

Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Choosing Policies for Peace

By
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Inequality and Conflict

‘Remove the secondary causes that have produced the great convulsions of the world and you will almost always find the principle of inequality at the bottom. Either the poor have attempted to plunder the rich, or the rich to enslave the poor. If, then, a society can ever be founded in which everyman shall have something to keep and little to take from others, much will have been done for peace’ (de Tocqueville 1835, quote from 1954 edition, : 266)

Today

- Nature of conflict and some hypothesised causes.
- Horizontal inequalities: what they are; how they may relate to conflict.
- Review of some of our findings
- Policy implications

Nature of recent wars

- Mainly intra-national not international, but with many international interventions.
- Incidence heaviest in low-income countries:
 - 1960-95, 0.5% of population of low-income died;
 - 0.25% of middle-income;
 - 0.2% of high-income.
- Africa estimated to account for 40% of world conflicts and nearly half high intensity ones, 2006.
- Deaths far greatest among civilians (90% typical); differs from international wars.

Trends

- Number of serious wars rising since 1950.
- Acceleration immediately after 1989 (end Cold War).
- Substantial decline over last decade.
- Proportion of 'ethnic' conflict rising
- International dimension changing (from finance to direct action)

Number of conflicts by level: all types

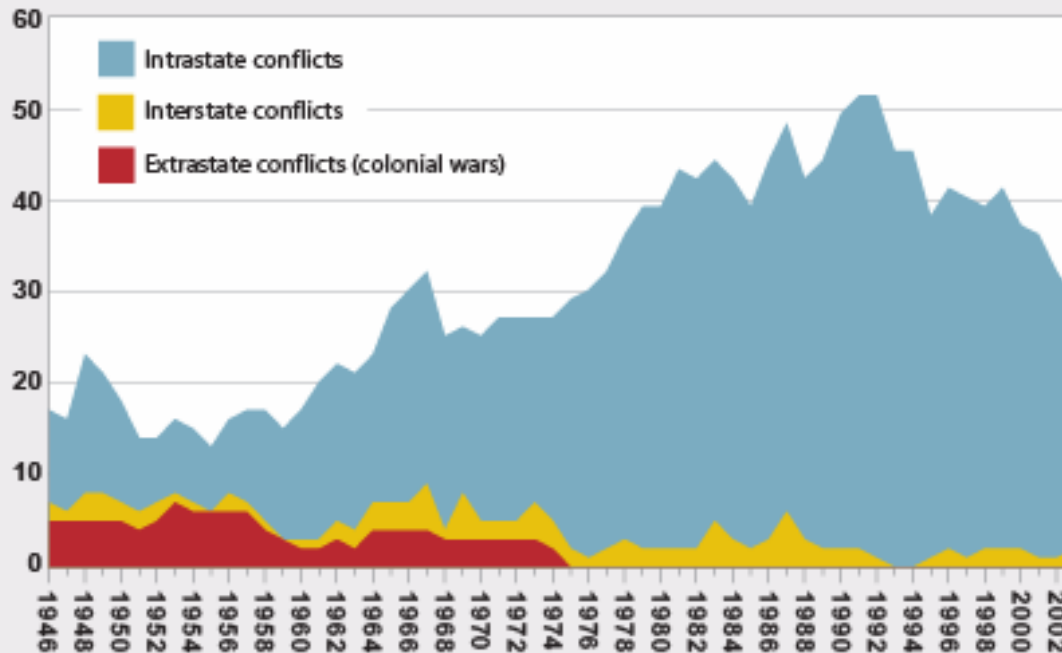


Figure 1.1 A less violent world:
Numbers of conflicts, 1946–2003

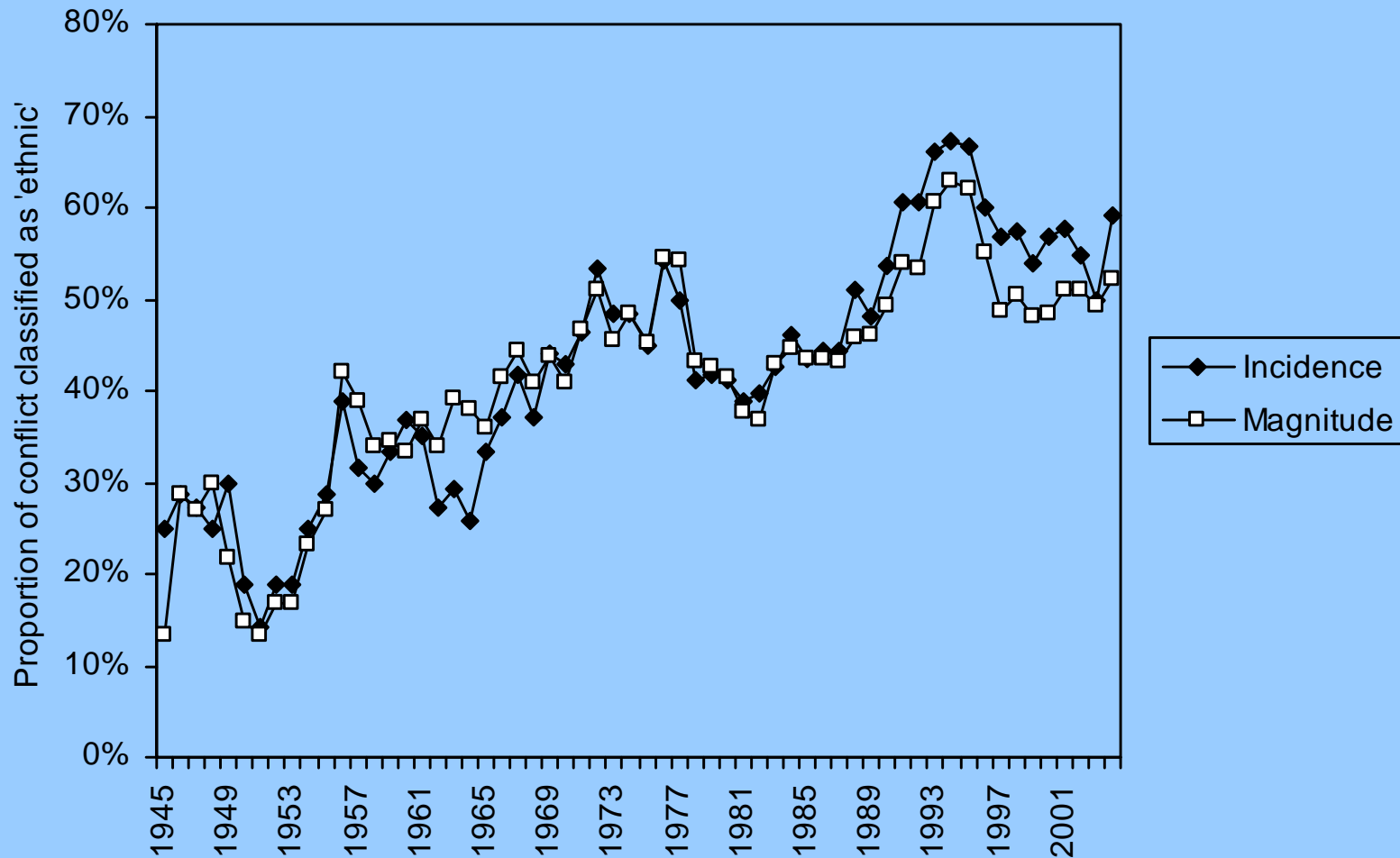
Since World War II, the number of interstate wars has remained relatively low. Colonial (extrastate) wars had disappeared by the mid-1970s, but civil (intrastate) conflicts rose steadily until 1992, after which they declined steeply.

Source: Uppsala and PRIO, 2004¹

The conflicts shown in Figure 1.1 resulted in at least 25 battle-related deaths a year. They are of three types: interstate (fought between states), extrastate (colonial wars) and intrastate (civil wars). In all cases one of the warring parties was a state. The graph does not include ethnic or other conflicts where neither warring party was a state, nor does it include cases of 'one-sided' violence such as genocide.

Figure 1.1 is a 'stacked graph', meaning that the number of conflicts in each category is indicated by the depth of the band of colour. The top line indicates the total of number of conflicts of all types in each year. Thus in 1946 there were five extrastate conflicts, two interstate conflicts, ten intrastate conflicts and 17 conflicts in total.

Trends in ethnic conflict, 1945-2004



Approaches to understanding causes of conflict:

- Culture or economy?
- Culture popular explanation. Age-old ethnic hatreds – Huntington, Kaplan.
- But clear weaknesses:
 - Most ethnic groups collaborate: Fearon and Laitin -- former USSR, 4.5% ethnic conflict of potential; Africa , 1960-79, less than 0.01%
 - Ethnicity ‘constructed’
 - ‘pre-colonial Africa far from there being a single ‘tribal’ identity, most Africans moved in and out of multiple identities, defining themselves at one moment as subject to this chief, at another moment as a member of that cult, at another moment as part of this clan’ (Ranger, 1983).

Turning to socio-economic causes...

- 'Rationalist' view: individual maximisation: economics by other means.
- Broken 'social contract'
- Greenwar.
- Group inequalities.

4. Horizontal Inequality and conflict

- Most economists measure and evaluate VERTICAL inequality – among individuals or households – generally of income.
- Very mixed evidence on normal (vertical) inequality measure and conflict
 - 1989 survey by Lichbach
 - Recent econometric evidence on vertical inequality – also mixed.
- But *is* evidence that significant cause of conflict is presence of Horizontal inequalities, or group inequalities.

Horizontal Inequality = inequality between groups

- What groups? – groups with meaning to members, viewed by people themselves, or others as important aspect of identity.
- Examples of salient identities:
 - Ethnic/'tribe': African
 - Religious: most regions – notable N. Ireland; Middle East; Indonesia; Nigeria
 - Race – e.g. South Africa; Malaysia; Fiji
 - Regional (overlaps with other identities) – E. Timor; Eritrea, Bangladesh.
 - Caste (S. Asia)
 - Class

Important question: what determines group boundaries?

- Identities 'constructed not primordial.
- But not plucked from air – constrained by history, language etc. Shared markers (language, behaviour, rituals, religious practices).
- Still 'boundaries' can be somewhat arbitrary.
 - Multiple identities.
 - Fluid. Mestizo in Latin America. 'Indigenous, 'cholo'.
 - Salient groups can change over time. (Moslems in Sri Lanka; Iwerri in Biafra).

Fighting groups

- Salient groups depend on leadership and ‘winning coalitions’ (Posner).; and treatment of group;
- Yet despite ‘constructed’ nature, ethnic differences **real** to participants.

The ‘very effectiveness [of ethnicity] as a means of advancing group interests depends upon its being seen as “primordial” by those who make claims in its name’ [Turton].

- Real enough to fight and die for.

HIs are Multidimensional

- Dimensions - those that matter to members – affect well-being, sense of injustice, actions.
- Salient dimensions vary according to nature of society/economy, and position (leaders/followers).
- Important dimensions:
 - **Politics** (political participation, power, at all levels).
 - **Economic** resources and outcomes (access to assets, employment, incomes).
 - **Social**, including services (health/education/water..; and social networks).
 - **Cultural recognition**.

HIs as mobilising agent

- HIs combine *identity* (which binds group) and *grievance*
- Ethnic or religious boundaries are a powerful source of mobilisation in general, but
- Especially where there are blatant HIs.
- Motives of leaders of groups (orchestrators) may be lack of political power (political HIs). Leaders help construct/accentuate group boundaries: i.e. 'ethnic entrepreneurs'.
- Followers mind about political exclusion but more about economic, social and cultural inequalities.

HIs and Political instability: many examples

Genocide:

- Rwanda;
- Pre-war German.

Violent conflict:

- Kosova;
- Sri Lanka;
- Nepal
- Indonesia (Aceh; East Timor).
- Sudan

Also riots:

- US cities in 1970s
 - Sporadic, cities in UK
 - City riots in India.
- Also applies internationally : Moslem/Western divide.

Some examples of major HIs.

Political Participation	Economic		Social access and outcomes
	Assets	Empl/ incomes	
Political participation in Government <i>Fiji,, Burundi, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Uganda Sri Lanka</i>	Land, <i>Fiji, Cambodia, El Salvador</i>	Incomes <i>Malaysia, Fiji, Chiapas</i>	Education <i>Rwanda, Burundi, Haiti S. Africa, Uganda, Kosova</i>
	Private capital <i>S. Africa, Burundi, Rwanda</i>	Govt. employment <i>Sri Lanka, Fiji</i>	Health services <i>Burundi, N. Uganda, Chiapas</i>
	Govt. infrastructure <i>Chiapas, Burundi</i>	Private employment <i>Fiji, N. Ireland</i>	Safe water <i>Uganda, Chiapas</i>
Army/police <i>Fiji N. Ireland Burundi Kosova</i>	Aid <i>Afghanistan Sudan, Rwanda</i>	'elite employment' <i>Fiji, Chiapas, N. Ireland</i>	Housing <i>N. Ireland, S. Africa</i>
	Natural resources <i>Liberia, Sierra Leone</i>	Unemployment <i>Algeria ,N. Ireland S. Africa; Palestine</i>	Poverty <i>Chiapas, Uganda, S. Africa N. Uganda</i>

Research into Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: some findings

- Research mainly by Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity Research (CRISE) programme (2003-9),
- Objective: to study multiethnic societies, investigating why some experience political instability and violent conflict, often labelled as 'ethnic', while others manage to solve disputes relatively peacefully.
- Major hypothesis:
That existence of high Horizontal Inequalities makes conflict more likely, where Horizontal Inequalities are inequalities among culturally perceived groups.

Programme coverage

- Three region/eight countries; plus some global analysis.
- West Africa:
 - Ghana/Cote d'Ivoire/Nigeria
- SEAsia
 - Indonesia/Malaysia (and a little elsewhere).
- Latin America
 - Bolivia/Guatemala/Peru.

His large in our countries

- **Bolivia:** IMR of indigenous population 50 per cent higher than nonindigenous
- **Peru:** the proportion of indigenous with secondary schooling 1/5 that of whites
- **Guatemala:** 20% of indigenous population in extreme poverty in 2000; 5% nonindigenous.
- **Nigeria:** maternal mortality rates in northeast are 9 times in southwest.
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** the literacy rate for Northern Mande is just 23 per cent, half the rate among the Akan
- **Ghana:** Northern Region child mortality rate is nearly 2.5 times Ghana as a whole
- **Malaysia:** despite considerable improvement, Chinese incomes on average, over 1.6 times Malays.

SOME FINDINGS

1. Probability of conflict rises as socio-economic HIs increase:
 - Econometric cross-country evidence by Østby; Gurr; Barrows
 - Within country evidence, Mancini; Gates and Murshed. Using a variety of group definitions; and HI definitions.
 - Separatist violence (Brown)
 - Association of conflict with perceptions of group injustice

N.B. Probability not certainty. Therefore need to explore **WHEN** and **WHY**

2. Conflict more likely where political and socio-economic HIs are consistent.

- political HIs motivate leaders; socio-economic followers
- examples: Cote d'Ivoire, versus Malaysia and Nigeria. Warri versus Calibar.
- Some econometric evidence : Østby (political/economic interaction); Cederman (political).

3. Inclusive government tends to prevent conflict.

- Econometric evidence shows that PR and federalism tend to reduce conflict probability.

- Contrast Bolivia and Peru and Guatemala; Ghana and Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

4. Citizenship often important source of exclusion.

- citizenship confers political, economic and social rights.
Source of general exclusion.

Occurs when:

- i. States decide to remove citizenship rights (Nazis; Uganda towards Asians)
 - ii. Migrants refused citizenship even after generations (Cote d'Ivoire)
 - iii. State changes; Czechoslovakia division left Roma peoples stateless.
- can be LOCAL as well as national: Indonesia, Ghana and Nigeria, Indigenes versus settlers.

5. Cultural status inequalities important

- Where sharp they bind people together and help mobilise people
- Represent powerful grievance in themselves
- Can be a major source of other inequalities (e.g. language restrictions).
- Events often act as a trigger – Orange Marches; destruction of mosque.

6. Perceptions important as much as 'observed' inequalities.

- E.g. in Nigeria and Ghana, don't perceive big differences in access to education, but do perceive differences in access to govt. jobs and contracts.
- In Nigeria, with broadly same HIs as Ghana, people generally perceive themselves as more ethnic and less national. And perceive sharper inequalities

7. Natural resources can be important source of HI, creating:

- regional inequalities in incomes
- regional resentments about redistribution
- within region inequalities
- examples: Indonesia; Nigeria.

One mechanism linking NR to conflict – others include finance, and greed.

8. Nature of state hugely important influencing whether HIs lead to conflict.

- state accommodating in Ghana conflicts; less so in rest of West Africa.
- state actions in Aceh, Indonesia, and Guatemala fueled and prolonged conflict.
- accommodating state in Sabah, Malaysia prevented violent separatism in contrast to Thailand, Philippines, East Timor.

9. Many HIs very persistent.

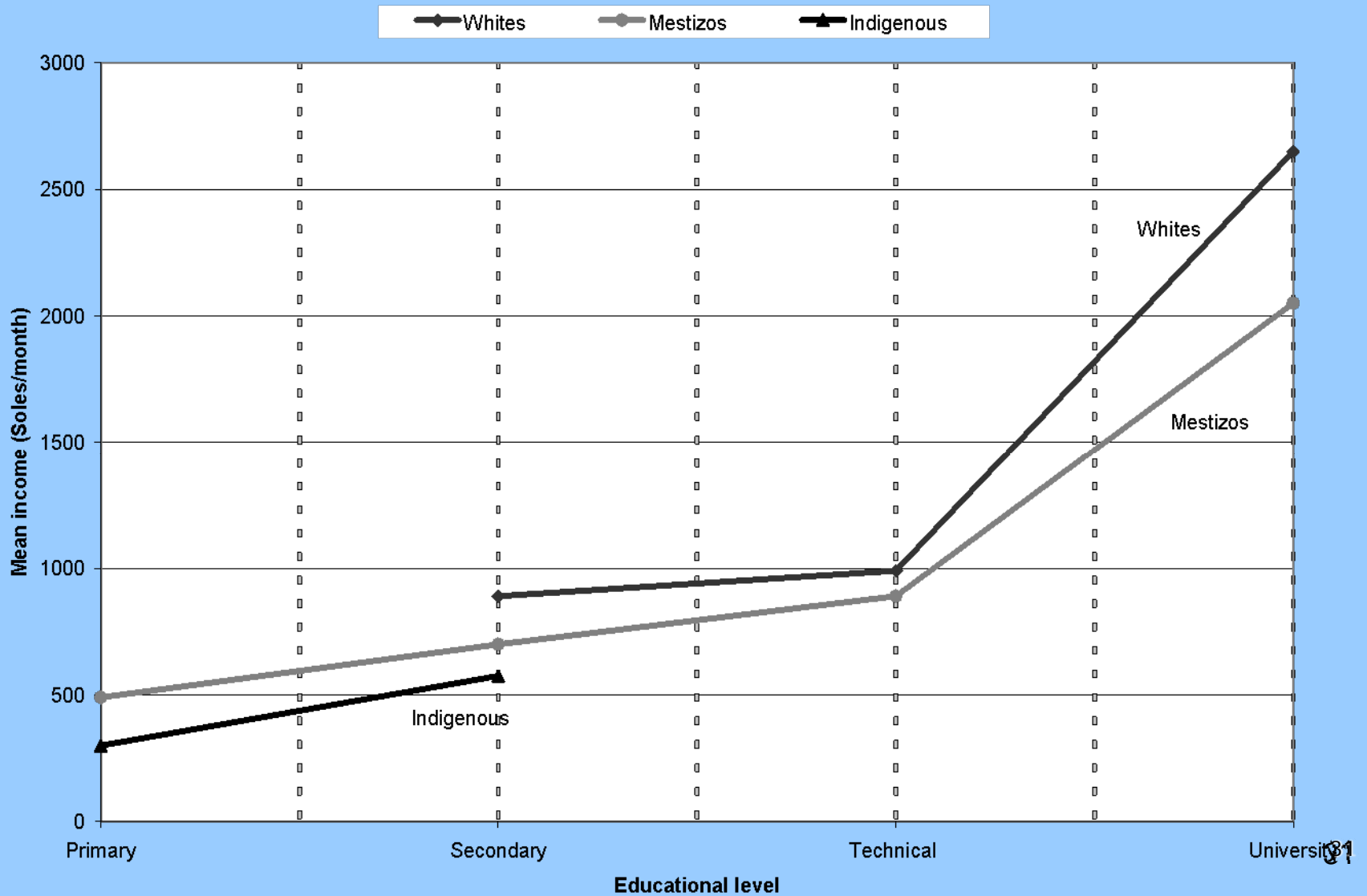
- Persistent inequalities in Ghana (North-South); US black-white; indigenous people, Latin America...
- Sometimes last centuries.
- Wellbeing impact worse because of this.

THE PERSISTENCE OF HIS

North South inequalities in Ghana over 60 years

	Infant mortality Gold Coast, 1931	Ghana, 1993
Northern Territories	1.26	1.20, 1.73, 1.29
National average	1.00	1.00

Returns to education in Peru



Policy conclusions

- When HIs are significant they make conflict more likely.
- Policy needs to address them, in all economies with marked inequalities, not only those coming out of conflict.
- Important for general wellbeing and poverty reduction as well as political stability
- NOT included in normal economic or political policies.

International policies pay less attention to HIs than national policies in some countries

- HIs mostly neglected, in international policy:
 - Aid, often worsens HIs (e.g. Burundi).
 - And structural adjustment policies
 - Ignored in most PRSPs
 - Also in much political conditionality – towards elections and multiparty democracy
 - But (implicitly) partially included in 'Human rights approach'; and Social exclusion approach.
- More often included in national policies.

Three types of policy

- Direct policies– targeted. Can be effective. But can lead to opposition and entrench ethnicity.
- Indirect policies – may be less effective, but also arouse less hostility.
- Towards greater integration – very long term; and has costs.

Policies towards political HIs

- Critical importance; reduce leadership motives; contribute to correcting other inequalities
- Structures needed to ensure that each group participates in political decision-making and power. Not Westminster majoritarian political system plus winner takes all.
- Power sharing is NOT natural consequence of the way many understand democracy.
- NB Participation important at many levels (central, regional, local) and in different types of decision (defence, economic, social) and in different activities (army, police, civil service).

Policies towards political HIs

- Indirect:
 - Federal or unitary (and design)
 - Extent and nature of decentralisation
 - Voting system – majoritarian; PR; alternative vote.
 - Voting system within assemblies.
 - Constitutional guarantee of rights and freedoms
- Direct.
 - Reserved seats.
 - Job allocation (and numbers). Three Presidents in Bosnia-Herzegovina; all levels of government
 - Political parties:
 - Restrictions on parties
 - Citizenship rights. Who is a citizen?

Policies towards socio-economic HIs

- Indirect
 - Legal rights; anti-discrimination
 - Progressive taxes and expenditure
 - Redesign of incentives (inc. macro policies) according to ethnic specialisation.
 - Comprehensive services (health, education etc. But also an issue of quality)
- Direct
 - Quotas and targets towards education; asset ownership; employment; subsidies; government procurement.

Some direct socio-economic policies

- **Assets**

- Land (Malaysia; Zimbabwe; Fiji; Namibia)
- Financial capital (Malaysia; S. Africa)
- Terms of privatisation – often unequalising
- Credit (Fiji; Malaysia)
- Education (Malaysia; Sri Lanka).
- Skills and training (Brazil, New Zealand)
- Public sector infrastructure (S. Africa).
- Housing (N. Ireland).
- Social capital? [neighbourhoods; clubs]

- **Incomes**

- Employment policies;
 - Public sector (Malaysia; Sri Lanka)
 - Private sector (S. Africa)

Integrationist policies

- Education
- Media
- National symbols
- But:
 - Can threaten cultural identities (France)
 - May disguise inequalities (Peru)

Two successful cases: 1. Malaysia: successful case of reducing econ/social Hls.

- 1971, following anti-Chinese riots, 1969. NEP. Aim to secure national unity.
- Characteristics.
 1. 'to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty';
 2. 'to accelerate the process of restructuring Malaysian society to correct economic imbalance so **as to reduce and eventually eliminate the identification of race with economic function**' (Second Malaysian Plan 1971-1975)

Malaysia policies

- a variety of anti-poverty policies (rural development; social services).
- restructuring:
 - o expand Bumiputera share of capital ownership to 30%.
 - o 95% of new lands to be settled on Malays;
 - o educational quotas in public institutions laid down, in line with population shares;
 - o credit policies favoured Malays, with credit allocations and more favourable interest rates.

Figure One: Malaysia mean incomes relative to national average

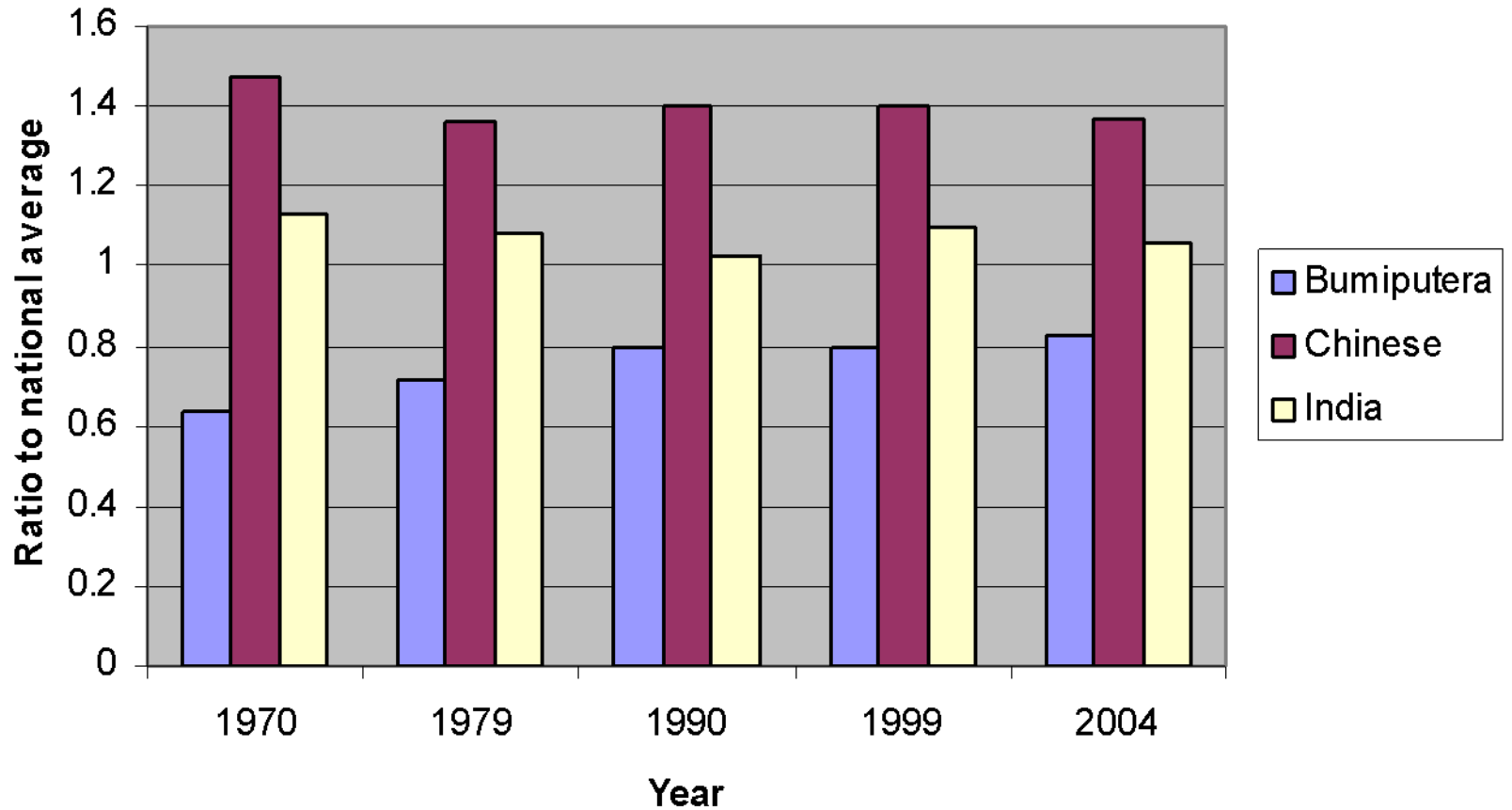
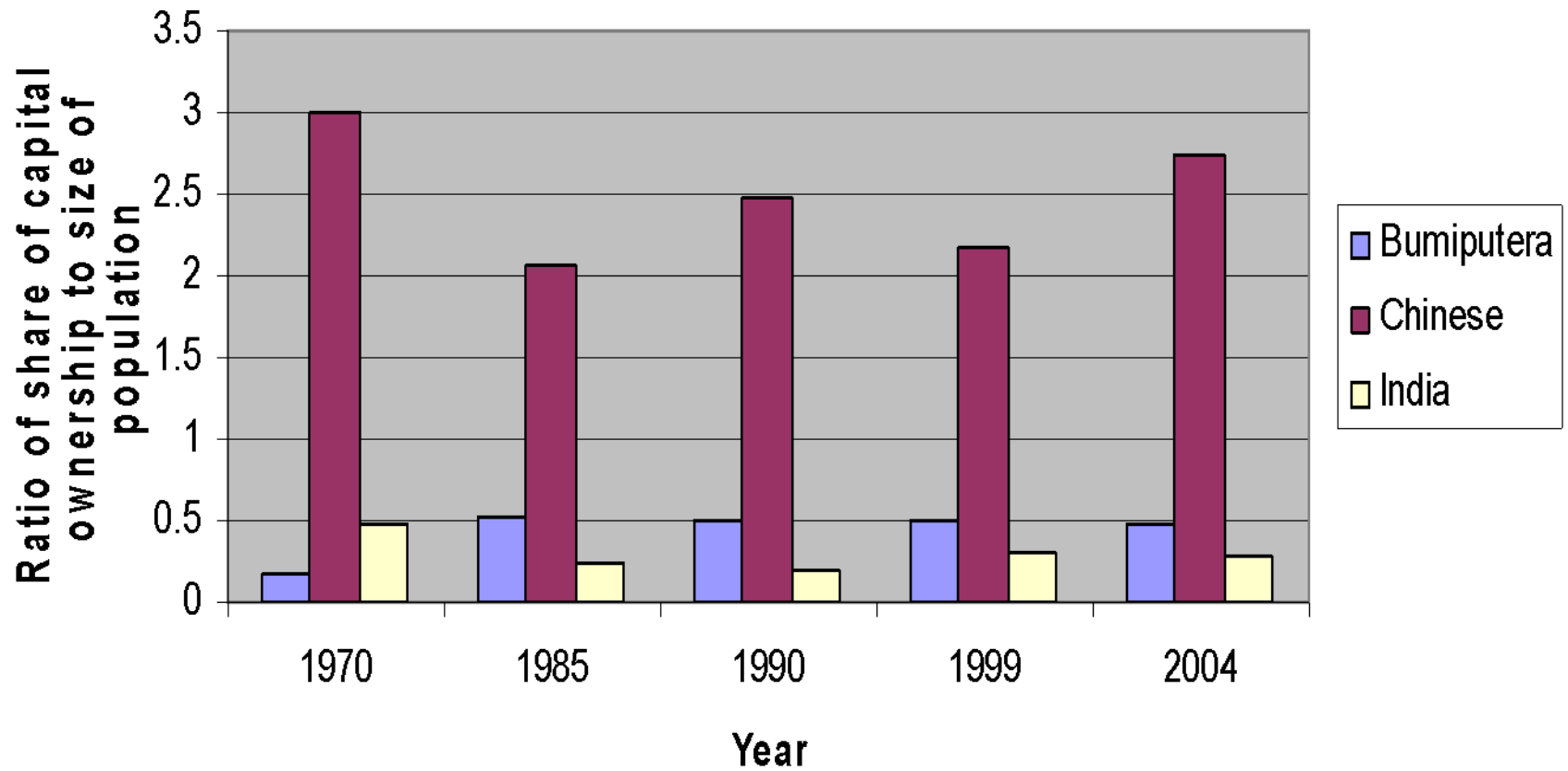


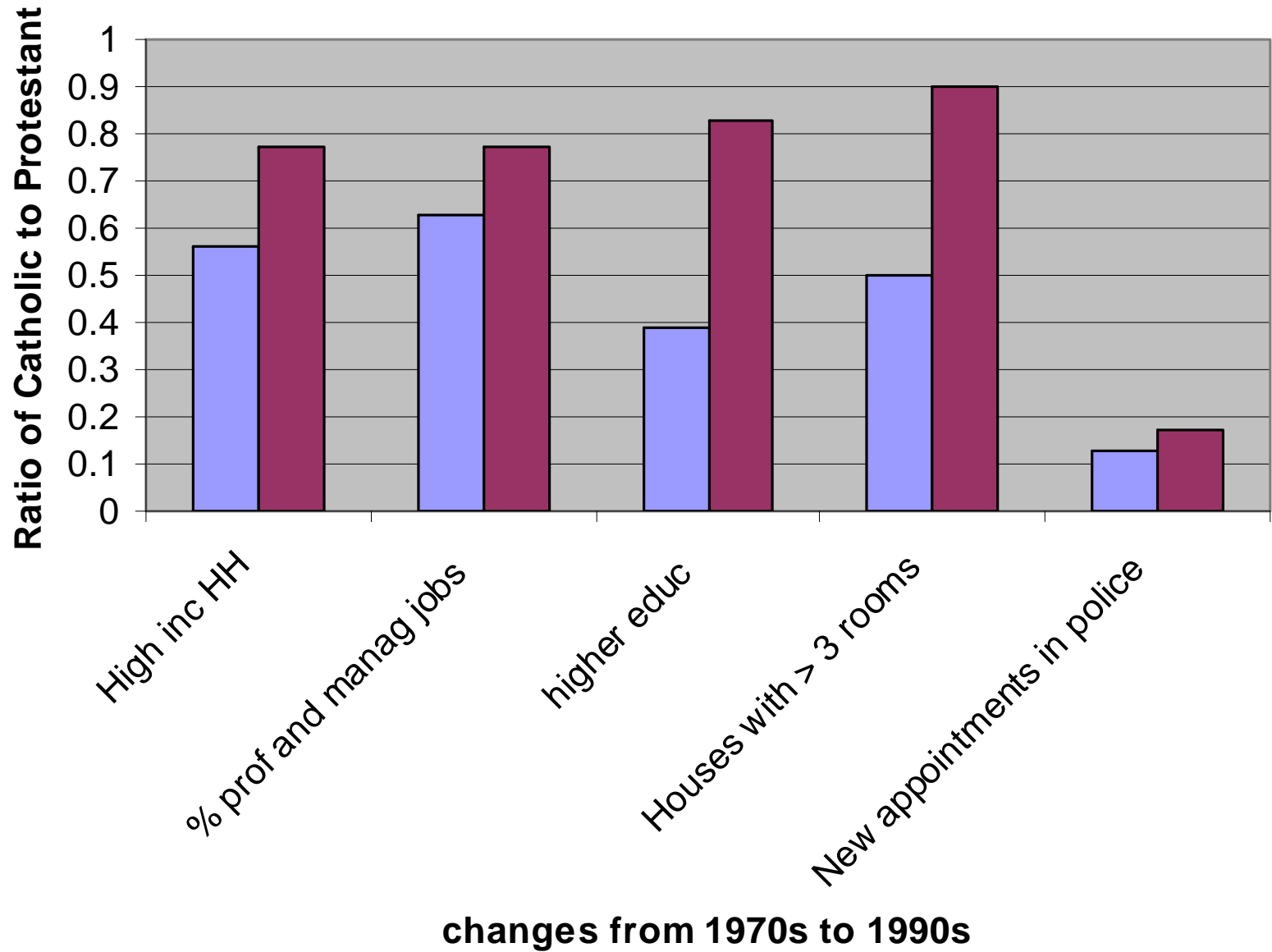
Figure Two: Malaysia share ownership by group



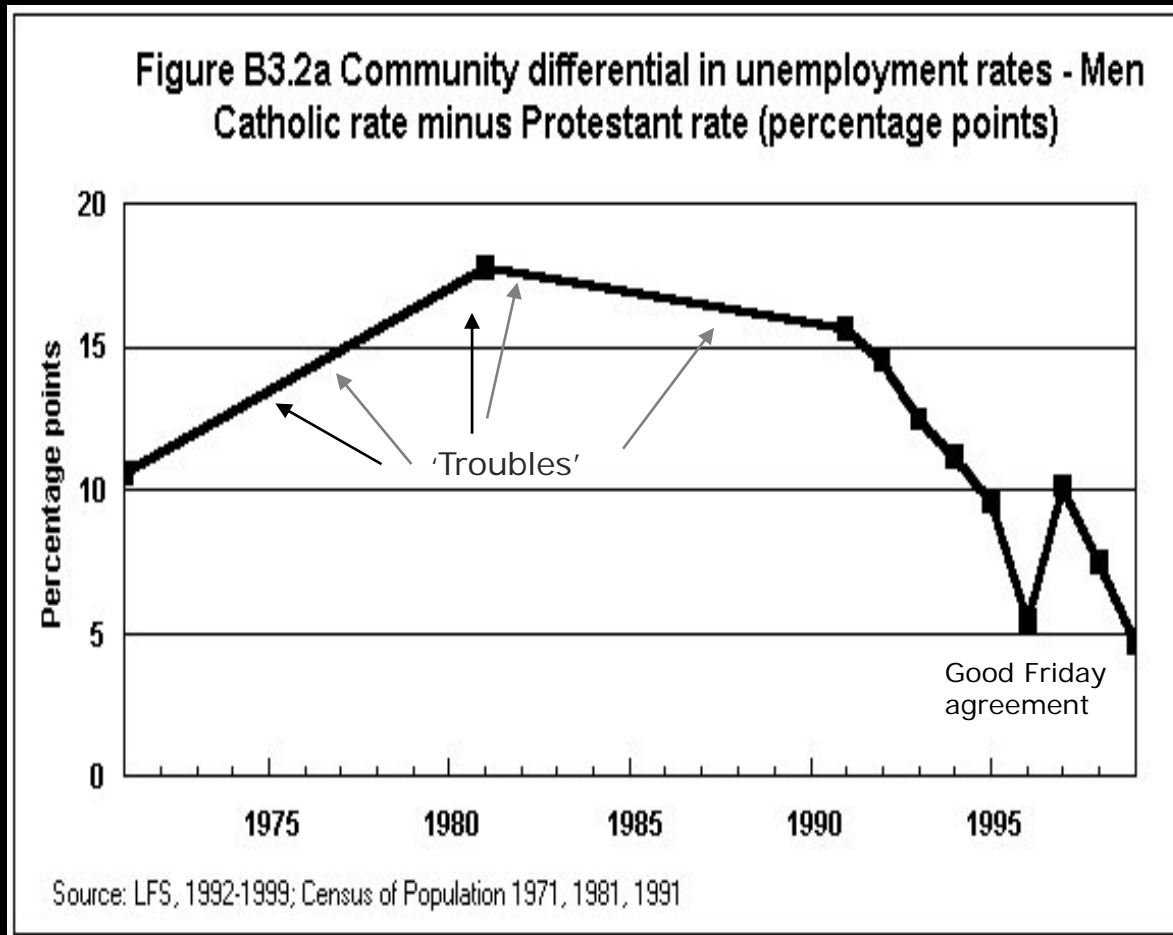
2. N. Ireland: economic changes underlying political ones

- His large, persistent and consistent over all dimensions over a long time period
- ‘By the end of the nineteenth century Protestants controlled the vast bulk of the economic resources of east Ulster - the best of its land, its industrial and financial capital, commercial and business networks, industrial skills’ (Ruane and Todd 1996)
- No narrowing of gap from 1901 to 1970s -- Catholics disadvantaged at every level.
- New policies to reduce gaps from late 1970s: Fair Employment Acts, 1976; 1989; housing policy. Police Acts 1998,2000, 2003: 50% recruitment aim.

Horizontal Inequalities in N.Ireland



N. Ireland: intervention on HIs and peace



Both cases did little to integrate communities

- Malaysia least integrated of all CRISE countries.
- N. Ireland: surveys show poor relations

Finally, international dimension

1. International dimensions to the issue: economic/social/political/cultural – across Islam/West divide.
2. Needs to be tackled at multidimensional/multisite levels.
 1. Within west in political and economic terms.
 2. Between countries, in political and economic terms.
 3. And within developing countries.

Summary of conclusions on HIs

- Where HIs are large, important to address them.
- Range of policies available, economic and political, which can be effective without sacrifice of efficiency.
- Mostly have had peace-promoting political consequences, but political caution needed.
- Policies needed in ANY society with sharp divisions, not only those with recent conflict.
- And for international inequalities.
- Policies NOT part of many policy agendas, including economic and political reform, or aid.
- NB. Other policies also needed, of course.



HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES AND CONFLICT

Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies

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