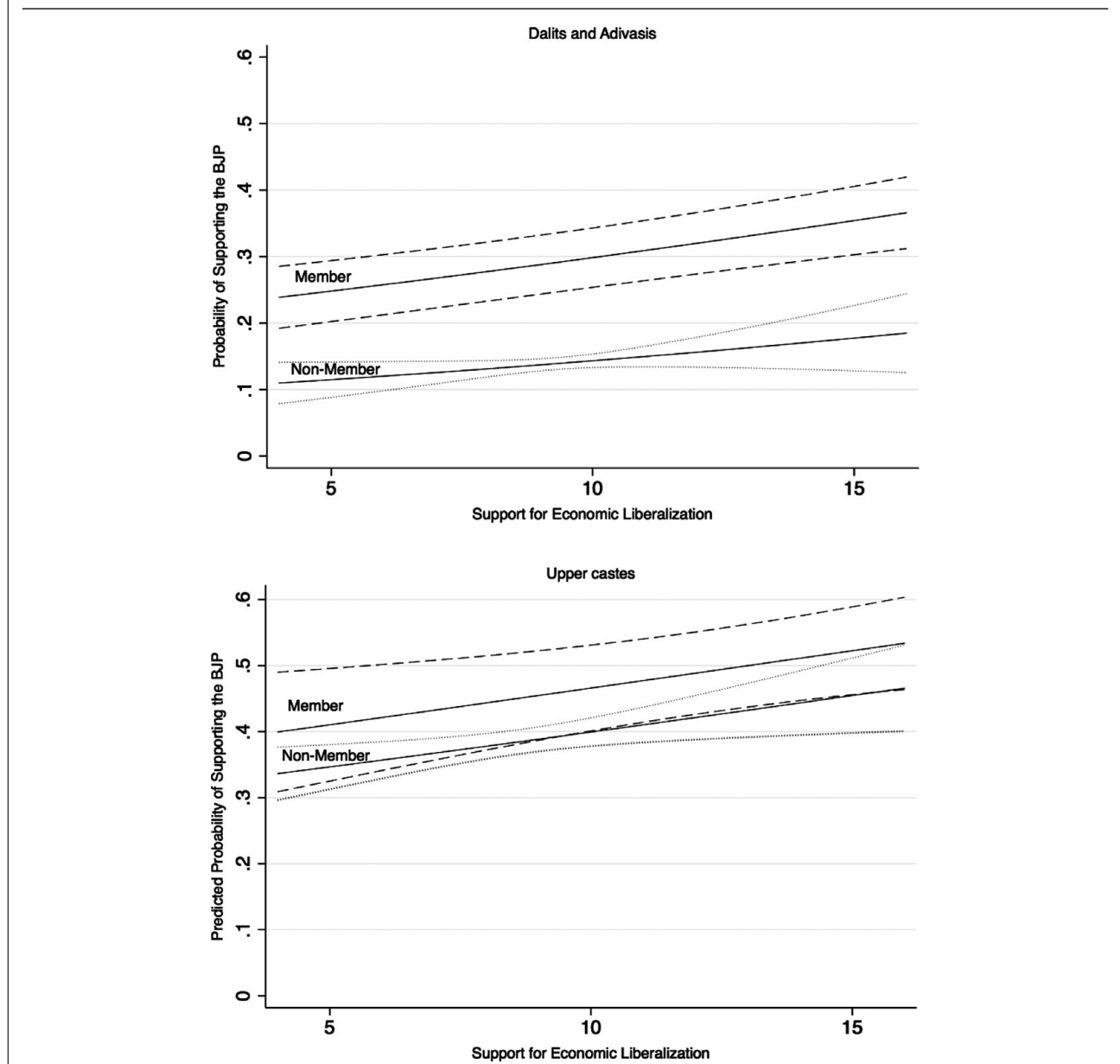
associations in the first place. The data cannot discern whether these low numbers stem from Hindu nationalist aversion to incorporating religious minorities or from poor minorities remaining wary of affiliating with a movement whose ideological mandate they distrust. Adjudicating between these two options remains an important question for further inquiry.

ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

The preceding section provides evidence of a strong correlation linking nonparty associations to non-elite voter support for Hindu nationalists. Before substantiating the mechanism behind this core result, I subject it to several robustness checks designed to address four separate issues: imbalances between "treatment"

(member) and "control" (nonmember) populations, reverse causation, whether membership effects were confounded by voter attachments to parties and party organizations, and whether these membership effects specifically benefited an elite religious party.

Are Membership Effects Driven by Underlying Imbalances in the Data?

One concern raised by this analysis is that the "treatment" of associational membership was not randomly assigned, a common problem with observational data. The top panel of Table 3 indicates there were in fact statistically significant differences between members and nonmembers across the other major explanatory variables included within the analysis. Given these

TABLE 3. Propensity Matching And Sensitivity Analysis

Balance Statistics Of Potential Confounders (Pre- and Post-Match)

Variable Name (scale in parentheses)	Mean Score (Members)	Mean Score (Non-Members)	Means Difference (unmatched sample)	Means Difference (matched sample)
Liberalization (4–16)	9.77	9.39	.38***	.09
Ethnic Influence (0–1)	.08	.11	−.03***	.015
Income (1–8)	2.38	2.12	.26***	.05
Communalism (1–4)	2.70	2.77	−.07**	.00
Religiosity (5–20)	12.84	12.52	.32***	.09

Average Treatment Effect of Membership

	Probability of Supporting BJP		Average Treatment Effect
	Members	Non-Members	
Unmatched	.301	.136	.165***
Matched	.280	.174	.105***

* p<.05 **p<.01 *** p<.001

Sensitivity Analysis

	Significance of Assumption (p-values)	
Odds of Differential Assignment	Overestimation of Treatment Effect	Underestimation of Treatment Effect
10%	.000	.000
20%	.000	.000
30%	.000	.000
40%	.001	.000
50%	.005	.000
60%	.025	.000
70%	.077	.000
80%	.180	.000

differences, the analysis needs to work toward fulfilling what Sekhon (2008, 7) has termed a "strong ignorability of assignment." An increasingly popular way to do so is through nearest neighbor propensity score matching, which first assesses each observation's "propensity" for being treated, based on observed covariates (in this case the five listed variables plus age, education, and gender). Each treated case is then matched to the untreated case with the closest propensity score. As the top panel of Table 3 shows, this matching procedure does improve the balance between members and nonmembers, eliminating significant differences across these major confounders.[33] The average treatment effect of nonparty membership was robust to this matching. The middle panel of Table 3 shows that members

remained 10.5 percentage points more likely to support the BJP than matched nonmembers, an impact that was statistically significant.

Matching on observed covariates is, of course, no panacea. One crucial concern is that the results cannot account for the possibility of unobserved confounders that increase the ex-ante likelihood of members supporting the BJP relative to nonmembers. Although estimating the magnitude of this potential bias with observational data is impossible, we can use the protocol developed by Rosenbaum (2002) to estimate how strong such a confounding effect would have to be to undermine the results of the matching analysis.[34] This sensitivity analysis finds that an omitted variable would

[33] More than 97% of matched pairs had a propensity score difference of .001 on a 0–1, and none were greater than .01 (Table S.22B); 85% of control units were only used once (Table S.22A).

[34] For propensity score maching, I used the *psmatch2* package developed by Lueven and Sianesi (2012), and for postmatch sensitivity analyses, I used the *mhbounds* package developed by Becker and Caliendo (2007).

have to make members 70% more likely to support the BJP than matched nonmembers to confound the impact of membership at the $p < .05$ threshold. Although we cannot definitively preclude this possibility, it is difficult to think of an omitted variable that would make members so much more likely than nonmembers to support the BJP, given that the two groups have already been matched on so many theoretically important potential confounders.

Does Support for the BJP Induce Membership?

Could nonparty organizations be targeting voters who were already supporting the BJP? If so, the direction of association between membership and voting might be the reverse of what my argument implies. Unfortunately, panel data, experimental manipulations, and instrumental variables—three major techniques for addressing endogeneity—are unavailable for use in this instance. Given the difficulties of tracking individuals, particularly in rural India, the NES surveys do not include panels. Experimentally compelling some citizens to join particular religious organizations is neither practically feasible nor ethically permissible. Finally, the survey questionnaire does not provide an instrument capable of fulfilling the especially tricky exclusion restriction when analyzing the impact of one kind of political participation (membership) on another (voting).[35]

However, two types of information can help us better address concerns of causal sequencing. The first is qualitative evidence from Hindu nationalists corroborating the role of nonparty networks in recruiting poor voters to the BJP rather than the other way around. Before discussing such evidence, the survey itself provides us some additional empirical leverage. The 2004 NES asked respondents whom they voted for in the prior national election held in 1999. If organizational inclusion preceded a change in electoral preferences, we would expect members to be more likely to have recently shifted to voting for the party. To examine if this held true, I retested Model 3 of Table 1 on a sample that excluded respondents who had supported the BJP in 1999. In effect the dependent variable now measured if a respondent switched from a different party to the BJP in 2004. The results (reported in Column 1 of Table S.21) indicate a statistically robust influence ($p < .05$) of nonparty membership on vote switches to the BJP. The impact of membership was also substantial: Members were 9.27 percentage points more likely than nonmembers to shift to supporting the BJP.[36]

Of course, this specification does not preclude a voter from first deciding to switch over to the BJP at some point between 1999 and 2004 and only then

joining a nonparty association. However, membership also increases the likelihood of BJP support among respondents who reported making their 2004 voting decision within a few days of the election (Column 3 of Table S.21). Further, membership increases the likelihood of such "late deciders" switching to vote for the BJP (Column 4). In this last specification, membership necessarily precedes the decision to begin supporting Hindu nationalists, unless the respondent decided to join a nonparty association on election day or just before. Although not irrefutable, these tests provide substantial evidence that poor voter shifts toward the BJP followed their organizational incorporation.[37]

Are Membership Effects Confounded by Ties to Political Parties?

My argument emphasizes the importance of the BJP's nonelectoral affiliates in recruiting poor voters. In line with this theory, the party does enjoy an advantage among poor voters who are incorporated within nonparty networks. But what if the BJP enjoyed a similar advantage among poor voters who were members of political parties? Such evidence would point to the importance of the general organizational strength of the party, rather than the specific division of labor that I emphasize. I therefore examine if the results hold if we substitute a measure of individual membership within political parties (*Party Member*) for the nonparty membership variable. Among non-elite voters, party membership had a slightly negative and statistically insignificant impact on support for the BJP. Among upper castes however, this variable positively and significantly distinguishes BJP supporters, with party members emerging as 36 percentage points more likely to support the BJP than nonmembers.[38] Rather than trouble my argument, these divergent findings reconfirm the contours of the division of labor I specify.

A related concern is whether a voter's satisfaction with the BJP party confounds the effects of membership. Given their conceptual proximity to vote choice, such preferences are notoriously tricky to include as explanatory variables within analyses of electoral decisions. Yet if membership effects remain robust even after including such a strong predictor, our confidence in the autonomous impact of nonparty associations will be concomitantly improved. Model 1 in Table 4 shows that membership's impact is statistically ($p < .001$) and substantively (15 percentage points) robust to controlling for a respondent's satisfaction with the BJP as a party.[39]

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[35] An instrumental variable would have to exogenously increase one kind of political participation while having no effect on another (Sovey and Green 2011). Yet nearly all partial causes of associational activity (age, gender, income, media exposure) can affect voting through multiple channels in addition to any influence on associational activity.

[36] By contrast, membership did not distinguish prior supporters of the BJP in the 1999 election (Column 2 of Table S.21).

[37] Alternatively, people may have joined associations before 1999, voted for a party other than the BJP, and then changed their mind in 2004. However, this sequencing is less problematic for my argument, which emphasizes that organizational incorporation precedes vote choice, not necessarily that these shifts must be immediate.

[38] Results reported in Table S.18. This insignificance persists if we run the analysis with party and nonparty membership measures simultaneously, and the inclusion of party membership does not confound the robust effect of nonparty organizations.

[39] The measure draws on a five-point response to the question: "What is your opinion of the NDA (central government coalition

TABLE 4.   Accounting for Party Preferences

| | Voted for BJP (2004) | | | |
| | Non-Elite Sample | | Elite Sample | |
VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Associational Member	0.494***	0.392**	0.251	0.289
	(0.142)	(0.158)	(0.153)	(0.159)
Liberalization	0.114	0.125	0.060**	0.058**
	(0.065)	(0.0711)	(0.025)	(0.022)
Communalism	0.0688	0.108	0.169**	0.213***
	(0.0547)	(0.0599)	(0.074)	(0.0755)
Control Variables				
Satisfaction with BJP	0.481***		0.596**	
	(0.080)		(0.073)	
Dislike BJP Opponent (Congress)		0.399***		0.960***
		(0.118)		(0.248)
Dislike Opponent Member*		0.282*[Y]		− 0.538[Z]
		(0.144)		(0.307)
Ethnic Influence	− 0.449**	− 0.604***	− 0.012	− 0.133
	(0.166)	(0.169)	(0.200)	(0.206)
Income	0.060	0.0709**	0.082*	0.0773*
	(0.0321)	(0.0360)	(0.040)	(0.0402)
Religiosity	0.080***	0.059***	0.065**	0.055***
	(0.025)	(0.017)	(0.025)	(0.012)
Age	− 0.00355	− 0.00424**	− 0.002	− 0.003
	(0.00212)	(0.00210)	(0.004)	(0.005)
Male	0.145*	0.150**	0.043	0.0525
	(0.0709)	(0.0754)	(0.064)	(0.0662)
Education	− 0.0166	− 0.0120	0.014	0.027
	(0.0298)	(0.0315)	(0.046)	(0.045)
Constant	− 3.660***	− 1.923***	− 2.993***	− 1.368***
	(0.353)	(0.321)	(0.396)	(0.395)
Log Likelihood	−2298.950	−2406.254	−1613.503	−1672.996
% correctly predicted	81.05	81.34	74.85	73.48
Observations	5,177	5,177	2,637	2,637

*** = p<.001 ** = p<.01 * = p<.05 Note: Logistic regression models with robust standard errors corrected for clustering by state.
[Y] The mean coefficient of individual interaction effects calculated separately for each observation (using the protocol developed by Norton et. al 2004) is positive (.144) and significant (p<.01). Figure S2C (in supplement) plots the distribution of the z-statistics for individual interaction effects (most are significant at the 95% confidence level).
[Z] The mean coefficient of individual interaction effects calculated separately for each observation is negative (-.120) and statistically insignificant. Figure S2D (supplement) plots the distribution of the z-statistics for these individual interaction effects (none are significant at the 95% confidence level).

A slightly different concern is whether voter displeasure with the BJP's major national rival (the Indian National Congress) confounds the impact of membership. Models 2 and 4 in Table 4 include a binary measure of such displeasure. Not surprisingly, this variable registers a significant positive impact on the likelihood of BJP support among both elite and non-elite samples. The inclusion of this measure does not, however, confound the autonomous impact of membership among non-elite voters. Interestingly, an interaction term between nonparty membership and Congress disaffec-tion exerts a positive average marginal impact on BJP support among Dalits and Adivasis. Membership's impact was more than twice as high among poor voters displeased with the Congress (25.38 percentage points) than among those less critical of the BJP's rival (11.65 percentage points).[40] The interaction was also statistically significant for most observations in the non-elite sample.[41] However, a similar interaction between membership and a voter's active preference for the BJP was not significant for any observation in the elite sample.[42] In line with my argument, these results show that the BJP's non-party affiliates are most effective at

headed by the BJP) performance during the past five years? (Q12 on NES 2004)." The key results are also robust to controlling for respondent preferences for the BJP over the Congress on a range of issues (corruption, governance, employment, and terrorism: Tables S.14A and S.14B) and for respondents "liking" the BJP (Tables S.16A and S.16C).

[40] Table S.17A2 discusses how this substantive impact was calculated.
[41] See Figure S.2C, which was created using the *inteff* command for Stata.
[42] See Figure S.2A.

TABLE 5.   Comparing Non-Elite Support Across Major Party Types (multinomial logit model, *Congress* Base Party)

	Party Voted For in 2004		
	Elite Party (BJP)	Ethnic Party (BSP)	Leftist Party (CPI/M)
Associational Member	.714***	.239	.504
	(.176)	(.324)	(.318)
Liberalization	.002	−.190***	−.100*
	(.027)	(.050)	(.043)
Ethnic Influence	−.297	.836***	.045
	(.200)	(.237)	(.390)
Income	.049	−.136	.037
	(.039)	(.052)	(.086)
Communalism	.038	−.125	.028
	(.044)	(.066)	(.080)
Religiosity	.056*	−.083	.024
	(.023)	(.060)	(.020)
Age	−.003	.005	−.002
	(.002)	(.005)	(.005)
Male	.135	.009	−.135
	(.083)	(.134)	(.147)
Education	.013	.037	.002
	(.034)	(.057)	(.050)
Constant	−2.968***	−1.166	−1.284*
	(.367)	(.709)	(.516)
Number of States	17	% predicted correctly	81.53%
N	3262	Log Likelihood	−2609.171

*** = p<.001 ** = p<.01 * = p<.05 Note: Multinomial Logit model with state fixed effects and robust standard errors corrected for clustering by state.

recruiting poor voters who are disaffected with other parties, rather than those who are already predisposed to vote for Hindu nationalists.

Do Membership Effects Extend to Other Types of Parties?

Finally, a theory of elite parties deploying a unique division of labor would be weakened by evidence showing that other political formations also use a similar approach. To assess this possibility, I compared poor supporters of the BJP to those backing three other types of parties common across the global south: a catch-all party of independence (in this case, the Indian National Congress), a nonreligious ethnic party (the Bahujan Samaj Party, India's most prominent lower caste party), and a leftist party (a coalition of two communist parties).[43] These formations were both conceptually important and electorally influential, comprising the four largest recipients of Dalit and Adivasi votes in 2004. To compare support for these parties, I estimated a multinomial logit model using the Congress as a base category, a decision informed by the party's "centrist" positioning and earlier national dominance among non-elite voters. The coefficients in this specification indicate the impact of a given variable on the

likelihood of a voter supporting a given party relative to the likelihood of his or her supporting the Congress.

In this analysis, reported in Table 5, associational membership was the single biggest factor distinguishing the BJP's supporters from those backing the Congress. Yet this variable was insignificant in identifying non-elite supporters of any other party. For the lower caste-led BSP, the strongest determinant of support was the influence of ethnic leaders, in line with conventional wisdom. Meanwhile, communist supporters were most strongly identified by their support for the left's vocal opposition to economic liberalization, also in line with the view that leftist parties establish programmatic linkages with their poorer core constituencies (Heller 1999).

SPECIFYING CAUSAL MECHANISMS: QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE ON RELIGIOUS WELFARE

Although survey data provided robust evidence of a broad division of labor between movement and party, it cannot specify *what* kinds of nonparty associations succeeded in recruiting the poor. In this section, I substantiate the causal mechanisms behind my argument by demonstrating how the BJP specifically used affiliates providing local public goods (mostly in health and education) to attract low-income voters. To do so, I collected state-level evidence from a range of primary sources. First, I draw data from the internal records

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[43] Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist).

of Hindu nationalist organizations, obtained through personal contacts made during fieldwork in India, to statistically test a third hypothesis:

> *H3: Poor voter support for elite parties is higher in areas where the parties' private welfare networks are more strongly developed.*

Second, I use qualitative data from interviews to discuss why this strategy is simultaneously attractive to the BJP and to poor voters and to provide additional confirmation of the sequencing implied by my argument.

Testing the Electoral Gains from Service

Data from the internal records of Hindu nationalists reveal a proliferation of service chapters over the past two decades. The movement's two major wings devoted to service provision are Seva Bharati (Service to India) and Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram (Association for the Welfare of Tribals; VKA). Both provide a variety of different services ranging from schools (including one-teacher schools in remote areas) to blood banks, medical dispensaries, and vocational training centers (for learning typing, sewing, etc.). Despite their long presence within the movement, these affiliates have massively proliferated over the past two decades (Figure 4).[44]

Did this growth correspond to the BJP's pattern of success among marginalized voters? To answer this question, I constructed an index of the per capita density of social service affiliates across the 17 largest Indian states.[45] If the BJP does indeed benefit electorally from the work of its service wings, it stands to reason that its aggregate performance with disadvantaged constituencies should be stronger where these affiliates have a denser presence. Figure 5 a shows that the vast majority of India's major states conform quite remarkably to this hypothesized pattern.

A second observable implication of my argument is that there should be no particular correlation between the BJP's performance and the aggregate presence of Hindu nationalist nonservice chapters. Figure 5b confirms this implication, showing that variations in an identical index for nonservice affiliates do not correspond to patterns in the BJP's performance with nonelite voters. Finally, service networks were not simply being built in states where the BJP was already doing well among marginalized electorates. Instead, states where service networks expanded most rapidly between 1996 and 2004 were also those in which the BJP made the most dramatic gains with poor voters during this same period.[46]

To further assess the centrality of service networks among the poor, I examined if the strong associations between service density and the BJP's performance were reduced or removed by accounting for certain state-level potential confounders. The dependent variable for this analysis is the BJP's vote share among a state's combined Dalit and Adivasi electorate in the 1996, 1999, and 2004 elections (each taken from the relevant National Election Study). The key independent variable for this specification (*Religious Welfare*) is the per capita welfare index described earlier, calculated from nationwide internal reviews conducted by Hindu nationalist organizations in 1995, 1997, and 2004.

The control variables were once again carefully selected as factors that are plausibly associated with both the dependent and key independent variables. I included a measure of party fragmentation (the effective number of parties, *ENPV*) within a state.[47] Elite parties such as the BJP stand to perform better with non-elites when they face fewer salient electoral competitors. Less politically fragmented states might also have less crowded organizational arenas and hence less competition for religious welfare organizations looking to recruit the poor.

Second, upper caste Hindu nationalist service activists may find it especially difficult to appeal to non-elite citizens where caste-based divisions are sharply politically polarized. At the same time, the elite BJP is itself less likely to attract non-elite voters in such environments. To measure ethnic political polarization, I adapt Huber's (2012) index of ethnic voting using NES data.[48] Higher values of the index indicate sharper partisan differences between members of different ethnic groups. Third, I include a measure of upper caste support for the BJP (*Elite Support*). Service organizations may be built where elite parties enjoy a greater following among their core constituencies, because these communities often fund and support welfare activities. Yet elite parties might independently do better among the poor in areas of high core support, where their own mobilizing capacities are likely to be stronger.

Fourth, demographic factors might jointly influence religious welfare and elite party performance. Past scholarship has argued that sectarian parties are more effective when the populations they mobilize against (Muslims and Christians in the BJP's case) are larger. Equally, religious movements might concentrate their welfare efforts in these areas because they view them as posing greater social threats to their faith (such as

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[44] Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram was founded in 1952 and Seva Bharati in 1979. However, both were fairly minimal presences within the movement until their recent expansion (see Figures S.4 and S.5). Figure S.9 illustrates the network of major Hindu nationalist organizations.

[45] To do so, I first collected data on the number of projects undertaken by both Sewa Bharati and Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram across India from the records kept by both organizations. I then divided this figure by each state's total Dalit and Adivasi population. See Table S.32b for details. Results are robust to using the state's entire population in the denominator.

[46] See Figure S.5.

[47] In calculating ENPV, I count all independents who won more than 2% of the state-level vote as separate parties when computing the measure, as suggested by Chhibber and Kollman (1998).

[48] The formula for ethnic voting (EV) is given by $EV = 1/\sqrt{G - 1/2G} \sum_{g=1}^{G} (EVg * sg)$ where G is the total number of groups in the country and *sg* is the proportion of group *g* in the country's voting population. The individual component of ethnic voting for each group EV_g is given by the formula $EVg = \sqrt{1/2 \sum_{j=1}^{P} (Vg - Vj)^2}$, where V_g is the proportion of individuals in group *g* who support party *j*, Vj is the proportion of individuals in society who support *j*, and *P* is the number of parties. The groups included in calculating the index were Hindu upper castes, Hindu Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Dalits, Adivasis, and the three largest religious minorities within a state.

FIGURE 4.   Recent Growth in Religious Welfare across India *Sources*:

VANVASI KALYAN ASHRAM
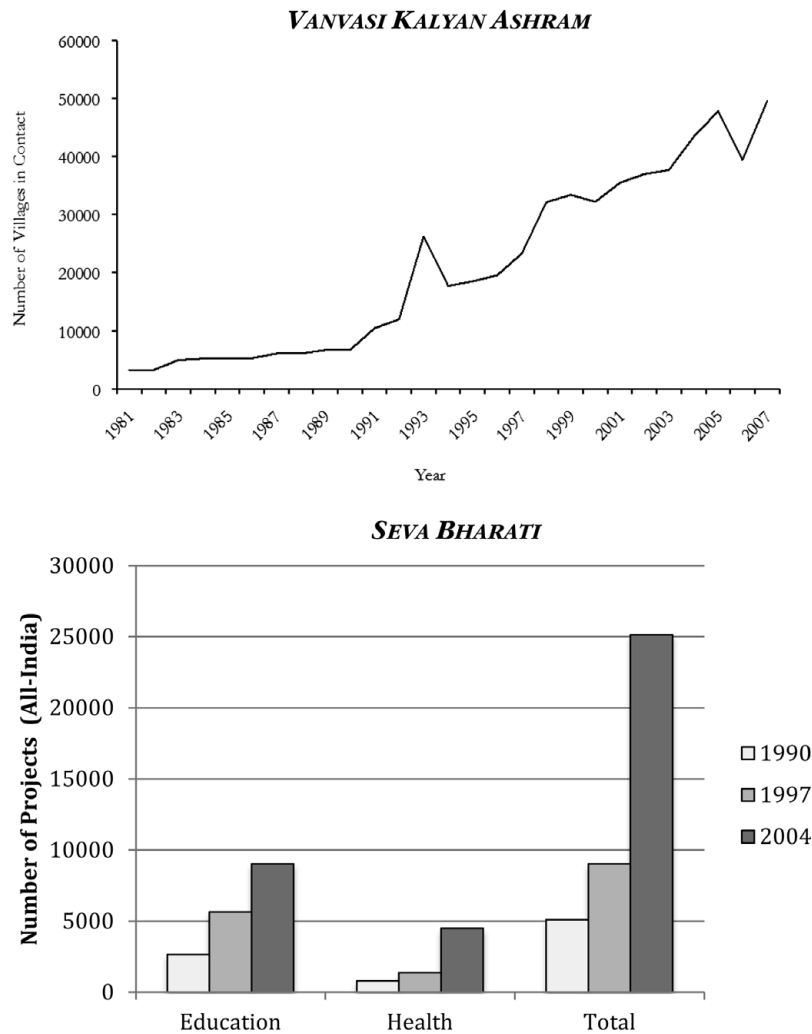
SEVA BHARATI

Sources: VKA data collected by author from VKA annual records, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh (April 2008). Seva Bharati data collected by author from Seva Bharati Office, Gol Market, New Delhi (July 2010).

organized conversion). I therefore control for the proportion of a state's population that is Muslim or Christian. Further, elite parties might also expand welfare networks where the non-elite populations they target are larger. However, India's plurality system may incentivize groups to self-mobilize where they are more numerous (e.g., Posner 2006). Non-elite ethnic communities may therefore be less likely to support elite parties as their size approaches a winning plurality. Not accounting for group size might therefore dampen any association between service chapters and elite party performance.

Finally, economic development (*Development*, measured as the per capita state domestic product) may exert similar inverse effects on welfare chapter placement and BJP support.[49] Service activists may concentrate their efforts in relatively underdeveloped states

where their offerings will be especially valued. However, class-based voting is often stronger in poorer regions (Gelman et al. 2008; Huber and Stanig 2009), reducing the chances of disadvantaged voters crossing class lines to support the BJP.

Table 6 reports how these various factors affected the BJP's performance across 17 Indian states from 1996 to 2004.[50] The models used were generalized least squares panel regressions with robust clustered standard errors.[51] All models also included year fixed

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[49] Net state domestic product data were taken from the Reserve Bank of India's *Bulletin*.

[50] Some observers might wonder if this relationship persists past 2004, especially given the BJP's poor performance in the 2009 election. Although data from the 2009 NES are not yet publicly available, I constructed estimates of the BJP's performance using secondary NES reports for 15 of the 17 states in the analysis. The party's performance continued to strongly correlate with the 2004 state-level welfare index (with a coefficient of .61, $p = .03$; see Figure S.8).

[51] Diagnostics revealed no collinearity or first-order autocorrelation (Table S.34). I used a random-effects specification in Models 1 and 2, because Hausman tests failed to reject the null hypothesis that the

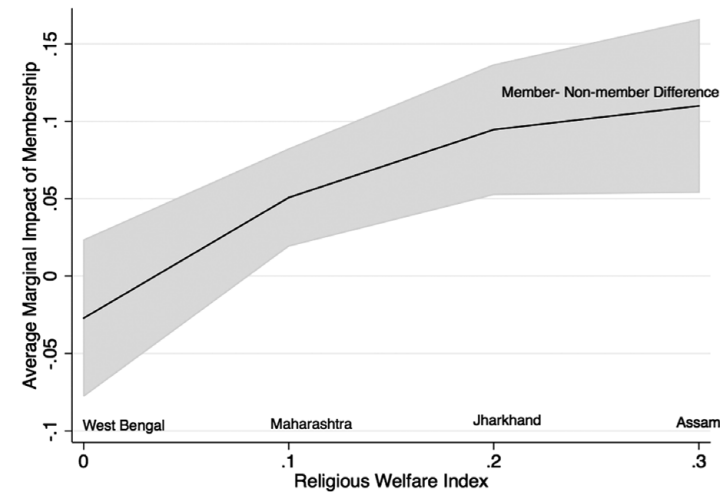**FIGURE 5. Religious Welfare and BJP Performance**

5A. DENSITY OF SERVICE WINGS CORRELATES WITH BJP PERFORMANCE (2004)
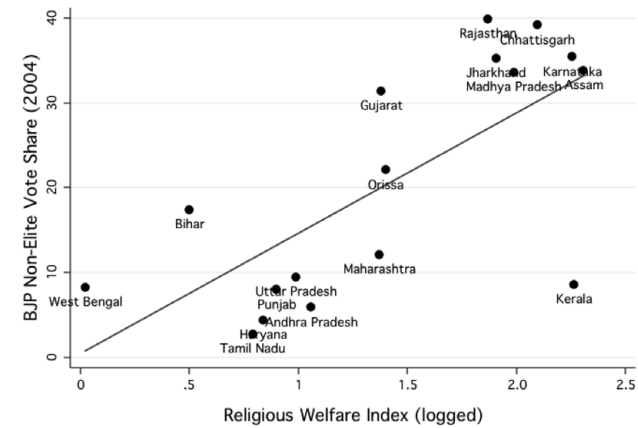
5B. DENSITY OF NON-SERVICE WINGS DOESN'T CORRELATE WITH BJP PERFORMANCE (2004)
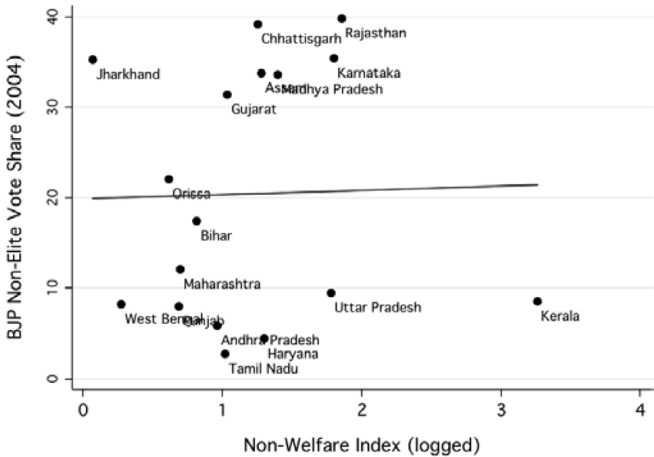
5C. AVERAGE MARGINAL IMPACT OF MEMBERSHIP INCREASES WHERE WELFARE NETWORKS ARE DENSER

Note: Shaded Area indicates 95% confidence intervals.

TABLE 6. Religious Welfare and Elite Party Support Across Indian States (1996–2004)

		Non-Elite Support for the BJP (logged)			DV: Upper Caste Support for BJP (5)	DV: *Subsequent* Religious Welfare (6)
	Service Index (logged) (1)	Baseline Model (2)	w/fixed effects (3)	w/lagged DV (4)		
Religious Welfare (log)		.455**	.276*	.568*	.330	
		(.178)	(.124)	(.290)	(.243)	
Prior BJP Support (log)				.263		.050
				(.167)		(.312)
Party Fragmentation (log)	− .236	.184	1.241	.279	.031	1.008
	(.273)	(.761)	(.612)	(.494)	(.890)	(.591)
Elite Support (log)	.209	.485**	.315	.608***		− .046
	(.123)	(.191)	(.240)	(.200)		(.260)
Ethnic Voting (log)	− .334	− .101	− .218	− .461	− .593	.095
	(.241)	(.618)	(.444)	(.425)	(.590)	(.358)
Development (log)	.216	− .055	− .044	.032	− .201	.355
	(.214)	(.268)	(.289)	(.315)	(.391)	(.323)
Non-Elite Population	.026*	.040	− .067	.048	.011	.020
	(.012)	(.023)	(.056)	(.025)	(.030)	(.038)
Christian Population	.096***	.061*	.474	− .056	− .083	.020
	(.019)	(.027)	(.503)	(.041)	(.041)	(.029)
Muslim Population	− .004	− .040	− .315	.049*	.031	− .004
	(.022)	(.025)	(.249)	(.024)	(.035)	(.021)
Constant	− 5.934***	1.614	4.219	.402	3.468	− 5.640
	(1.514)	(3.194)	(4.513)	(2.706)	(4.315)	(3.057)
Year Fixed Effects?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
State Fixed Effects?	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
N*T	47	47	47	32	47	30
R²	.64	.64	.72	.63	.33	.19

Notes: *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001. The panel is slightly imbalanced (47 instead of 51) due to missing data on some explanatory variables for Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand for 1996 and 1999, as these states were only formed in 2000.

effects to remove any idiosyncratic effects of a particular election year. Given the limited sample size (N = 47 for most models), the results should be interpreted with caution, but are nevertheless instructive. Model 1 first assesses where Hindu nationalist service networks were built by regressing the service index on the other explanatory factors. Only the size of Christian and that of non-elite populations were found to significantly affect welfare network density, both in the expected positive direction.[52]

Model 2 shifts to regressing BJP performance with Dalits and Adivasis on the service index and other

state-specific random effects are uncorrelated with the regressors. However, the results are checked with state fixed effects in Model 3. Given the short duration of the panel, I preferred using robust clustered errors to panel-corrected standard errors (Beck and Katz 1995). However, the results remain robust to using naïve standard errors (at the .01 level).

[52] The percentage of Christians and Muslims within a state's non-elite population had no impact on where welfare wings were built (Table S.37). Data from Woodberry (2012) showed that the historical presence of Christian missionary networks also had no impact (Figure S.10).

state-level explanatory variables. The results reveal that the density of welfare chapters significantly and positively correlates with the BJP's performance, even when accounting for these theoretically important potential confounders. Because both the key predictor and outcome variables are log transformed, the results indicate that a 10% increase in the service index results in an average increase of about 4.5% in the BJP's vote share. Among the control variables included, the BJP's upper caste vote share also exerted a positive impact on its performance among subaltern groups, but this result was not consistent across all specifications and did not confound the autonomous impact of service networks. Although the proportion of Christians did significantly affect BJP vote share, its impact was in the opposite direction to its impact on welfare network density. Given these inverse effects, this variable cannot be driving the positive association observed between welfare and BJP performance.

Models 3–6 subject the observed association between welfare networks and BJP performance to additional robustness checks. Model 3 shows that the impact of welfare is robust to controlling for unobserved stable

differences between states by including fixed effects.[53] Model 4 shows this result also holds when including a lagged measure of non-elite support for the BJP.[54] This gauge of past performance helps control more directly for the distinctive trajectory of Hindu nationalism with disadvantaged voters in each state (Angrist and Pischke 2008). The consistently robust impact of service on BJP performance across these different specifications increases confidence that the results are not the artifact of a particular modeling strategy.[55]

Finally, Models 5 and 6 present "placebo tests" for which my central theory predicts no effect. Finding an effect in either instance would therefore cast doubt on the support this analysis provides for my argument. First, my theory anticipates welfare network density to have no impact on elite support for the BJP, because service chapters explicitly do not "treat" upper caste populations. Model 5 regresses upper caste support on religious welfare and finds no impact. Second, Model 6 finds no effect of earlier BJP performance (measured in 1996 and 1999) on subsequent levels of Hindu nationalist service provision (measured in 1997 and 2004). A significant coefficient on the welfare index in this specification would have indicated a violation of the causal logic implied by my argument.[56]

We can also combine state and survey data to address concerns of measurement validity with the membership variable used in the voter-level analysis. The broad wording of the survey question used to construct this measure raises the possibility that participation in non-Hindu nationalist organizations drives membership's impact. To address this concern, we can leverage the reasonable assumption that membership is more likely to reflect participation in Hindu nationalist welfare associations where these organizations actually have local chapters for voters to join. Consequently, my argument anticipates membership to correlate with BJP vote choice more strongly in states with dense aggregate welfare networks. Conversely, my theory would be troubled if we find this correlation is stronger in states with weak service networks (i.e., where membership is less likely to reflect inclusion in Hindu nationalist networks).

Accordingly, I test whether membership's impact on BJP support is conditioned by the state-level welfare index. I do so by including an interaction term within the full specification used among non-elite voters. This term interacts the welfare index value resides with his or her individual membership status

($Service^* Member$).[57] I follow Long (2009) in using simulated probabilities to interpret the interaction effect within a nonlinear framework. Figure 5c charts the average marginal impact of membership on BJP support across a range of welfare index values. This effect is actually negative (and statistically insignificant) for low values of the welfare index, but steadily increases for higher index values. The impact becomes positive for values greater than .05 and is statistically significant for values greater than 0.1 (roughly the index value for Maharashtra).[58]

Thus, in line with my argument, the marginal impact of membership on BJP support becomes more pronounced where Hindu nationalist welfare networks are denser. Of course, these tests must be read with caution, because the interaction term still does not specifically identify members of Hindu nationalist associations. That said, these findings—triangulated with the other layers of evidence provided here—do strengthen confidence in the validity of my analysis.[59]

Why Service? The Views of Providers and Recipients

A final question that the prior analyses cannot satisfactorily answer is why parties such as the BJP might turn to this particular division of labor.[60] In 1989, Hindu nationalists launched a new "service division" (*seva vibhag*) to expand their welfare activities. Interviewees admitted that this new division was created to be a tool for political recruitment, noting that "we knew that our presence was mostly with upper castes, so we decided to make a separate service division to help us work among our backward brothers."[61] Other informants corroborated this shift, noting that "it was in 1990 that we really decided to enter society in a full way using service. Before that we did not always do this *constant* service work" [emphasis added].[62] In this section, I draw on extensive fieldwork in three Indian

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[53] A separate test failed to reject the null hypothesis that all year coefficients are jointly equal to zero in the fixed effects specification, and therefore year fixed effects were not technically necessary in this specification, but are included nevertheless.

[54] For a clear discussion of why a lagged dependent variable cannot be combined with state and year fixed effects, see Angrist and Pischke (2008, 243–46).

[55] Additionally, Models 2 and 3 in Table S.36 show that service correlates with BJP performance for panels constructed to ensure the former lags the latter by at least one year.

[56] A more in-depth discussion of these tests is presented in Table S.36.

[57] I am grateful to Ana De La O for a helpful discussion on this point. See Table S.19 for full results and discussion of these tests.

[58] The results are similar if we calculate the individual interaction effect for each observation separately, using the protocol suggested in Norton, Wang, and Ai (2004). The average interaction effect is positive (.488) and significant ($p < .01$), and practically each individual interaction effect is positive (Figure S.3A) and significant (Figure S.3B). See the fourth section of the Supplemental Online Appendix for more details.

[59] Additional tests examined whether membership is likely to be capturing participation in secular associations, specifically labor unions and caste associations. Table S.20A reports members are not more likely to come from more heavily unionized occupation categories nor to oppose measures to reduce the size of the public sector (where most formal unionized employment in India is located). Table S.20B reports that members are also not more likely to vote with their caste community or to oppose intercaste marriages (both attitudes expected of members of caste associations). Instead, members are marked by higher levels of religious activity, consistent with expectations of those who join religious organizations (Table S.20C).

[60] Names of field site villages and interviewees in this section have been changed to protect respondent anonymity.

[61] Author interview with activist BD, Agra, January 6, 2010.

[62] Author interview, with Seva Bharati activist AB, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, July 27, 2010.

states between 2007 and 2010 to argue that the provision of quotidian private welfare proved particularly attractive because it allowed the BJP to balance the needs of poor voters, wealthy core constituencies, and movement ideologues.[63]

For poor voters, welfare-based outreach provided modest but tangible material benefits and was therefore preferable to strategies primarily based on ideological appeals. In interviews, poor beneficiaries repeatedly voiced their appreciation of these services. One telling instance came from the village of Kikar, where the local public schoolteacher confessed he had enrolled his son in a Hindu nationalist school, which he regarded as superior to his own.[64] Another example came from two Adivasi residents of Bael village, who said they especially valued the local Hindu nationalist welfare wing for its afterschool programs.[65] Absent this service, their children had often been left unsupervised and invariably found ways to get in trouble. A particularly striking illustration came from the village of Anola, where an interviewee said he enrolled his son in a Hindu nationalist school, despite initially opposing the BJP, because he believed it offered a better education.[66] He now openly claims to vote for the BJP.

This appreciation was enhanced by the inadequacy of local public services. Dalit residents of a slum in the northern city of Agra complained about the irregular presence of government schoolteachers, noting that "out of three teachers, only one actually shows up. There is no atmosphere for learning." They noted that "compared to the [local] Seva Bharati school, the work in government schools is third rate—it is just a salary collection business."[67] Villagers in central India voiced similar complaints about their local primary health center, saying they preferred to receive medicines for common illnesses (colds, coughs, diarrhea) from Hindu nationalists because "they will always see you, whereas with the government center we never know whether we will even see a doctor that day."[68] These conversations underscore the fact that it was dissatisfaction with existing service infrastructure that drew the poor to religious welfare chapters, not their preexisting attachments to the BJP.

For elite party providers, welfare offers an efficient method of outreach that does not encroach on the programmatic agenda of their core supporters. First, offering local public goods allowed individual providers to establish contact with a relatively large number of poor voters. Second, the physical expenses of welfare could be kept relatively low. They relied on committed ideologues to provide low-cost services, while the inadequacy of public services ensured these basic offerings were still appreciated. Third, the patronizing terms of

"uplift" associated with welfare proved far less threatening to the BJP's elite core than the redistributive language needed to justify pro-poor shifts in policies or party personnel.[69]

Additionally, welfare provided the basis for upper castes to gain access to poor communities that have been previously hostile to Hindu nationalism's elitist ideological vision: "There is distrust at first, and will continue until you actually go to them and work amongst them,"[70] but "through our little pieces of work we gain their trust."[71] Welfare providers discussed how the goodwill and high local standing that welfare generates can be deployed to help the BJP electorally: "Our teachers are not respected at first, because people are not sure about what they are trying to do in the village. But over time they gain high status in the village . . . even today teachers in tribal society command much respect, which is helpful for us politically."[72]

Some activists were even more forthcoming, detailing their specific contributions toward mobilizing communities within their sphere of influence. Two activists discussed how they "first sit with those villagers with whom we have a good relationship and make clear which candidate we want to win the election."[73] Having done so,

> We tell our friends to go and talk to their neighbors and try and convince them to support our preferred candidate. We also tell them how to explain their support, to make sure villagers understand the choice is best for the development of their community.[74]

Another activist, who runs a boarding school for tribal students notes:

> See in the beginning, people were suspicious, but the best proof of the turn [in their opinions] has been that we have managed to recruit 15 students from our school alone in the last few years to work as full time party workers for *hamara bhajapa* [our BJP].[75]

Such sensitive confessions, which required sustained engagement with particular activists to elicit, provide invaluable confirmation of the causal sequencing implied by my argument. These interviews all converged in describing a pattern of initial hostility among non-elite citizens toward Hindu nationalism and the BJP, which is overcome by the goodwill earned by service workers, leading to a shift in political preferences.

[63] The states were Uttar Pradesh (in north India), Chhattisgarh (central), and Kerala (south).
[64] Interview with WA, Kikar village, July 20, 2010.
[65] Interview with WD and WE, Bael village, July 16, 2010.
[66] Interview with WB, Anola village, July 18, 2010.
[67] Focus group discussion, Chottanagar, Uttar Pradesh, January 11, 2011
[68] Interview with WC, Anola village, July 18, 2010.

[69] Note the language of one service activist during a fundraising effort I observed among upper castes: "Does a man seek newspaper praise if he feeds his children? . . . the way this will work is that our brothers have to put their hands up, and we have to reach down and pull them up." Speaker at Seva Bharati fundraiser attended by author, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, January 6, 2011.
[70] Interview with Seva Bharati activist AB, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, July 27, 2010.
[71] Interview with activist AD, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh, April 2, 2008.
[72] Interview with activist AG, March 22, 2008.
[73] Interviews with AJ and AM, Kikar village, July 22, 2010, August 2, 2010.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Interview with AH, Bilaspur, July 27, 2010.

Qualitative fieldwork also confirmed that this "goodwill" is not simply window dressing for clientelism. As part of my research, I interviewed 80 randomly selected households in five central Indian villages with active Hindu nationalist service chapters. Contra the discretionary logic of clientelism, no interviewee reported being turned away from a Hindu nationalist welfare chapter. Second, villagers framed their reciprocity in terms of voluntary gratitude, not as a compulsory quid pro quo. Each household was asked if it "had to" (*dena parhta hai*) give something back to Hindu nationalists in return for using their services. The vast majority (87%) said they did not. However, when asked if they felt they "should" (*dena chahiye*) give something back, 53% responded in the affirmative. Interestingly, such reciprocity often included attending regular meetings and festivals organized by the providing organization.[76]

Finally, service activists noted that monitoring voters—a key feature of clientelism (see Stokes 2005)—imposes prohibitive logistical costs, especially within populous Indian constituencies. Assuming such responsibilities would curtail the service work each activist could perform, reducing the number of poor voters within his or her sphere of influence.[77] Further, service activists believe they are more socially respected (and hence electorally effective) if they do not explicitly make partisan demands.[78] These claims appear to resonate with survey evidence, because measures of monitoring efforts did not correlate with the BJP's success among associational members. Neither preelection contact with party activists nor attendance at campaign rallies increased the likelihood of members voting for the party (Table S.28).

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION: THE ARGUMENT BEYOND INDIA

This article has argued for the need to extend the study of the poor voter paradox to the non-Western world. Such paradoxes emerge routinely across the global south, but have been ignored because these arenas are not organized in accordance with Western convention. Through an in-depth examination of how this puzzle manifested within the world's biggest democracy, I have illustrated the inadequacy of existing explanations based on conventional material strategies or values voting. Instead, I outline a unique strategy through which elite parties can recruit the poor while retaining the rich. Specifically, the BJP exemplifies how elite parties can outsource recruitment to organizational affiliates providing basic social services, allowing their party arm to maintain programmatic linkages with elite core supporters. In delineating this strategy, I more broadly highlight the importance of privately furnished

electoral strategies that (outside of direct vote buying) continue to be significantly understudied.

I develop and test this argument with evidence from the intrinsically important case of India. One of the advantages of my subnational design is its ability to control for institutional effects while analyzing variations in elite party performance. However, India's institutional context does highlight some important conditions that enabled the BJP's approach. Most fundamental were the demand-side incentives provided by electoral competition and the civic freedoms the BJP's affiliates enjoyed. Absent these conditions, elite parties are more likely to remain focused on organizational survival (and hence on core voter retention), instead of on electoral expansion.[79] Second, India's plurality system compelled the BJP to expand beyond its elite base, because upper castes do not constitute a plurality in practically any Indian constituency. Finally, India's populous constituencies raised the monitoring costs of individualized clientelist pacts, thereby incentivizing Hindu nationalists to focus on providing local public goods.

Some of these facilitative conditions may not exist in polities in which other elite actors, especially those with religious roots, operate. Yet insights from India are still useful for the broader study of such parties. For example, my argument has illustrated the widely varying reasons for which citizens might support the BJP, an elite party with religious roots, and the importance of intra-faith class distinctions in structuring such variation. Second, the BJP's approach also reverses conventional portrayals of these actors, which assume movement radicals whip up the core base, while party pragmatists focus on reaching out to noncore supporters.

An interesting illustration of the comparative potential of both insights comes from contemporary Yemen. Although clearly not a fully democratic state, Yemen also defies many stereotypes of political life in non-democratic settings. The country has had a vibrant history of associational life, and "Yemenis from a variety of regional and class backgrounds routinely criticize the regime without the fear of repercussions" (Wedeen 2008, 76). The country is also home to an elite party affiliated to a religious movement: the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (commonly known as Islah). Islah has a staunchly urban, middle-class core, and its platform accordingly emphasized "everyday social practices" (Weeden 2008, 189–91) and avoided redistributive economic policies favoring the poor.[80] Yet the party has faced increasing electoral incentives to reach out to poor voters in post-unification parliamentary elections, because tribal leaders it had relied on for this task were inconsistent in their commitment to Islamist values and susceptible to the poaching efforts of the dominant General People's Congress (GPC). Welfare provision,

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[76] Even this voluntary reciprocity was not articulated in electoral terms. In open-ended questions, the most common items mentioned were gifts of rice around Hindu festivals (41% of respondents), attending meetings held by the organization (39%), and help with building small rooms for classes to be held (16%).

[77] Interview with activist BF, Agra, January 8, 2010

[78] Interview with activist CH, Agra, January 6, 2011.

[79] Indeed, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood were believed to have taken such an approach under Mubarak's restrictive regime (Masoud 2010).

[80] Clark (2004) quotes a 1993 survey conducted among 190 of Islah's 196 candidates, which showed nearly half (81) had university degrees.

led by the Islah Charitable Society (ICS), appears to have become an important part of the party's outreach, especially among the urban poor.[81] Even Clark's (2004, 124) skeptical account, which depicts Islamic welfare networks in Egypt and Jordan as being run "by and for middle classes," calls the ICS "the most successful humanitarian nongovernmental organization helping the poor in Yemen."

It is beyond the scope of this article to provide equivalently extensive tests of my argument within Yemen. However, the recent Arab Barometer survey does provide evidence of some intriguing parallels. Although it did not report the specific electoral preferences of respondents, it did ask whether they thought it "suitable to have a parliamentary system in which only Islamic political parties and factions compete."[82] A replication of the tests conducted in Table 2 revealed that among poorer Yemeni, associational members were significantly more likely to support Islamist politics (a simulated probability of 30%) than nonmembers (14%).[83] Conversely, a respondent's religiosity (measured as the frequency of reading the Quran) yielded no significant impact.[84] Yet these effects were inverted among relatively privileged Yemeni respondents: Organizational inclusion had no effect on support for Islamist politics, but piety increased such support by 30 percentage points.

I do not wish to overstate the significance of these findings nor conclude with unfounded assertions that all elite parties, even those with religious orientations, will necessarily replicate the BJP's approach. Instead, this brief discussion helps highlight how a study from South Asia can help structure our analysis of similar phenomena outside the region. In this instance, insights from the BJP's experience helped uncover strikingly resonant divergences in how organizational inclusion and cultural values affect support for a similar elite party outside the subcontinent. The momentous changes sweeping across much of Africa and Asia have ensured that a growing number of such parties will simultaneously face decreased restrictions on their activities and increased electoral incentives to appeal to the poor. Given this shifting terrain, an explanation of how Hindu nationalists forged a coalition of rich and poor within India's more mature democratic setting should prove particularly instructive.

Supplementary materials

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0003055414000069

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[81] The ICS was also founded in 1990, just shortly before the founding of the formal party itself.
[82] Question 246, part 2 on the 2006 Arab Barometer Survey Instrument. The survey was conducted in Jordan, Palestine, Algeria, Morocco, Kuwait, and Yemen.
[83] Full results in Table S.38. Poor voters are those self-reporting in the bottom six income deciles.
[84] I follow Jamal and Tessler (2008: 101) in using this measure of respondent piety. The likelihood increases from 11 to 41%. These effects of piety and membership do not change if we restrict the sample to the top one, two, or three income deciles.

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