

# The Effect of Pre-Colonial Temple Desecration on Contemporary Hindu-Muslim Conflicts

Ali Adibnia

Supervisor: Prof. Felipe Valencia Caicedo

Vancouver School of Economics

University of British Columbia

September 30, 2019

## **Abstract**

Do historical events like desecrating Hindu temples by Muslims cause more contemporary conflicts in India between Hindus and Muslims? Do they make conflicts more severe? Historical events may affect people's incentives. Moreover, Incentives are the reasons for people's acts like starting a conflict or participating in it. By knowing them, we can stop or mitigate the severity of a conflict.

I use historical temple desecration data from 1192 to 1760 to investigate the effect of these desecrations on Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India in the second half of the 20th century. The results show that while these temple desecrations do not affect conflict onset, they can affect conflicts' severity. They cause more prolonged conflict, fewer arrests and a higher casualty rate in their districts.