Hindu-Muslim Violence in Gujarat, 2002:

Political Logic, Spatial Configuration, and Communal Cooperation

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Abstract

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This thesis uses a mixed methods approach to investigate the different levels of Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat (western India) in 2002 when at least a thousand Muslims were killed. An original dataset of killings is compiled to analyse macrospatial variation in the violence across towns and rural areas of Gujarat. Data collected from 21 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Ahmedabad city is used to investigate microspatial variation across three neighbourhoods with varying levels of violence.

Macrospatial analysis discusses the link between political authority and its capacity to instigate ethnic violence as a response to electoral calculations and identifies the mechanisms by which violence against Muslims was orchestrated by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Ethnographic findings demonstrate the importance of ecological strategies adopted by attackers and targets during the course of attack and urge a re-examination of the intuitive association of spatial proximity with greater interethnic contact. Findings also reveal methods of enforcement used by legitimate and illegitimate institutions of a peaceful slum neighbourhood in resolving

commitment problems of cooperation. Finally, the thesis examines the aftermath of the violence, more specifically a political phenomenon of Muslims of Gujarat supporting the BJP nine years after the brutal violence.

Methodologically, the main contribution of this thesis is in bridging the quantitative and ethnographic traditions in the sociology of ethnic violence to make possible the linking, and disentangling, of macrolevel risk factors associated with violence from microlevel factors. Findings of the thesis hopefully provide a better understanding of ethnic violence in multi-ethnic democracies and a roadmap of policy-making for India as it continues to struggle with ethnic strife.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat in 2002

1.1. The event

On the morning of February 27, 2002, a Muslim crowd burnt a train carrying Hindu *karsevaks* (volunteers for a religious cause) in Godhra town of Gujarat in western India (Map 1.1). Fifty-nine passengers, largely the *karsevaks*, died in the fire and 48 were injured (Commission of Inquiry 2008). Within twenty-four hours of the horrific incident a bloodbath, largely of Muslims, began across towns and villages of Gujarat. At least a thousand Muslims were killed in what became infamous as the worst episode of Hindu-Muslim violence to occur in a single state in the history of independent India.

Following the train attack violence against Muslims spread on an unprecedented scale unceasingly for four months and then, intermittently, for another six months. In most attacks people were burnt alive. Reports about gang-rapes and dismemberment of bodies accompanied those of arson and looting of public and private property. Within three days, at least 495 Muslims were killed. In the first five days of violence, the state incurred economic losses worth US $ 500 million (Spodek 2011) and 250,000 people, largely Muslims, were displaced from urban and rural areas (US Department of State 2012). The spread of large-scale violence to rural areas was most shocking. It was contrary to established literature that treated ethnic violence “an urban phenomenon rooted among the petty bourgeoisie” (Engineer 1995: 106). Massacres of rural Muslims by crowds of Hindus were rampant and reported widely (e.g. Gupta 2002). People

belonging to the Scheduled Tribes[1] in the eastern tribal belt of Gujarat mobilised by the thousands to set upon Muslim people and their properties with an unprecedented fury (Devy 2002). Among the manifold consequences of the violence, is the biggest string of Islamic terror attacks on India in the past decade; members of terrorist organisations have cited retaliation for the Gujarat riots as one of the key reasons for the attacks (Indian Mujahideen 2008; Goswami 2009; Press Trust of India 2011).

For what is a terrible irony, Gujarat where Mohandas Gandhi the apostle of non-violence was born holds the dubious distinction today of having the worst record in Hindu-Muslim violence among all Indian states. In their pioneering dataset of Hindu-Muslim violence in India for the period 1950 to 1995, Wilkinson and Varshney found Gujarat's per capita rate of deaths to be117 per million of urban population, compared to the north Indian states of Bihar (78 deaths per million) and Uttar Pradesh (43 deaths per million) also infamous for their record of Hindu-Muslim violence (Varshney 2002: 97; Varshney-Wilkinson 2006). The 2002 Gujarat violence reinforced this reputation.[2] As it turns out the brutality, scale, casualties and repercussions make the 2002 Gujarat violence worse than all previous episodes of Hindu-Muslim violence in India since 1947, prompting Nandy (2002: 6) to liken it to "the second partition of India".

1.2. Context

The precursor to the violence was a temple campaign in Ayodhya town of Uttar Pradesh in the 1990s. The campaign was launched by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya

[1] Disadvantaged tribal communities (also known as Adivasis or STs) scheduled under the Constitution of India to receive affirmative action in education and employment. Each state has its specific list of STs.

[2] Bhalotra, Clots-Figueras and Iyer (2012) who are, arguably, the only scholars to have updated the Varshney-Wilkinson dataset until 2010 find the incidence of Hindu-Muslim riots lower in the post-1995 period compared to 1980-1995, except for the upsurge in violence in Gujarat in 2002 (p. 10). However, they qualify this finding with the fact that states with a high level of riots before 1995 also witnessed a high level of riots after 1995, e.g. Gujarat.

Janata Party (BJP) – the largest opposition in the Parliament to the Indian National Congress (INC) – to build a temple to commemorate Lord Ram, whom some Hindus believe was born on the exact place occupied by the Babri Mosque, dating from the 16th century (Spodek 2011). Around 300 Hindu-Muslim riots were triggered across India as a result of the campaign, which eventually culminated in the demolition of the Babri Mosque on December 6, 1992. Between September 1990 and January 1993, riots in Gujarat's urban areas killed 500 people (Engineer 2003; Varshney-Wilkinson 2006). The continuing Ayodhya campaign also sparked the violence in 2002. On February 27, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) resolved to begin construction of the Ram Temple. The VHP is a religious body for the consolidation and service of Hinduism, and one of three principal affiliates of the Sangh Parivar (Family of the Sangh or network of Hindutva associations), a Hindu nationalist organisation in India. The other two affiliates are the BJP, the political wing and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS or National Volunteers Corps), a paramilitary social body for Hindu males. To celebrate the commencement of temple construction, thousands of *karsevaks* converged at the site, including many from Gujarat. Returning back to Ahmedabad city, around 2,000 boarded the Sabarmati Express train. As the train reached Godhra railway station in Gujarat, on the morning of February 27, a fierce fire engulfed one coach of the train. The fire claimed 59 lives, mainly *karsevaks*. Without any investigation, the BJP government immediately issued a press release calling the fire a "pre-planned terrorist attack"; subsequently the government labelled it "inhuman genocide" or "inhuman carnage" (Patel, Padgaonkar and Verghese 2002). In a state where trivial incidents had previously triggered large-scale violence, this was a trigger of immense magnitude, its impact further heightened by inflammatory headlines in the vernacular press. Later investigation refuted the claim of terrorism. The central government's Ministry of Railways concluded that the fire was

accidental (*The Hindu,* 18 January 2005). Alternatively, and more plausibly, the incident began with an altercation between the *karsevaks* and Muslim tea vendors at the station, and then escalated when passengers attempted to abduct a Muslim girl; a Muslim crowd then attacked the train.[3] After the fire, violence began in Godhra town, but police immediately controlled it; however, violence spread rapidly to villages and towns that seemed to fall on the train route, leaving a trail of massacres. On February 28, the government brought the 59 corpses to Ahmedabad railway station, further inciting angry Hindu crowds (Dayal 2009). On that day, the VHP declared a Gujarat *bandh* (strike), which the BJP endorsed. People were forced to remain indoors, which made their homes and closed shops easy targets. That day alone, 248 Muslims were killed. The government referred to the massacres as "disturbances" (Patel, Padgaonkar and Verghese 2002). There is evidence of police complicity in the violence in many places. In the aftermath, moreover, the police failed to properly investigate and prosecute. In 2004, the Supreme Court of India ordered the police to review and reopen 2,000 cases of violence that they had closed (*BBC News,* 17 August 2004).

2. Contribution to existing literature

A systematic causal analysis of ethnic violence in India has been a challenge in the absence of reliable data, given that official data is frequently manipulated by police and politicians who have an incentive to underreport crime to portray efficient governance (Bohstedt 1988; Wilkinson 2009). That could be one reason why much of the study of ethnic violence in India has followed two approaches. First, the culturalist approach construes the context of violence rather than the cause (Pandey 1990; Tambiah 1990;

[3] This was part of witness statements to the Commission of Inquiry (2008). The Commission itself denied this evidence. In 2011, 31 Muslims from Godhra were convicted for setting the train on fire (*Times of India*, 3 February 2011).

Brass 1997; Desai 2009). Culturalists attempt to focus on the consequences of the riot to investigate the processes that generated the riot, their 'labelling' and interpretation (and their manipulation) after it has occurred (Freitag 1989; Pandey 1990; Tambiah 1990; Breman 1993; Brass 1997; Desai 2009; Frøystad 2009; Ghassem-Fachandi 2010). I will discuss dominant culturalist explanations in section 5.1.3. The second approach identifies causation qualitatively through historical narratives and field reports of human rights groups (Shah 1970, 1974; Spodek 1989, 2010; Engineer 1995, 2003; Devy 2002; Yagnik and Sheth 2005; Shani 2007). Both approaches converge on two conclusions: that the typical ethnic riot is (i) a multicausal phenomenon emerging from a context of social tensions that are strengthened by historical distortions and myths, and (ii) often a state-sponsored "pogrom" against ethnic minorities for electoral benefits. Establishing causation is problematic because these studies are unable to gauge the extent to which historical myths and rabid propaganda are actually internalised by people (Brubaker and Laitin 1998). More importantly, they focus only on places where riots have occurred, generating a selection bias and the danger of theoretical overgeneralisation (e.g. Shah 1970, 1974; Hasan 1982; Krishna 1985; Mayaram 1993; Engineer 1995, 2003). Studying only violent places says little about causality, as it would lead to selection on the dependent variable and only inform us about variations among observations of violence and nothing about the causes of its occurrence or intensity (King, Keohane and Verba 1994; Patel 1995; Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2004; Andrews and Biggs 2006).

Most human rights activists and scholars of Hindu-Muslim violence have agreed that the attacks on Muslims in 2002 was a "pogrom" that the Sangh Parivar planned and executed—with support of the BJP government in the state—for electoral benefits in the subsequent assembly elections (Concerned Citizens' Tribunal 2002; Dayal 2002; Human Rights Watch 2002; Engineer 2003; Brass 2006). Media reports (e.g. Patel, Padgaonkar

and Verghese 2002) and field testimonies by human rights groups provided substantive evidence of crowds of perpetrators armed with voter lists of Muslim houses and businesses and of political leaders guiding the crowds. But despite the widespread occurrence of the violence and its assumed planning and execution, not all places in the state experienced the same levels of violence (Figure 1.1). For example, 279 people were killed in Ahmedabad city – the highest (37%) in proportion to the total killings in the state. Yet violence varied extensively across the city's 43 municipal wards (Figure 1.2). Although BJP complicity would explain the high scale of violence, it does not without further refinement, explain the uneven distribution of violence across Gujarat and within its urban and rural areas.

3. Methodology

The value of studying geographic variation in ethnic violence has been realised very recently for Hindu-Muslim violence in India, although the tradition was well established by Donald Greer's 1935 study of political executions during the period of Terror (1793-1794) in France (Kalyvas 2012) followed later by studies of urban rioting in the US (Spilerman 1971; Olzak 1992; Myers 1997; Herman 2005). Key proponents in India include Paul Brass (1997, 2005), who remains among the early researchers to examine neighbourhood-level variation using ethnographic methods. He suggests the presence or absence of "institutionalised riot systems" (IRS) – a network of political and civic actors and organisations whose objective is to keep a town or city in a permanent state of awareness of religious conflict – as the principal factor in predicting occurrence of riots over time and space. This is an explanation not entirely without limitations (for a discussion see section 5.1.2.) but insightful enough for later scholars to base their own research on. Varshney and Wilkinson added to the literature on spatial and temporal

variation in violence. They used an original dataset of Hindu-Muslim violence in the period 1950 to 1995 in India, compiled from the *Times of India* newspaper (Varshney-Wilkinson 2006). Their innovative data-gathering approach encouraged updates on the dataset for the period after 1995. Works in progress include Mitra and Ray (2012) who have extended the dataset till 2000 and Bhalotra, Clots-Figueras and Iyer (2012) till 2010. I drew upon the same technique to compile an original dataset for the 2002 violence in this thesis.[4] But even within the literature on variation, there exists a dichotomy. Studies either take a top-down (macrolevel) perspective, explicating political machinations (e.g. Lijphart 1969, 1996; Wilkinson 2004) or economic conditions (e.g. Field, Levinson, Pande and Visaria 2008; Bohlken and Sergenti 2010; Mitra and Ray 2012). Or they are bottom-up (microlevel), where individual grievances, intergroup threat, and the attributes of participants in violence are reviewed (e.g. Varshney 2002; Brass 2006; Berenschot 2009, 2010, 2011).[5] Studying macrolevel indicators is useful in identifying structural risk factors that lead to violence in one place and not another. However, master narratives are not sufficient alone, just like a microlevel explanation alone is insufficient as it fails to look at the structural context in which an actor would act in the way she does (Sampson and Wikstrom 2008). If electoral politics explains macrolevel variations in violence across constituencies, it does not consequentially lead to the conclusion that individual actors in a neighbourhood would behave as replicas of their political masters. Indeed, violence varied spatially even within electoral wards in a city. At the same time, although the two approaches have a different vantage point they need not be mutually exclusive. For example, a dominant group's perception of threat for an ethnic migrant group in terms of employment opportunities (bottom-up grievances)

[4] I compiled my dataset for 2002 in 2007 for my master's thesis on the same topic.

[5] Note that a macro-micro approach does not necessarily imply a distinction between quantitative and qualitative methods.

could be linked to the larger political milieu that has engaged in providing concessions to migrant groups in exchange of their votes. The principal point I make in explaining variation at both the macro and the micro levels in my thesis is that neither is a successful explanatory approach in isolation. To know if violence is indeed caused by political manipulations at the macro level, one would have to control for variables proxying individual-level socioeconomic characteristics. Similarly, the political configuration of an electoral constituency would have to be controlled for in order to reveal the effect of individual-level factors.

Apart from theoretical reasons, my choice of methodology was also shaped by practical concerns. At the macro level, availability of data on explanatory variables made it possible to conduct a systematic analysis. This was not so at the micro level, where data on religious groups at the ward level is not publicly released by the Indian government. Moreover, one of the most demanding tasks of conducting research in a conflict zone is the ambiguity surrounding events and subsequent data (Brass 1997; Davies 1999; Wood 2006). Notwithstanding the partisanship that the researcher can unwittingly be drawn into, reliability of data sources and of the data itself becomes suspect. Truth, as it comes out, can be slippery. While quantitative methods were useful for macrolevel spatial analysis in order to generalise the risk factors, ethnography was my preferred approach to explain individual explanatory factors for it provided me with the scope to disentangle ambiguity in the given conflict situation and reach a reasonably logical argument.

For the quantitative analysis, the district is the standard unit of analysis of violence in India as it is the primary administrative unit of governance in a state (e.g. Prakash 2003). But there were only 25 districts in Gujarat in 2002. Such a small number of cases poses the danger of more inferences than observations (King, Keohane and Verba 1994).

Districts are enormous, with an average population of two million, and combine rural and urban areas. Therefore analysis is conducted at the level of the town, which is the basic administrative unit for urban areas. The 2001 Census provides data on 191 towns but none on the equivalent rural unit, the village. It only provides data on the rural population of each district. Therefore 25 rural areas, ranging from 187,000 to 2.2 million were analysed. The self-compiled data on killings during the violence is detailed, broken down to the level of town, village and neighbourhood and coded by day and month. Investigating change over time was not applicable because violence was most intense in the first three days. A negative binomial regression analysis for count data was most appropriate in order to identify the risk factors of the violence (Long 1997; Cameron and Trivedi 1998). Chapter 2 discusses the methods and data in detail. For the microlevel analysis, I conducted 21 months of ethnographic fieldwork to examine different levels of violence over three neighbourhoods within the same electoral ward in Ahmedabad city. Again, data obtained from retrospective interviews could not have accurately captured change over time as bias would have increased with increasing distance in time. Therefore, I focus solely on spatial variation in the violence. Following comprehensive literature on the role of incumbent political elites in orchestrating Hindu-Muslim violence in India (section 5.1.2.), as also my findings from the macroanalyses (chapter 2), it became crucial to hold the political configuration of my fieldwork sites constant if I were to investigate other possible explanations. I also conduct a very preliminary quantitative analysis of ward-level data by using information on religious composition of wards obtained from the informed judgement of one journalist and two municipal officials, to help develop initial hypotheses for the fieldwork. Chapter 3 discusses the ethnographic methods and ethical challenges.

4. Basic concepts and definitions

Violence is not a quantitative degree of conflict but a qualitative form of conflict with its own dynamics (Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 426; Kalyvas 1999).[6] In India, Hindu-Muslim violence is commonly referred to as 'communal' violence, with the term 'ethnic' reserved for racially and linguistically distinct groups. I prefer 'ethnic' for two reasons. First, following Gupta (2002), conflict among Indian castes is properly communal because the opponent's national identity is not questioned; upper-caste Hindus accept backward-caste Hindus as legitimate members of the nation.[7] "Ethnic" mobilisation, by contrast, reasserts national identity and defines the opponent as foreign; Hindus thus associate Muslims with Pakistan. I describe Hindu-Muslim conflict as ethnic or religious, as distinct from conflict among castes. Second, I follow Weber's classical definition of ethnic groups: '…those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists' (Weber 1978: 389).

Finally, a distinction between 'riot' and 'pogrom' is in order. A 'riot' is a general term for violent collective acts of anger or retaliation by a group of people against another group of people or against the state. The 1716 British Riot Act defined it as disruption of public peace for a common purpose by 12 or more people – scholars have generally settled with the figure of 30 or more (Rudé 1981; Olzak, Shanahan and McEneaney

[6] Ethnic violence is theoretically different also from civil wars (including ethnicised wars), which engage completely different incentive structures for its actors (Kalyvas 1999).

[7] The 'caste' is a hereditary, endogamous social group having a traditional association with an occupation and a particular position in the hierarchy of the complex stratification of the 'caste system' (Srinivas 1966). Like the Scheduled Tribes, the Indian Constitution specifies certain historically disadvantaged low-caste groups, formerly called 'untouchables', to receive affirmative action in education and employment. These are the Scheduled Castes also known as Dalits or SCs. Each state has its specific list of SCs.

1996) – and can include bystanders, instigators, even police (Olzak, Shanahan and McEneaney 1996: 594). The Indian Penal Code defines a riot as an "unlawful assembly" of five or more people using violence in pursuit of a common purpose. [8] Following an inductive study of 40 postcolonial countries, Horowitz is more specific in defining what he terms the "deadly ethnic riot" (1985: 1) – "an intense, sudden, though not necessarily wholly unplanned, lethal attack by civilian members…the victims chosen because of their group membership". What makes a 'deadly ethnic riot' distinct from a 'pogrom' is not merely the degree of organisation of the violence but organisation that is covert and made to be perceived as 'spontaneous rioting', beyond the capacity of a 'weak' state to control (Tambiah 1990; Brass 2005; Desai 2009). Both the BJP and the Congress in India are known to engage in the spontaneity rhetoric. After the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (Congress) by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, her successor and son Rajiv Gandhi justified the massacres of Sikhs: "Once a mighty tree falls, it is only natural that the earth around it shakes" (*BBC News,* 1 November 2009). In Gujarat in 2002, Chief Minister Narendra Modi was reported to have cited Newton's third law in a speech made on March 1—"Every action has an equal and opposite reaction"—to lend a flavour of spontaneity to the anti-Muslim killings (*Times of India,* 2 March 2002).[9]

5. Theories

Sociological explanation about crowd behaviour has come a long way since Le Bon's view of crowds being "automatons" with "low levels of brain activity" (Le Bon 1896: 2, 13). Later work of scholars like Greer and Rudé on crowd behaviour in collective violence and protests brought into focus the role of ordinary citizens as perpetrators and

[8] On the vexed definition of riot, see Wilkinson (2009).

[9] Modi's government issued a rejoinder denying this statement, which was published in the *Times of India* on March 23. On March 26, the newspaper confirmed its original report as accurate, citing a television news report as the source for the verbatim quotation.

took account of local and regional variables in riot models (Horowitz 1985; Tambiah 1990; Wilkinson 2009). Evidence since then widely supports that collective violence, including riots, are often non-spontaneous, strategic, with targets carefully selected (e.g. Schelling 1963; Berk 1974; Horowitz 1985; Kydd and Walter 2002; Brass 2003; Kalyvas 2006, 2012; Collins 2008; Martin, McPhail and McCarthy 2009).

In the next section, I will broadly classify dominant theories of ethnic violence on the basis of their explanatory focus i.e. top-down (macrolevel) and bottom-up (microlevel), and identify the theories testable for the purpose of my thesis.

5.1. Top-down theories

5.1.1. Consociationalism

In 1969, Arend Lijphart derived the consociational model from Gabriel Almond's typology of democratic regimes (Lijphart 1969). The influential theory underscores proportional representation in a political system as a remedy to maintaining stable democracy in states with fragmented ethnic cleavages. In multiethnic societies, Lijphart argues, when governmental decision-making comes under majoritarian influence it gives rise to a high likelihood of violence. So long as elites govern in a way that leads to coalescence of conflicting subgroups in decision-making processes, multiethnic identities can coexist. A consociational model is marked by four characteristics: a grand coalition; proportional representation of major linguistic and religious groups in the government and in civil service appointments; minority veto with regard to vital minority rights; and segmental autonomy. Primarily extending his argument to European democracies of Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Lebanon and Belgium, Lijphart argues for consociationalism as a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for democracy in deeply divided societies.

In a later article, Lijphart (1996) makes a consociational case for the "Indian paradox" (Weiner 1989: 9) – how India's democracy has successfully survived the recurrent shocks of political violence. He argues that the period post 1960 witnessed heightened peasant activism compelling the national Congress to move from a federal and consociational model to a highly centralised and hierarchical system. This weakened the Congress as also the consociational political system, increasing Hindu-Muslim violence in the country: from 112 deaths in the period 1954-58 to 2,350 deaths in the period 1981-85. By this definition, the BJP in Gujarat in 2002 can be considered the inverse of consociationalism. In the year of the violence, there were five Muslim legislators (Members of the Legislative Assembly or MLA) in the government, none from the BJP. Muslim police presence was also not proportionate to the Muslim population in the state (*Times of India*, 9 April 2002). In a recent study Bhalotra, Clots-Figueras and Iyer (2012) find that raising the share of Muslim MLAs in India resulted in a substantial decline in the incidence of Hindu-Muslim riots in the period 1980-2007. This was true for close elections fought against political candidates of the other religion.

One of the main critiques of consociationalism is its empirical inconsistency between the model and the cases it is used to describe (Barry 1975; Halpern 1986; Horowitz 1985; Wilkinson 2004).[10] One criticism relevant here is that consociational arrangements of political leaders ignore the structure of incentives within which the leaders work (Horowitz 1985). In other words, power-sharing by numerically strong minority groups indicates their electoral salience. By implication, the presence of an electorally less profitable ethnic group in the government will not necessarily provide incentive to the government to prevent violence. So the inclusion of Muslim MLAs in a state government would give the perception of power-sharing policies but if none of them have positions in

[10] For example, consociationalism in Switzerland is practised, albeit without the presence of prior subcultural hostility, the causative agent that generates impetus to power-sharing (Halpern 1986).

the Home Ministry that controls law and order, the influence of such leaders over prevention of violence would be negligible. Indeed, Muslim officers of the elite rank of IPS (Indian Police Service) in Gujarat in 2002 were promoted, albeit to perfunctory positions (*Times of India,* 9 April 2002). Secondly, the consociational practice in colonial India of giving separate electorates in legislative bodies to religious minorities, according to the proportion of their population in the provinces, generated interethnic competition and deep ethnic divides between Hindus and Muslims rather than interethnic cooperation (Bhagat 2012). Ethnic riots erupted – though varied spatially – despite separate electorates constituted across colonial India (Varshney 2002). Thirdly, the consociational argument assumes inflexibility of ethnic identity. It has been demonstrated that proximity of elections may heighten the salience of ethnicity and overwhelm class identities (e.g. Patel 1995; Kalyvas 1999; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010; Blakeslee 2013). People are also known to bargain their position in the social hierarchy in exchange of material benefits. This is best illustrated in the demand for downward mobility by upper-castes in India to claim reservation benefits allotted for lower castes.

Investigating the applicability of Lijphart's theory for India, Wilkinson (2004) argues that, contrary to Lijphart's contention, India became more consociational in the period after rather than before 1960. In the immediate period after independence, the national Congress abolished colonial practices of providing proportional representation to Muslim, Sikhs and Christians in politics and employment, retaining proportionality for only the Hindu Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). It was after the weakening of the Congress at the national level – post 1960 – that coalition politics of regional parties increased and so did violence. Providing statistical evidence, Wilkinson shows that Congress rule was positively linked to violence during its greatest dominance period in the 1950s and 60s and up until 1995. The 1980s, in particular, coincided with

increased mobilisation around ethnic identities and increased Hindu-Muslim violence (Wilkinson 2009). Drawing from the Varshney-Wilkinson dataset he finds that some states, such as West Bengal and Kerala, with lowest levels of Muslim proportionality in the administration and cabinets had fared better than others in controlling Hindu-Muslim violence. His analysis of data drawn from the Indian Minorities Commissions and election commissions for measures on proportionality of Muslim police and ministers respectively for 14 Indian states finds no clear causal relationship between occurrence of Hindu-Muslim violence and minority proportionality in the state government. It is plausible that governments with the worst records on minority rights often make the greatest efforts to include minorities to deflect criticism. The above discussion suggests that power-sharing could partly explain the higher occurrence of ethnic violence in Gujarat than in other states, but it is not very useful to explain variation in violence within the state across towns, villages and neighbourhoods.

5.1.2. Politics

The link between political authority and its capacity to arouse ethnic tensions, sometimes leading to violence, has been investigated in a number of democracies. Political power brings with it the benefit of control over distribution of economic and political resources (Gurr 1970; Bates 1974; Horowitz 1985) and the emergent political competition may heighten the salience of ethnicity. Multi-ethnic societies particularly provide a wider scope of changing the salience of ethnic issues to suit political elites. This is truer of societies in which ethnic conflict is at moderate levels or in which ethnic divisions must compete for attention with other sources of tension, for that would produce party systems that sometimes foster and sometimes moderate ethnic conflict (Horowitz 1985: 291).

At the top-down level, the theory provides an understanding of elite manipulation of ethnic identities for political power and response of state elites to violence. The Weberian perspective assumes that states will repress actors who challenge their monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory (Bleich, Caeiro and Luehrman 2010). The social control perspective also assumes political elites bearing intention to maintain control over territory but control would be at times coercive (repression) and at times beneficent (accommodation) (Fording 2001). The third perspective associates electoral calculations to state response. The crucial difference lies in the nature of the violence: unlike an insurgency against the state, political leaders act in complicity with rioters taking into account voting patterns of the rioters, the opposing ethnic group and the rival political parties. The explanation that the key determinant of Hindu-Muslim violence in India is electoral calculations – state intent and not state capacity – finds most acceptability among scholars studying India (e.g. Brass 1997, 2003; Engineer 2002; Spodek 2011; Wilkinson 2004). For example, as mentioned earlier, Brass conceptualised the IRS to describe the state's camouflage of the organisational element of a riot, framing it as 'spontaneous'. The cultural construction of fear is a subsequent progression that leads to the demonisation of Muslims, and eventually culminates into 'legitimate' violence. Similarly, Tambiah (1990) expounds on the recurring phases and ritual-like patterns within a "spontaneous" riot, the consequences of which could become the revenge motivation for a subsequent riot. But postulating a riot system makes it hard to explain why violence varies across space and time. Or does the system itself vary? If so, under what conditions? Brass later identifies three (albeit "unstable") contextual factors that produce a riot: the numerical strength of the Hindu and Muslim populations—if the Muslims are substantially higher, they could tilt the balance in favour of a rival political party; the presence or absence of political space and political

opportunity; the presence or absence of political will to prevent and control riots (Brass 2004). However, without explaining the emergence of an IRS, which is a key component in a place where Hindu-Muslim riots are endemic, these conditions are not very useful for explaining variation or change.

Analysing Hindu-Muslim violence over the period 1950-1995, Wilkinson (2004) offered a more testable theory to examine the political logic: "The most effective method for elite-dominated ethnic parties to mobilise those target voters who are at risk of voting for the main rival parties will be to use ethnic wedge issues to increase—albeit in the short term—the salience of ethnic issues that will favour their party" (p. 23). This holds especially in close electoral races, where political parties can win votes by raising divisive symbolic issues related to ethnic identity. The resulting violence is either allowed to continue or is stopped, depending on the will of the government controlling local law and order. The decision depends on the risk of the governing party losing votes, on the electoral strength of minorities, and on party competition. In the United States, for example, the government did not prevent anti-minority violence in the South after 1877 when it looked for support from white Southerners whereas it did restrain violence after 1945 when votes of blacks mattered (Wilkinson 2008). Rabushka and Shepsle (1972) derived a related mechanism in 'ethnic outbidding' wherein violence is an outcome of two or more competitive political parties representing the same ethnic group, having no incentive to cultivate voters from other ethnic group, competing to demonstrate their 'nationalism'. Ethnic outbidding would be less relevant to Gujarat even though bipolar party competition has existed in the state since its separation from Bombay in 1960 because only one party – BJP –gains more than the other from exploiting antiminority

sentiment.[11] When this antiminority party controls the state, violence is a tempting political strategy. Following the Ayodhya temple campaign in the 1990s the BJP became the single most counterforce to the Congress in Gujarat (Figure 1.3).[12] The low level of party competition in Gujarat, as Wilkinson's theory advances, assumes crucial significance.

The principal critique of top-down theories arises when aggregate factors are extrapolated to individual-level motivations. For example, if Milosevic's grand nationalist oratory is attributed for deflecting people's attention from the economic crisis of 1990s' Eastern Europe and subsequently leading to violence, it wrongly assumes people to be "passive victims of the elites' charged rhetoric" (Toft 2003: p. 9). However, individual-level factors need not be mutually exclusive to the macro political context. Using ethnography in the study of Hutu-Tutsi violence in Rwanda, Strauss (2008) demonstrated that intraethnic Hutu struggles for power were a central precursor to the violence against Tutsis. The period of confusion that followed the assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana had unsettled existing power structures and created an opening for rural social elites to jockey for power – in some areas Hutu elites rallied their supporters to prevent attacks from other Hutus outside their commune and in other areas they bypassed local authorities to launch attacks on Tutsis (p. 317). Political competition is not disconnected from economic deprivation of individual actors, as the payoff for participating in violence may be a material benefit, such as liquor or money. Berenschot (2012), in an indepth ethnographic investigation of the 2002 violence in three

[11] Following Gujarat state's foundation on May 1, 1960 the Congress had come to dominate the electoral space with opposition mainly from its own fringe parties—the Swatantra Party in the 1960s, the Indian National Congress (Organization) in the 1970s and the Janata Party in the 1980s.

[12] The BJP in India was established in 1980 after the dissolution of the Hindu nationalist party Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS). The political presence of Hindu nationalist parties in Gujarat was first made in 1957 when the Akhil Bharatiya Hindu Mahasabha (HMS) had contested in three constituencies, one being the Gujarat region of Bombay.

neighbourhoods in Ahmedabad, endorses the political argument and associates it with state patronage. He links the motivation of individual participation in violence to material benefits provided by the state and accessed through pro-violence intermediaries (such as the IRS) working as brokers between the voters and the state: "The capacity of political actors to instigate violence should be understood in relation to their capacity to help citizens gain access to state institutions, that is, to mediate between state institutions and citizens. The political networks that facilitate the interaction between state institutions and citizens are to a large extent the same networks engaged in the instigation and organisation of communal violence" (Berenschot 2009: 415). However, as I further delineate in chapter 5, among the main limitations of Berenschot's arguments is the research design which does not hold the political configuration of the neighbourhoods constant. Without applying controls it becomes possible that the probability of an electorally-beneficial voter alliance varied from one neighbourhood to another (Laitin 2001) and mechanisms linking violence with patronage might operate differently.[13] In this thesis, I test the argument of political calculations and violence at both the macro and the micro levels. For the former, I control for a number of demographic and socioeconomic variables, sourced from the Indian Census of 2001, to test the relationship between BJP's vote in the previous election of 1998 and the 2002 violence. For the latter, ethnographic data collection in neighbourhoods located in the same electoral ward helped to identify the factors leading to microspatial variation in the violence.

[13] For example, Arriola and Johnson (2012) demonstrate that electoral violence is less likely to erupt in those patronage-based democracies where patronage continues to function as a redistributive mechanism among elites.

5.1.3. Culturalist

Culturalist explanations treat ethnic violence as "meaningful" only when taken in relation to other elements of a culturally defined context. These explanations specifically focus on the social construction of fear, emphasising the cultural and historical basis of cultural fear, such as the exclusion of a rival ethnic group through 'demonisation' and 'Othering' (e.g. Freitag 1989). Examples include memories associated with the Indian subcontinent's colonial history riven with Muslim invasions (e.g. Pandey 1992; Jaffrelot 1996; Yagnik and Sheth 2011); reinforcement of Hindu nationalism and creation of the cultural 'other' through visual media (Chakravarty and Gooptu 2000); and practices like radical vegetarianism (Ghassem-Fachandi 2010). Culturalist explanations of violence can also be seen in the Tamil "foreigner" as viewed by the Sinhalese in context of *Mahavamsa* Buddhist nationalism in Sri Lanka (Kapferer 1988; Spencer 1990); the historical context of Hutu-Tutsi relations that contained symbols and meanings shared by a group or individuals, enabling mobilisation and subsequent progression to violence (Tanner 2011); the framing of social interaction in Northern Ireland by rhetorical metaphors and social dramas, such as political parades and riots, which in turn enable mobilisation around identity (Buckley and Kenney 1995); or violence as an experience of solidarity justified by 'othering' the rival group in the Muhajir Quami Movement in Pakistan (Verkaaik 2003). These are richly textured accounts of contextual processes within which violence is framed as legitimate self-defence, by a "weak" state, against minority aggression (Brass 1997; Desai 2009). I draw upon the richness of the culturalist literature in my qualitative analysis to contextualise the ordinariness of Hindu-Muslim antagonism in everyday living. The difficulty lies in assessing the extent of such explanations and, subsequently, their analytical depth – it is unclear, probably unknown, why and how socially constructed fear varies across microspatial boundaries ultimately

leading to different levels of violence. As Brubaker and Laitin (1998: 443) note, citing Pandey (1992: 42-43) and Hansen (1996: 149, 153): "How do we know that, in India, the most "rabid and senseless Hindu propaganda" , "the most outrageous suggestions" about the allegedly evil, dangerous, and threatening Muslim "other", have come to be "widely believed", and to constitute a whole new 'common sense'?"

5.2 Bottom-up theories

5.2.1 Primordialism

For its intuitive appeal, the primordial model that assumes ethnicity per se as an explanation for violence continues to find favour in political rhetoric and in scholarly literature. As Kaufman (2006: 192) says, if there were no primordial loyalties, "we should observe as many people being killed by co-ethnics as by members of enemy communities". Under this explanation, ethnic membership is understood as a metaphorical family which makes it more likely for conflicts along ethnic lines to turn violent than those along ideological and other political cleavages (Horowitz 1985). Politicians revel in oratory that engages essential imaginings, which also appeal to people affected by violence. The ethnographic fieldwork that I conducted for this thesis provided several glimpses of how people perceive ethnic groups in terms of primordial identities. Respondents in a peaceful as well as a violent neighbourhood in Ahmedabad city believed Hindu-Muslim riots to occur because of "century-old enmities between the two communities". That the "enemies" in one neighbourhood chose to keep peace rather than fight did not receive attention. It is such differences in levels of violence between "traditional antagonists" that question the premise of the primordial argument as an explanation. Compared to material goods, ethnic membership and the relative immutability of ascriptive identities do bear potency to mobilise people on ethnic lines

(Bates 1974; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010), but people are unlikely to kill or attack each other only because of ancestral animosities. If this were true, riots between Malays and Chinese in Malaysia in 1969 would not have occurred in Kuala Lumpur and elsewhere in Selangor state alone but in all states with a similar ethnic mix and voting patterns (Wilkinson 2004). Similarly, on the Zambia-Malawi border, the Chewas and Tumbukas engage in violence on the Malawi side, but are peaceful on the Zambian side (Posner 2004). Essentialised identities do not explain why violence breaks out in particular places at particular times, while other places and times remain peaceful. Secondly, ethnic behaviour is a dynamic and rational behaviour (Bates 1974) with many ethnic identities produced or reformulated in response to changing political environments (Patel 1995; Kalyvas 1999; Fearon 2004; Chandra 2007; Wilkinson 2004, 2008; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010; Wilkinson and Haid 2010). Examples include the Yoruba and the Kikuyu ethnic groups of Africa which developed post colonisation when the field of political and economic competition had enlarged (Fearon 2004). In the massacre of nearly 3,000 Bengali-speaking Muslims in Assam in north-east India in 1983, there were no fixed enemies: "The ethnic divisions along which the violence took place varied from place to place: Tiwa "tribals" versus Muslims of Bengali descent; Bodo "tribals" versus Bengali Hindus and Muslims; Bodo "tribals" versus Bengali Hindus; Bodo "tribals" versus Assamese Hindus; Muslims versus Hindus; ethnic Assamese Hindus and Muslims versus Muslims of Bengali descent" (Baruah 1999: 132). Ethnicity has a functional salience which implies the unlikeliness of fixed enemies and, indeed, the explanatory lacunae in the primordialist thesis.

5.2.2. Emotions

Bearing a primordial dimension, Roger Petersen's work on emotions and ethnic violence in 20th century Eastern Europe can be considered the most persuasive in associating individual visceral motivations to variation in violence. Petersen assumes "the motivation to participate in or support ethnic violence and discrimination as inherent in human nature" (Petersen 2002: 1). His main argument is founded on the mechanism of emotion which "explains shifts in motivation" given that the same individual may be driven to commit ethnic violence by different motivations at different times (p. 20).[14] Thus emotions are individual-level causal forces that work to change the level of saliency of desires. Petersen emphasises resentment – an emotion centred on group status – as the primary motivation for spontaneous rebellion and ethnic violence. Individuals care about group status, as manifested in language policy, law, and occupation of political/military/police ranks. When that status is suddenly reversed, especially for the majority, the result can be rebellion (e.g. against Soviet domination 1940-41) or violence (against Jews, 1941). Thus the target for resentment is a group that is dominant when it ought to be subordinate.

Petersen also advances other emotional mechanisms namely fear, hatred and rage to help explain not only why the intensity of ethnic conflict varies sharply over time, but also how it can arise spontaneously and yet remain directed and purposeful. For example, fear orients the individual to take actions, fight or flight, to meet a threat whereas hatred would predict attacks on historical traditional enemies and rage tends to numb cognitive abilities, leading to incoherent target selection. It is a compelling argument because emotions induce urgency which may affect optimal information gathering and, therefore, as Petersen argues, prompt specific action. Emotions need not be negative alone.

[14] Petersen excludes organised violence, such as ethnic cleansing operations under the Nazis and the Soviets, wherein incentive and constraint would have to be accounted for.

Drawing on the Durkheimian notion of 'collective effervescence' (Verkaaik 2003) rioters have been depicted to experience a euphoric high of intense pleasure during violence, for example The Troubles (Buckley and Kinney 1995). Legitimisation of violence, as in Gujarat, is likely to have assuaged the shamefulness associated with demonstrating pleasure in violence (Berenschot 2009).

It is true that emotions are crucial mechanisms for mistrust between ethnic groups, leading to conflict. Fear can bolster the in-group whereas anger can lead to the derogation of the outgroup (Ruback and Singh 2008), generating the dominant group's perception of threat for the subordinate (Blumer 1955; Coser 1956). But the predictive power of emotions leading to violent behaviour is unclear. As Tilly notes (1975: 512), "The trouble with letting a lot depend on intentions is intentions are mixed and hard to discern". Petersen argues that if violence against a weaker minority group is a public good (in the Olsonian sense), members of many societies seem more than happy to assume the private costs necessary to supply it when they could actually free-ride – participation in violence is, in fact, not a cost but a payoff. This is plausible in episodes of pogrom-like violence, such as in Gujarat, where rioters did not oppose but were supported by the dominant social system (state laws). Violence could, therefore, be considered as normative behaviour in which case the cost of participation is considerably reduced. Subsequently, it would not be wrong to expect more acts of violence proportionate to the high incidence of individuals entering an emotional state. But this does not happen in reality – not all individuals motivated by emotions engage in acts of violence. One of the reasons could be because urgent emotions which can convert emotion into action are prone to decay with time (Elster 2007).

Resentment, however, is crucial here. Blumer's (1958) explanation of prejudice – a cognitive rendering of resentment as proposed by Petersen – can be operationalised

(Biggs and Knauss 2012) and, as Petersen himself argues, is most useful as a mechanism to explain spontaneous collective rebellion or ethnic violence. I discuss this in section 5.2.3.

5.2.3. Contact and threat

Contact and threat theories are basically founded on the structural characteristics of inter-group relations and their effect on the level of prejudice. High levels of prejudice can increase the probability that once an incident occurs, there will be a critical mass of people with a low threshold for participating in violence (Spilerman 1971). Both threat and contact are interrelated concepts, stemming from demographic characteristics. Whereas threat theory predicts that heterogeneity breeds distrust in the dominant group (Blumer 1955; Blalock 1967), contact theory posits that social interaction with potentially disliked groups can reduce prejudice towards those groups (Allport 1954). This means a larger minority population constitutes a greater threat, but it also means more opportunity for contact (Biggs and Knauss 2012). This implies a conceptual contradiction between the two, albeit each is plausible because of the different spatial distances at which the theories operate. Threat is largely a macrolevel phenomenon operating on the perception that a large minority population would take up more jobs and prominent political positions (realistic threat) or disrupt the moral constitution of the existing dominant group (symbolic threat). It is, therefore, more likely to operate at a greater spatial distance, at the national, regional or municipal level where economic and political competition occurs (Biggs and Knauss 2012).

Realistic threat and its effect on violence has been widely theorised and empirically studied, both spatially and temporally. In the context of Black Americans, Olzak (1992) argued that periods of economic growth could increase ethnic violence by increasing the

competition for economic resources of subordinate groups with those immediately above them in the hierarchy; Gurr (1970), conversely, had demonstrated that short-term declines in economic growth increased violence. Bohlken and Sergenti (2010), like Gurr, find that riots in Indian states decreased by 5% with a 1% increase in the short-term economic growth rate within a state over time. Whereas change over time is not in the purview of this thesis, the economic hypothesis is expected to be a crucial factor even in explaining spatial variation. In developing democracies, ethnic violence is predicted by the level of economic threat and resentment originating from the economic advantage that ethnic minorities (Market Dominant Minorities or MDMs) hold over the majority, such as the Lebanese in West Africa and Indians in East Africa (Chua 2003; Bezemer and Jong-A-Pin 2013). In Gujarat, one might expect higher violence in places where the Muslim population held an economic advantage over the majority. While it is true that Muslims in India are less likely to invite resentment based on realistic threat because of their extremely disadvantaged political and economic status (Prime Minister's High Level Committee 2006; Tausch, Hewstone and Roy 2009)[15], radical Hindu leaders commonly argue that high Muslim growth rates will lead to Hindus being outnumbered (see also section 6). Therefore, places where Muslims were significantly greater in population in 2002 could be expected to have experienced more violence. In addition, a minority is most likely to be perceived as an economic threat by groups suffering deprivation, such as unemployment. In view of literature highlighting the importance of young people being likely to participate in violence (Huntington 1997; Shah 2004; Urdal 2006, 2008), places with more young people, especially economically deprived, could be expected to have greater violence. There is some evidence from India to suggest that symbolic threats are more likely to be salient and predictive of prejudice for Hindus

[15] According to various classifications of developing countries with and without MDMs, India belongs to the latter category (Chua 2003).

(Tausch, Hewstone and Roy 2009). This follows from further evidence demonstrating Hindus to be more likely than Muslims to underline cultural differences and historical incidents as causative factors for Hindu-Muslim violence in India (Ruback and Singh 2008). Cultural threat is likely to be assuaged by education which tends to weaken traditional, ascriptive attachments, including those based on ethnicity (e.g. Bobo and Licari 1989). This is testable at the macro level.

Contact, on the other hand, is a microlevel phenomenon most likely to occur during frequent interpersonal relations between neighbours. Massey's study on intolerance in ethnic enclaves of Yugoslavia (Massey, Hodson and Sekulic 1999) and Biggs and Knauss' (2012) study of BNP membership in Britain are among the few studies that ably disentangle the conceptual contradiction of threat and contact by systematically taking account of the spatial dimension at which the two theories operate. Both studies find support for contact and also underscore the importance of segregation. Biggs and Knauss find strong support for contact at the micro level and find hostility to increase with an increase in minority population at the macro level, but only in highly segregated areas. Varshney (2002) applied the contact hypothesis to make a compelling argument for interethnic civic networks as a deterrent to politically-motivated violence. From an investigation of six cities in India, including Ahmedabad and Surat in Gujarat, he argues for the presence or absence of interethnic civic and associational networks as the key variable for variations in occurrence of violence, assuming that the elected state would act in a politically strategic manner. The difficulty lies in testing this theory systematically across many cases. His quantitative analysis of Hindu-Muslim violence in the period 1950-1995 uses literacy, Muslim population, and city area, but does not measure civic networks. Other scholars suggest that desegregation, rather than the absence of integration, causes ethnic conflict. Olzak (1992) analyses 77 American cities

from 1877 and 1914, and argues that riots are more likely when segregation in the labour market breaks down. In a recent study of Ahmedabad, Field, Levinson, Pande and Visaria (2008) suggest that violence occurred in heterogeneous working class neighbourhoods where archaic tenancy rights made it impossible for residents to relocate to their respective segregated areas. Unfortunately, the distribution of Muslim and Hindu populations within towns is not publicly released by the Census and therefore segregation cannot be measured. While I also do not have a measure for associational networks in order to systematically test Varshney's theory, my ethnographic comparison provides significant insight into interethnic relations.

6. India: Historical Background

Anderson (1983) understood census-taking to be a powerful instrument of domination during colonial rule. The census-makers' "intolerance of multiple, politically 'transvestite', blurred, or changing identification" (p. 166) led to a systematic *quantification* (p. 168, emphasis in original) of ethnic-racial classification. Even before the census, the advent of Muslim invaders in the second millennium A. D. had made the identity of the indigenous inhabitants more tangible, for '*hindu'* (Indo-Aryan for 'river') was a geographical marker for the land around the river Indus and not the mass religious unity it subsequently became considered as (Smith 1962; Sen 1993). The advent of the Muslims meant that a boundary came to be drawn between the followers of indigenous ways ('Hindus') and those belonging to an organised and systematic religious community (Muslims) (Smith 1962). Yet even in early British documents Muslims were referred to as 'Hindoo Muslims' and Christians as 'Hindoo Christians', to distinguish them respectively from Muslims and Christians from outside India (Sen 1993). Census-taking that began around 1872 during the British Raj transformed this indistinct consciousness

of caste and religion into an aggressive self-awareness of numerical strength and territorial reach (Bhagat 2012), objectifying Hindu-Muslim consciousness and facilitating 'essentialisation' of Hindu-Muslim identity by right-wing political groups (Cohn 1987; Jeffery and Jeffery 2002; Bhagat 2012). Although there were Hindu-Muslim riots in the 18th and 19th century – the first recorded riot being in Ahmedabad in 1714 (Shah 1970; Ruback and Singh 2008) – such riots were highly infrequent until the 20th century. With census-taking and the introduction of elections in British India in 1920, the importance of numbers became amplified and resulted in a sway of Hindu nationalism in the early 20th century. The numbers translated into threat posed by a rising Muslim population, which was attributed to Muslim invasions, a sexual predatory characteristic of Muslim men and their abduction of Hindu women, and conversions of poor Hindus to Islam (Jaffrelot 1996; DeVotta 2002; Gupta 2002; Urdal 2006; Jeffery and Jeffery 2012).[16] The Hindu nationalist movement gained pace in the 1920s. It was mentored by the RSS that associated itself with the fascist regime and its aspects of militarisation and anti-democracy as an alternative of democracy (Jaffrelot 1996). Inspired by Fascist Italy and Nazism, the first head of the RSS, M S Golwalkar wrote in his book, *We or Our Nationhood Defined* (1939: 88): "Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by." The new Muslim threat became the context for the codification of Hindu nationalism or *Hindutva* (Pandey 1992). Indeed, the Muslims form India's largest minority at 13.4% of total population (Census 2001) with Hindus at 80.5%.

[16] Jeffery and Jeffery (2012) argue that the Hindu-Muslim fertility differentials propounded by the Hindu Right are misleading, when macro-demographic data is subjected to controlling for socioeconomic variables. Moreover, analyses in India rarely account for micro-level localised variations, such as accounting for factors like urban-rural residence and the schooling and economic condition of parents when considering the relation between child mortality rates and religion.

The rising Hindu nationalism was, at the same time, countered by a growing consciousness of Muslim political interests and secession. As Muslim philosopher Allama Iqbal conceded in a letter to M. A. Jinnah, the future founder of Pakistan, that secession was "the only course… to secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims" (Allana 1937). Like minority leaders in other parts of the world who sought partition– Carson and Craig for Ireland or Weizmann and Ben-Gurion for Israel-Palestine– Jinnah's (and Iqbal's) transformation from a secular Congressman to an advocate of Muslim rights and an exclusive nation has been linked to the ambiguity of Congress leaders over provision of minority rights (O'Leary 2007).

The bloody Partition riots in 1947, which claimed 200,000 lives, marked the beginning of Hindu-Muslim violence as a pervasive phenomenon in independent India. Memories of the Partition have been continually invoked during subsequent episodes of violence. Since 1950, Hindu-Muslim violence has claimed more than 10,000 lives (Wilkinson 2004). The Gandhian ethic receded as ethnic and caste violence became ingrained in postcolonial Indian society. As in the case of Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, more than nationalism, religious identification became more closely associated with collective identity in South Asia (Ruback and Singh 2008). Following the 1980s, religious identities (Hindu-Muslim in particular) generated the most violence compared to other ethnic identities, such as caste (Wilkinson 2008). In terms of identity of perpetrators, Krishna (1985) cites data from the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs for the years 1961 to 1970 which shows that in 3,888 (75%) of 5,189 cases, the individuals who "first resorted to violence" were Hindus; 2,397 (89%) of 2,679 killed were Muslims and that since 1947, more Muslims than Hindus have been killed in violence.

The worst episodes of ethnic violence in India include Hindu-Sikh violence in Delhi (around 3,000 dead in four days) in 1984; Tribal-Hindu-Muslim violence in Assam in

1983 discussed earlier in section 5.2.1 (around 3,000 dead in one day); and Hindu-Muslim violence in Maharashtra in 1984 (109 dead in 12 days), Bihar in 1989 (396 dead in two months), Ahmedabad in 1969 (600 dead in five days), and across India in 1992-93 (around 2,000 killed in five months).

7. Gujarat: Politics and Social Structure

Gujarat is among India's most economically developed and urbanised states and Muslims form its largest religious minority at 9.1% of total population (Census 2001). Part of the urbanisation and mercantilism is linked to the state's long history of migrations. The first wave of out-migration was an outcome of the Great Famine of 1899-1900 followed by a second wave of interstate and interdistrict migrations in the mid-20th century, a result of land reform measures by the Congress government in Bombay and Saurashtra states.[17] The migrations exhorted peasant communities as well as the Hindu upper-castes of Brahmins and Vaniyas (alternatively transliterated 'Banias') and mercantile Muslim sects to diversify into commerce, industry and technical education (Hardiman 2002; Yagnik and Sheth 2005).

As part of Bombay State, Gujarat had not experienced extreme Hindu-Muslim violence during Partition in 1947. Migration of Muslims to Pakistan was negligible and most of the 2.2% who migrated were Sindhis and Gujarati Hindus (Yagnik and Sheth 2005). It was only after Gujarat's secession from Bombay in 1960 that caste and Hindu-Muslim violence became pervasive. One plausible explanation for Gujarat's high incidence of ethnic violence – higher than other Indian states in the period 1950-1995 – is

[17] During the British Raj, present-day Gujarat was part of the Bombay Presidency which included certain districts directly under British rule and others divided into princely states. The state of Baroda (present-day Vadodara district) was the only region ruled directly by the Governor-General. Following independence in 1947, the princely states were formed into three divisions, namely Saurashtra, Bombay State and Kutch. In 1956, Bombay State embraced Saurashtra and Kutch eventually leading to a rift between the Gujarati-speaking and Marathi-speaking population and Gujarat was created on May 1, 1960.

the amorphous nature of caste, which promotes the integration of upper and middle castes. The Patidar[18] caste group of Gujarat attained vertical ascension from a Shudra-like status in the early 19th century (Pocock 1976) to upper-caste status – on par with Brahmins and Vaniyas –in later years with their rapid economic prosperity (Gupta 2002). Similarly, the low-caste Kolis became politically salient on account of their numerical dominance – 24% of total population – as they formed the tactical alliance of the 'Kshatriya' bloc in the 1940s with upper-caste Rajputs who, at 5% population, drew little political influence on their own. The Koli became a crucial 'swing' voter for both the Congress and the BJP thereon. Caste stratification is more pronounced in other states, which experience more caste violence but less ethnic violence (Gupta 2004; Iyengar and Patel 1985; Varshney 2002).

The first large-scale Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat occurred in 1969, in Ahmedabad. It claimed around 600 lives in five days. The violence is usually explained as the result of communal propaganda by the BJP (then called the Bharatiya Jana Sangh or BJS) and two other parties, dominated by the upper-caste Patidars and Vaniyas. In the 1970s, the Congress faced a serious challenge to its power in the state, but it eventually established a stable coalition of caste and religion known as 'KHAM': Kshatriyas (the Rajput-Koli political alliance), Harijans (Scheduled Castes), Adivasis (Scheduled Tribes), and Muslims. In 1981 and then in 1985, violence occurred in Ahmedabad city between upper-caste Hindus and Scheduled Caste Hindus. Although the first was entirely a caste-based conflict, the anti-reservation riots of 1985 transformed into a Hindu-Muslim conflict within one month. This transformation has again been explained by one section of scholars as an attempt by the Hindu nationalist parties, favouring the anti-

[18] 'Patidar' was the prestigious name given to those in the largely peasant 'Kanbi' caste who could pay taxes, owing to their cultivation of cash crops. The Patidars of peninsular Gujarat (Saurashtra) had been the chief beneficiaries of Gujarat's land reform and deregulation policies since the 1950s (Sud 2013).

reservationists at the time, to politically unify Hindu caste groups (Shani 2007; Desai 2009; Sanghavi 2010). An alternative explanation is the ruling Congress' use of criminal elements within the party, who happened to largely be Muslims, to counter the movement (Iyengar and Patel 1985). These criminal elements were part of illicit alcohol networks (bootleggers) in a nexus with the police and local politicians (Shani 2010). It is notable that as part of its Gandhian legacy Gujarat observes total prohibition on consumption of alcohol. Despite the prohibition, liquor smuggling business in Gujarat is worth nearly two billion rupees (Shani 2010).

The 1990s saw a shift from Congress to the BJP in Gujarat and the rise of political Hindutva – the pooling of upper and lower caste Hindu against non-Hindu groups – as a response to KHAM. The deconstructing caste equations and the upward mobility of Patidars in the caste hierarchy facilitated the unification of Hindu vote (Gupta 2002). By 1991, the BJP awarded 30% of its district-level leadership positions to the backward castes, which formed their "junior" partners (Chandra 2007b: 269). In 1995, the BJP first came to power in the state, winning 42.5% of votes in the state election, though it continued to be in the opposition in the Parliament. Within this tumultuous political situation, the national-level BJP launched the Ayodhya temple campaign. For the first time, violence involved active participation by Hindu upper-caste and middle-class men and even women. In the ensuing ethnic rioting, the BJP came to power in the Parliament in 1999 even as it continued to govern Gujarat. In 2001, a massive earthquake occurred in Gujarat which claimed 20,000 lives. The ruling BJP under chief minister Keshubhai Patel received wide criticism for corruption and mismanagement of aid. Caste and religion-based prejudice was equally widespread in the distribution of rehabilitation measures (Yagnik and Sheth 2011). Chapter 2 further delves on the BJP's electoral circumstances in the aftermath of the earthquake, preceding the violence in 2002.

8. Outline of thesis

Chapter 2 quantitatively analyses spatial variation in the violence across 191 census towns and 25 rural areas of Gujarat. The dependent variable for this macrolevel analysis is the number of people killed in 2002 sourced from my original dataset. Findings show that ethnic violence in 2002 was a product of electoral competition and economic deprivation. Notably, the findings depart from earlier literature that highlighted the role of certain backward Hindu caste groups as perpetrators.

Chapter 3 introduces the city of Ahmedabad where the ethnographic fieldwork is based and describes the fieldsites, setting the tone for the rest of the thesis. The chapter discusses the research design and also the methodological challenges that I faced as a Muslim woman ethnographer in the city where I have witnessed three major episodes of Hindu-Muslim violence.

Chapter 4 is the first of three chapters based on ethnographic fieldwork. This chapter demonstrates that tactics of attack were calculated taking into account the target's situational factors and the attacker's own levels of risk. Two ecological factors – the built environment and the spatial concentration of targets – were key factors influencing the decision-making processes of attackers and why people in one place were more susceptible to attack than in another. Muslims were most vulnerable where they were concentrated in small numbers and on routes which afforded the attackers obstacle-free entry and retreat.

Chapter 5 examines the peaceful neighbourhood more closely to explain why Hindus chose to cooperate with Muslims than behave opportunistically at a time when anti-Muslim violence was more rewarding than peace. It argues that a paradoxical combination of legitimate and illegitimate institutions in RRN doubled up as an

enforcement mechanism that overcame commitment issues in RRN. Both collaborated to enforce cooperation through coercive measures. Findings demonstrate the importance of penetrating beneath social order to uncover the mechanisms.

Chapter 6 investigates a unique political development nine years after the violence: the support of Gujarat's Muslim voter for the BJP, a party acknowledged to have perpetrated the anti-Muslim pogrom. Ethnographic findings and preliminary polling booth analysis suggest there being a distinct possibility of Muslims supporting the BJP in public but not voting for it. One theoretical reason to expect contradictory behaviour would be the absence of a 'hidden transcript' among the Muslims leading to a type of expressive dissonance that limits the articulation of true feelings.

Chapter 7 concludes the thesis.

Appendix for Chapter 1

Map 1.1: Gujarat district map showing Godhra and Ahmedabad towns

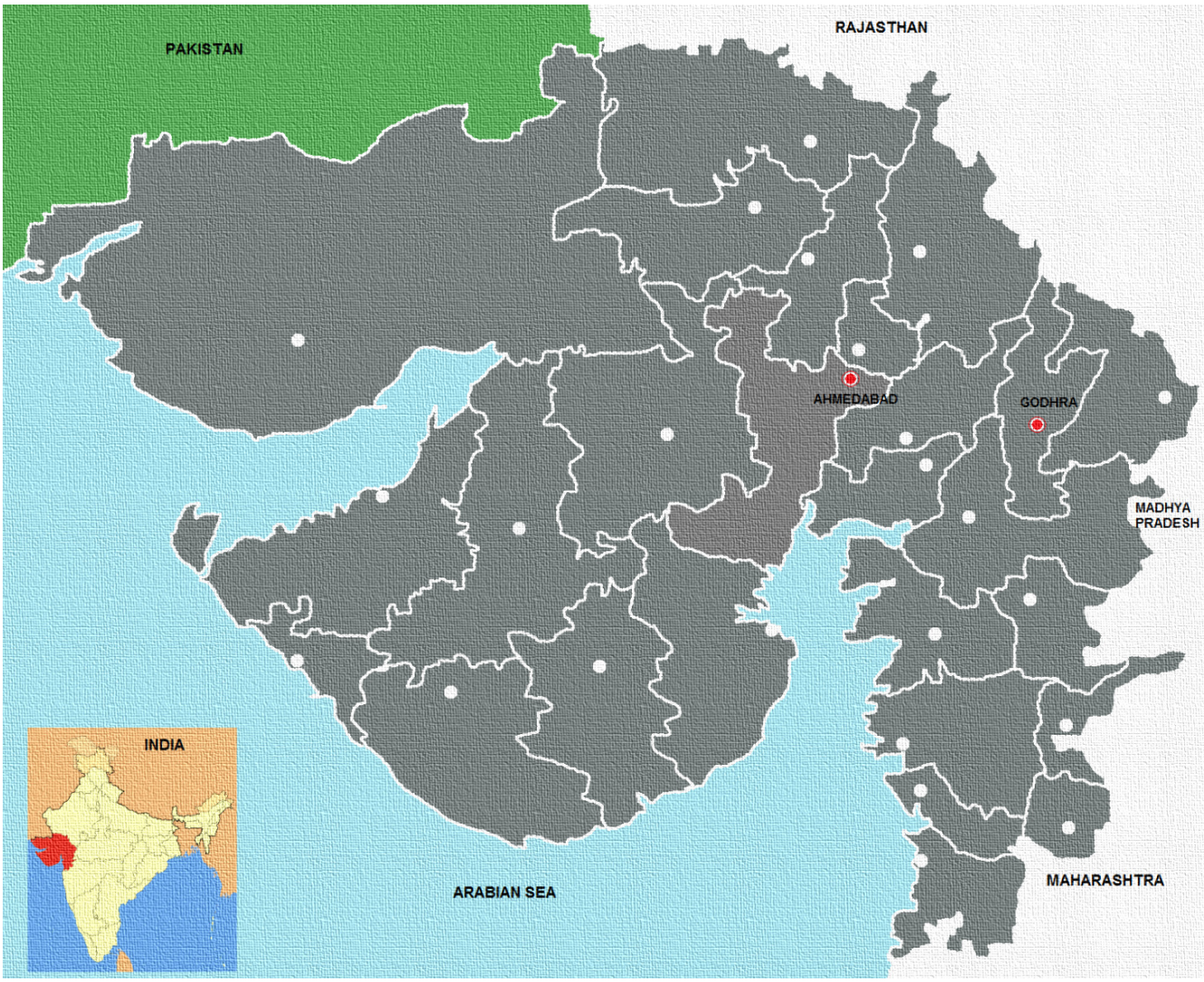


Figure 1.1: Killings in Gujarat in the period February 28 to May 9, 2002

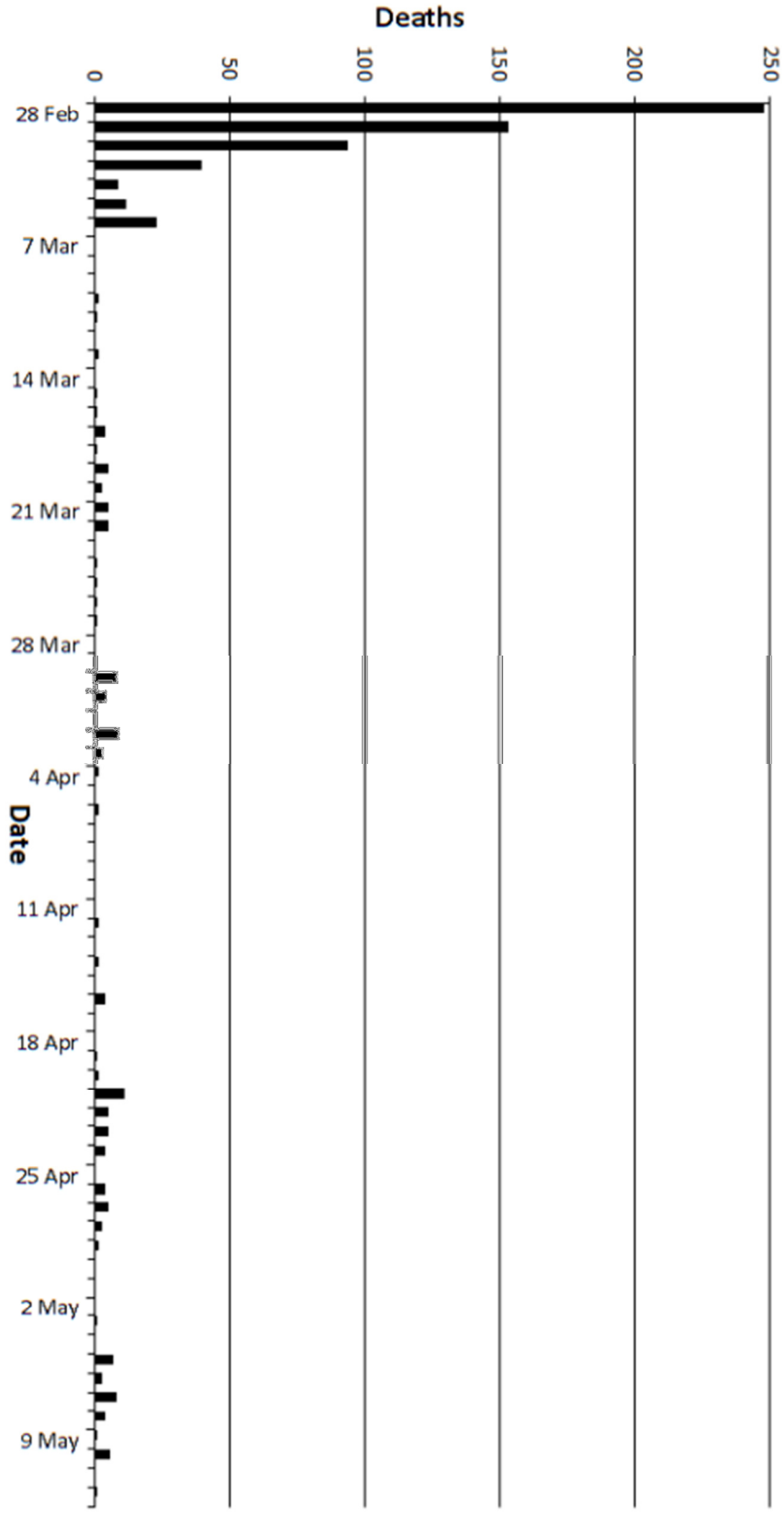
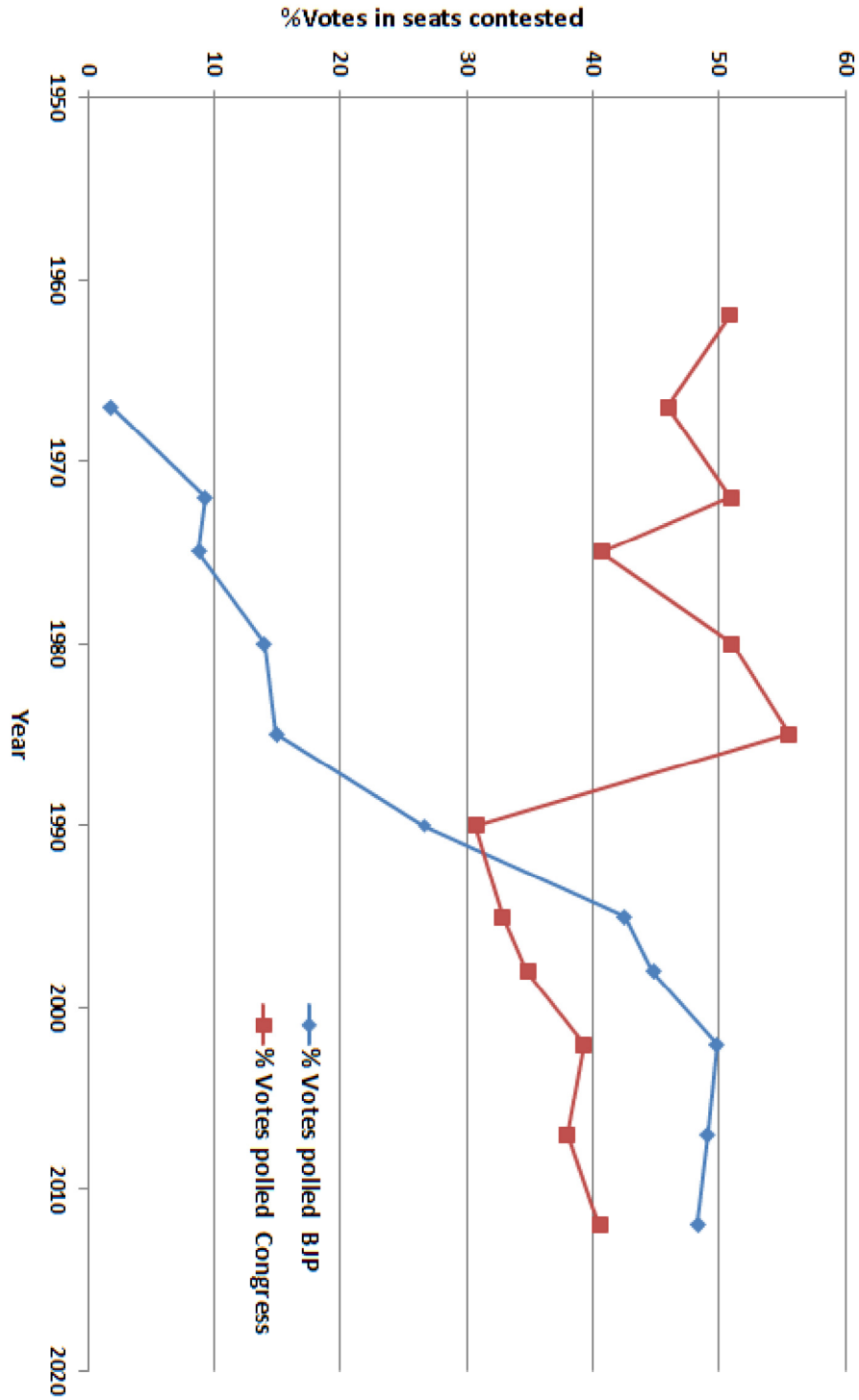


Figure 1.2: Killings across 43 municipal wards, Ahmedabad city, 2002



Figure 1.3: Performance of BJP vs. Congress in Gujarat assembly elections, 1967-2012



CHAPTER 2

A Macrolevel Analysis of Spatial Variation in Violence in Gujarat, 2002

1. Introduction

This chapter systematically investigates why violence in Gujarat in 2002 varied across urban and rural areas. I compare all places, including those without violence, to test theories that can potentially explain the spatial variation using data on economic, political and demographic characteristics before violence occurred. The dependent variable is an original dataset of the number of killings that occurred from February 28 to December 31, 2002.

Following the death of 59 *karsevaks* in Godhra town, at least a thousand Muslims were killed in what came to be called the "post-Godhra" violence. Rarely do such large-scale killings take place in a democratic polity, absent civil war. A comparative example would be the 1983 ethnic violence in Sri Lanka, when an estimated 2,000 Tamils were killed in two weeks. Yet, the violence in Gujarat was unevenly distributed. Four-fifths of towns and rural areas did not experience any lethal violence (Table 2.1).

2. Theory

Ethnic violence is assumed to be endemic in India, particularly in Gujarat. Maya Kodnani, a BJP MLA, described the post-Godhra violence at the time as "part of Gujarat's nature (*prakruti*). It is a natural part of life, and should be accepted as such" (Infochange Books and Reports 2002). This primordial explanation of ethnic violence assumes that human beings are inherently bound by common myths and symbols associated with their ancestry (Smith 1986). While this approach has an instrumental utility, in that 'ties of blood' can explain the creation of a collective identity in building

feelings of nationalism, they cannot explain why resentment occurs between two 'inherently' antagonistic groups in one place and not another (Smith and Hutchinson 1996).

Exploring spatial variation in Hindu-Muslim violence in Uttar Pradesh (north India), Brass argues that Hindu-Muslim violence in India is organised by political elites for electoral gains. Wilkinson's (2004, 2010) argument, explicated in chapter 1 also focuses on the importance of political incentives, primarily at the state level, albeit the argument has substantive predictive power. He argues that depending primarily on the extent of the risk of target voters voting for the rival parties, a triggering event is either allowed to or prevented from erupting into full-blown violence. High levels of party competition, where the 'effective number of parties' (ENPV) is three or more, presents a favourable situation for minorities wherein the state is more likely to prevent antiminority violence from escalating. This, however, depends on who among the electorate is most pivotal to the party in power. The ENPV for Gujarat in 2002 was 2.97 – a bipolar situation between the Congress and the BJP (p. 143). Although Gujarat was bipolar even before 1995, the presence of an antiminority party (BJP) after 1995 heightened the possibility of anti-Muslim violence.

Relative to material goods, the immutability of ascriptive ethnic identities such as caste, religion and, to some extent, language, tend to heighten the success of using divisive issues during elections; people are less willing to compromise on what they see as fixed (caste, colour) or sacred (religion), which undermines utilitarian bargaining (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972; Horowitz 1985; Elster, Offe and Preuss 1988; Kalvyas 1999; Ginges, Atran, Medin and Shikaki 2007; Ginges and Atran 2009a; Ginges and Atran 2009b; Eifert, Miguel and Posner 2010). By serving as a 'focal point' which facilitates convergence of individual expectations, ethnic identity is useful as a

mobilisation strategy (Varshney 2002). In addition, for the political party, the cost of mobilising voters on an issue that is symbolic is lower than if the voter is mobilised on a material issue, such as employment of an ethnic group wherein the party needs to deliver results if victorious. In India, the cost is lower also because the state institutionally privileges some forms of mobilisation, particularly "traditional" religious ceremonies and processions, which cannot be banned by the local administration. These occasions often provoke countermobilisation by the minority group which can then be interpreted as 'illegitimate provocation'.[19]

The political logic articulated by Wilkinson is clearly relevant to violence in 2002. The BJP's grip on the state had begun to wane. The party had fared poorly in civic and district panchayat elections in 2000. After widespread criticism of its response to the earthquake in 2001, as mentioned in chapter 1, the BJP lost two by-elections in September 2001: one for the State Assembly, and one for the Parliament in Delhi. The Chief Minister resigned, to be replaced by Modi. Under Modi, however, the BJP lost two further Assembly seats in three by-elections in February 2002. In those four by-elections for the State Assembly, its vote fell on an average by 14 percentage points from 1998. A complete revival of the Gujarat BJP was vital, particularly for the new Chief Minister, before state elections scheduled for the end of 2002. Several accounts directly blame elected BJP MLAs, particular those who were cabinet ministers or ministers of state—for fomenting the riots (e.g. Concerned Citizens' Tribunal 2002). In one case, BJP MLA Kodnani was convicted to serve 28 years in prison in August 2012 having been found guilty of inciting attackers in her constituency (Naroda Road, in Ahmedabad), where about 100 persons were killed.

[19] Violence in Ahmedabad in 1969 was said to be precipitated by Muslims disrupting a Hindu religious procession soon after the Hindus were said to have done the same with the Muslims (Wilkinson 2004).

Hypothesis 1a: Muslims were more likely to be killed where the BJP had the greatest electoral support.

Hypothesis 1b: Muslims were more likely to be killed where the BJP faced greatest electoral competition.

Hypothesis 1c: Muslims were more likely to be killed where the elected MLA was from the BJP

Chapter 1 introduced threat theory which is able to be tested in this thesis. Basically, the theory posits that the size of the minority group can increase the majority's perception of threat—whether economic, political, or cultural (Blumer 1955; Blalock 1967). Radical Hindu leaders commonly argue that high Muslim growth rates will lead to Hindus being outnumbered (DeVotta 2002; Urdal 2006; Jeffery and Jeffery 2012). Indeed, areas with high in-migration of Muslims have been notable targets of previous violence, such as Aligarh city in Uttar Pradesh in 1990-91 and Surat city in Gujarat in 1992-93.[20]

Hypothesis 2a: Muslims were more likely to be killed where they were a larger minority.

Hypothesis 2b: Muslims were more likely to be killed where Muslim in-migration was high.

In line with modernisation theorists, education can be expected to assuage cultural threat because education is argued to enable the weakening of ascriptive attachments, including those based on ethnicity. Education is associated with greater tolerance even of

[20] For Aligarh riots, see Brass (2005); for Surat, see Desai (2006).

groups perceived as a threat (Bobo and Licari 1989) and tends to weaken ethnic forms of national identity (Tilley, Heath and Ford 2008). Cross-national analyses find a strong inverse relationship between education and expressions of ethnic prejudice or support for the extreme right (e.g. Quillian 1995; Lubbers, Gijsberts and Scheepers 2002). Urdal finds literacy to have a moderately inhibiting effect on riots in 13 states of India (Urdal 2008).

Hypothesis 3: Muslims were more likely to be killed where literacy was low.

A minority is most likely to be perceived as an economic threat by groups suffering deprivation, such as unemployment.

Hypothesis 4: Muslims were more likely to be killed where unemployment was high.

Related to economic deprivation, recent literature highlights the importance of young people as most likely to participate in violence (Weiner and Russell 2000; Goldstone 2002). 'Youth bulges'—unusually high proportions of people in their teens and twenties in relation to the adult population– have been historically associated with political violence (Huntington 1997). The English Revolution of the 17th century, the French revolution of the 18th century, Paris in 1968, Dhaka in 1971, Tehran in the late 70s, Manila in 1986, in Tiananmen Square in 1989, Jakarta in 1998, have all seen youth movements challenge regimes. As Huntington (1997: 117) says, "Young people are the protagonists of protest, instability, reform and revolution." In India, youths are closely linked to student agitations on campuses. There have been many significant student protest movements, such as the agitations in Gwalior, Indore, Calcutta, Allahabad and

Jaipur in the 1950s; the Navnirman Movement in Gujarat in 1974 that led to the overthrow of the incumbent Congress government; the anti-reservation movements in 1985 in Gujarat and in India in the 1990s; and the more recent movement for secession of Telangana state in south India in 2013. The agitation in Gujarat in 1985 began as an anti-reservation movement against Scheduled Castes, and then turned into a Hindu versus Muslim clash, claiming 150 lives (Spodek 1989; Engineer 2003; Shah 2004). Urdal's study of Indian states finds that a youth bulge increased the risk of Hindu-Muslim rioting in the period 1956-2002.

Hypothesis 5: Muslims were more likely to be killed where there was a surplus of young adults.

3. Data and Method

3.1. Dependent variable

The dependent variable is the number of killings in Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat from February 28 to December 31, 2002. I choose to count fatalities rather than 'riots.' Indian law defines a riot as an unlawful assembly of five or more people (Wilkinson 2009). Countless riots occurred in this period, and many did not lead to killing. Killings have greater theoretical significance—and worse social ramifications—than damage to property. Deaths also have a methodological advantage. In the first few days of the violence, when hundreds of incidents were occurring across the state, non-lethal riots were likely to have gone unreported.

Figures provided by the government are obviously suspect. Only in 2005 did the Gujarat government, under pressure from an Indian Member of Parliament, provide an official death toll in the post-Godhra violence (Rajya Sabha 2005). The official death toll

(excluding the 59 passengers who died in the train fire) was then 1,044: 790 Muslims and 254 Hindus. But this excluded many victims whose bodies had not yet been discovered. In 2009, after the legal period of seven years, 228 missing during the violence were officially declared dead. The final official death toll was publicised as 1,180 (again excluding the passengers). The sum (1,044 + 228) should be 1,272, but the anomaly is unexplained. The state government has admitted destroying many relevant records (*BBC News,* 30 June 2011). Advocates for victims have compiled their own figures, though these may be suspected of exaggeration. Non-governmental organisations tend to claim a death toll of around 2,000, mostly Muslims (e.g. Human Rights Watch 2002; Coalition Against Genocide 2005). For example, the Tribunal lists "over 200 deaths" in Naroda Patiya and Gam areas in Ahmedabad city. Combing through newspaper reports, I could enumerate only 91 deaths.[21]

I compiled original data from the *Times of India* (*ToI*), following the procedures used by Varshney and Wilkinson to compile data on Hindu-Muslim violence in India from 1950 to 1995 (Varshney and Wilkinson 2006). They chose *ToI* in part because "unlike several other newspapers, many a time [it] refused to run unchecked rumours about communal violence" (Varshney 2002: 92). Aside from the advantage of comparability, *ToI* had a wider network of reporters across Gujarat than any other English newspaper, and it checked information from the police against deaths reported in local hospitals. Indeed, *ToI*'s Ahmedabad edition won the nationally renowned Prem Bhatia Award for the most objective coverage of the Gujarat violence. Reading the *ToI*'s Ahmedabad edition from February 28 to December 31, 2002, all deaths resulting from Hindu-Muslim violence are recorded. (Varshney and Wilkinson use the Mumbai edition, but this was found to have reported 9% fewer deaths than the Ahmedabad edition.) In addition, I

[21] This figure is to the end of 2011. In April 2012, fresh legal petitions issued a figure of 94 killings in Naroda Patiya (*Times of India*, 14 April 2012).

updated the number of deaths following subsequent legal investigations, as reported in *ToI*'s Ahmedabad edition, to the end of 2011. For example, 27 deaths were reported in Sardarpura village of Mehsana district at the time. In 2009, this figure was revised to 33.[22] If the number of deaths is not exact, I followed Varshney and Wilkinson in using the lowest number. They exclude killings where personal rivalry is the trigger. In this episode of violence, however, this distinction is impossible to draw, because the Godhra train burning overshadowed all other triggers.

Figures are compared with others in Table 2.2. The first measure is used in the quantitative analysis of towns and rural areas, as seen in Table 2.1. The second incorporates 228 missing persons legally declared dead in 2009. This is available only at the district level, but it is very highly correlated with the first. The combined total of 984 is lower than the government death count of 1,180, because I always took the minimum number reported. This measure of killings is fairly highly correlated with Concerned Citizens' Tribunal. It is even more highly correlated with the number of Muslims killed compiled by the State Intelligence Bureau, covering the period February 27 to August 7. The Bureau was headed by a police officer who abhorred the complicity of the state government. The triangulation of my figures with the Bureau's and Tribunal's increases confidence in their reliability. Most crucially, my figures can be disaggregated below the district level, to locate violence in towns and villages. Fatalities can be compared with properties destroyed by arson, also from the Bureau. The correlation is fairly high, showing a correspondence between attacks on property and on persons.

Previous literature finds that Hindu-Muslim violence tends to recur in the same places over time (Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2004; Wilkinson and Haid 2010). The number of killings in each district in 2002 can be compared with the number of killings in the

[22] See *Times of India*, 2 March 2002 for the initial death toll and *Times of India*, 11 August 2009 for the revised figure. Also, Justice M.L. Mehta, "Report Related to Gujarat Riot Cases," *TP 194-202, 326-329/03 and other related cases* (New Delhi, 20 August 2006).

violence during the Ayodhya campaign and subsequent demolition of the Babri Mosque (1990-93), the previous peak of violence in Gujarat. There is a positive correlation (r = .64).[23] But this simply reflects the large number of killings in Ahmedabad in both waves of violence, which in turn reflects the fact that the city has a far higher Muslim population than anywhere else. Controlling for the Muslim population, the correlation is minimal (r = .14) and far from statistical significance (p = .49).

3.2. Method

The primary administrative unit of governance is the district, which has become the standard unit in quantitative analyses of violence in India. But there were only 25 districts in Gujarat in 2002. Such a small number of cases poses the danger of more inferences than observations (King, Keohane and Verba 1994). Districts are enormous, with an average population of two million, and combine rural and urban areas. Therefore I conducted analyses at the level of the town, which is the basic administrative unit for urban areas. The 2001 Census provides data on 191 towns, ranging in population from 338 to 4.4 million. Unfortunately the Census provides no detailed data on the equivalent rural unit, the village, but only on the rural population of each district. Therefore only 25 rural areas, ranging from 187,000 to 2.2 million (Census of India 2001a; 2001b), could be analysed. These ecological units are large enough to encompass perpetrators and their victims. Although people sometimes blame violence on outsiders, this does not mean that the perpetrators travelled far.[24] Considering Hindus convicted of killing Muslims in 2002, all 32 in the urban areas came from the same town as their victims; in the countryside, 31

[23] The number of districts increased from 19 in 1991 to 25 in 2001, as six new districts were split off from seven districts. Killings from these seven districts were redistributed to the new districts, according to delimitation boundaries listed in the state government's District Panchayat websites. For example, see http://bharuchdp.gujarat.gov.in/bharuch/ for Bharuch.

[24] Jeffery and Jeffery's quote in Heitmeyer (2009: 111) is useful: "…to blame outsiders; or to pass the riots off as momentary madness, are clearly too conveniently aimed at removing responsibility from the shoulders of all locals and encouraging a return to "normal" life which does not look too closely at local causes".

of 42 came from the same village as their victims, while 11 came from a neighbouring village (in the same district) (Court of Sessions for Greater Bombay 2004; Mumbai Special Court 2008; Court of Sessions Mehsana 2011).

As shown in Table 2.1, the dependent variable is extremely skewed. Ahmedabad had 279 fatalities, while rural Panchmahals had 164. Negative binomial regression is to estimate the number of deaths in each place:

$$\tilde{\mu}_i = \exp\left(\beta_0 + \sum \beta_k X_{ki}\right)\delta_i$$

where X_k are independent variables and δ is the error term, drawn from the Gamma distribution with mean of 1 and variance of α. The 191 towns and 25 rural areas are pooled because there are no compelling theoretical reasons to expect the causes of violence to have operated differently in urban and rural areas (this assumption will be tested below). Social and economic variables, such as the proportion of agricultural labourers, measure many of the differences between town and country. (Tables 2.3 and 2.4 provide summary statistics and correlations.) Any remaining differences are captured by a binary variable coded 1 for town and 0 for rural. Muslim population is used to capture, to put it crudely, the potential number of victims. The variable is transformed by taking the logarithm, like an exposure term (though its coefficient is not constrained to one). Needless to say, this variable is strongly correlated with the logarithm of the Hindu population (r = .83).

3.3. Independent variables

To test Hypothesis 1, the prior election to the Gujarat State Assembly in 1998 (Election Commission of India 1998) is examined. The 182 constituencies of the State

Assembly do not correspond with towns. One solution was to aggregate constituencies by district, because constituencies like towns do not cross district boundaries. BJP vote at the district level ranges from 28% to 59%. Another solution was to painstakingly match towns to constituencies, using official delimitation data (Government of Gujarat 1971).[25] Most towns form part of a single constituency (which might include other towns as well as the surrounding countryside), and thus the constituency's voting returns are used. Six cities encompass multiple constituencies, and so the votes across all constituencies are totalled. For each rural area, the votes in all the district's constituencies were added, weighted by the rural proportion of the constituency.[26] This procedure yielded estimates for BJP vote ranging from 7% to 73%. Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of BJP vote. Following Hypothesis 1a, the number of deaths is expected to increase with BJP vote. Following Hypothesis 1b, the number of deaths is expected to peak where the BJP vote is close to the threshold of electoral victory—around 39% in 1998—and then would fall where the BJP vote is high enough to assure victory.[27] This is tested by adding a quadratic term.

In addition to voting, I also measured whether the constituency had a BJP Member in the State Assembly in February 2002 (elected in 1998 or in subsequent by-elections). For most towns this is either zero or one. For large cities and rural areas, which spanned multiple constituencies, it is a fraction. There were nine BJP Members from Ahmedabad's 13 constituencies, for example, and so the variable takes the value .69.

[25] The Election Commission of India (Gujarat) website was referred for matching towns to constituencies following the formation of six new districts in 2001.

[26] The population of each constituency was estimated from the number of electors, using the statewide ratio of population to electors. Comparing this population estimate to the population of town(s) within the constituency yielded an estimate of the rural proportion.

[27] The relationship between the percentage of votes won by the BJP and the election of a BJP candidate is estimated by logistic regression for the 182 state assembly seats. The predicted probability is greater than half once the BJP vote exceeded 39 per cent.

Following hypothesis 1c, the presence of a BJP MLA to increase killings is expected to increase killings.[28]

Hypothesis 2a is tested by the proportion of Muslims. Places with a higher proportion of Muslims are expected to have more killings. Hypothesis 2b is tested using the proxy of Muslim males per 100 Muslim females, because an excess of males reveals high in-migration (Yagnik and Sheth 2005; Desai 2006).[29] Places with high Muslim in-migration are expected to have more killings. Hypothesis 3 is tested by the proportion of total population aged 7 and over who are literate. Hypothesis 4 is tested with the conventional division of the Indian population into two categories: "main" workers, who have worked for at least six months of the year, and "marginal" workers, who have worked for less. The reference category is non-workers. Areas with more marginal workers are expected to have more killings. The hypothesis is also tested using the four occupational categories provided by the Census (Census of India 2001c). Variables are entered for the proportion of cultivators (who own land), of agricultural labourers, and of household-industry workers. The reference category is "other workers," encompassing all other occupations from factory workers to professionals. A positive association is expected between agricultural workers, the most disadvantaged occupation, and the number of killings. Hypothesis 5 is tested using the age range of 15-24 years, as conventionally used in the literature.[30] The denominator is the population aged 15 years and above, which Urdal (2006) argues is more appropriate than total population. Combining Hypotheses 5 and 4, a measure of youth unemployment is created. This is the proportion of people aged 15-24

[28] A test of analogous variables for a BJP Member who was cabinet minister or minister of state, did not yield any result.

[29] Female infanticide is much less prevalent among Muslims. See Guilmoto and Depledge (2002); Bhat and Xavier (2003). The sex ratio is extremely high in a few places, where the underlying Muslim population is small, and so 120 (the 95th percentile) was substituted.

[30] Many people subsequently convicted were in their late twenties or thirties at the time of the violence; for example, Mumbai Special Court (2008). An investigation of the age range of 15 to 34 proved inferior.

years who are either marginal workers or non-workers, and who are available for or seeking work.[31]

The proportion of the population who are in Scheduled Tribes and in Scheduled Castes is obviously important to consider. There is no clear theoretical hypothesis, but commentators have emphasised the prominent role of both groups in this wave of violence, and so a positive association is expected (Devy 2002; Gupta 2002; Nandy 2008).

All these political, social, and economic variables are far removed from the heightened emotions in the days after the Godhra incident. Seeking to measure this emotional impact, the initial report of *karsevaks* dying on the train is used. This was published by the state's major vernacular newspaper on February 28, from information provided by the VHP.[32] Fifty victims were identified, from five districts (including Ahmedabad) concentrated in the centre and east of Gujarat. The number of victims per million Hindus in each district is calculated. These districts had no higher BJP vote than average. If this variable captures the emotional impact of the triggering incident, then a positive association with killings can be expected.

4. Results

Tables 2.5 and 2.6 show the results. The exponent of the coefficient is taken to yield the incidence-rate ratio. For independent variables measured as a percentage, this ratio estimates how much a change of one percentage point in the independent variable would multiply the predicted number of killings. Because observations within the same district are not necessarily independent, robust standard errors are estimated, clustering on

[31] Youth bulge and youth unemployment are not available for individual towns, and so these variables measure the percentage for the district's entire urban population.

[32] *Gujarat Samachar*, 28 February 2002, p. 4. This list is not identical to one provided later by the central government Rajya Sabha (2004). The correlation between the lists at the district level is .93.

district. Models can be compared using the corrected AIC, which is most appropriate for a modest number of observations.[33] The high value of α reveals pronounced overdispersion (compared to a Poisson distribution, which would be indicated by $\alpha = 0$), even controlling for Muslim population. This is evidence for positive feedback: every killing increased the probability of further killings in the same place (Biggs 2005).

Model 1 (in Table 2.5) begins with social and economic variables. Killings increased with the Muslim population, as would be expected. The increase was notably disproportionate. (A proportionate effect would mean an incidence-rate ratio of $e^1 = 2.7$, which can be rejected at $p < .001$.) A tenfold increase in Muslim population multiplied the predicted number of killings by 19. Hypothesis 2a is not supported, as the proportion of Muslims had no effect.[34] Hypothesis 2b is strongly supported. Killings increased with inwards migration, as indicated by the Muslim sex ratio. Hypothesis 3 is contradicted, as literacy actually increased the predicted number of killings. Hypothesis 4 is supported in one respect. The predicted number of killings increased where more people were marginal workers. The proportion of agricultural labourers, however, has no effect.[35] Hypothesis 5 is not supported, for the youth bulge had no discernible effect. Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes defied expectations, because the presence of each reduced the predicted number of killings. These social and economic variables leave a large differential between urban and rural areas, revealed by the variable for towns. This binary

[33] Defined as

$$AIC_c = -2\log(L) + 2p + \frac{2p(p+1)}{n-p-1}$$

where L is the likelihood, n is the number of observations, and p is the number of parameters. See Burnham and Anderson (2004). For negative binomial regression, $p = K + 2$ (β_k, plus β_0 and α).

[34] In a few towns Muslims outnumbered Hindus, which might suggest a non-monotonic effect, whereby killing was lowest where the Muslim proportion was near zero or above half. A quadratic term, however, reveals no such effect.

[35] The proportions of agricultural laborers and of cultivators are highly correlated, of course, but dropping either makes no difference. The ratio of the former to the latter, as a measure of land hunger, is also not significant.

variable is a partial effect, of course, which must be interpreted alongside the other variables. Rural areas generally had a higher proportion of marginal workers, which increased the number of killings. The overall death rate (per Muslim population) was almost identical between rural and urban Gujarat.

BJP vote in the 1998 election is added in Models 2 to 6. The results for social and economic variables remain broadly similar to Model 1. Two further variables emerge as statistically significant in some of the models. The proportion of youths increased the number of killings, supporting Hypothesis 5 (in Models 4 to 6). The proportion of workers in household industry reduced the number of killings (in Models 2, 3, 6).

Model 2 aggregates BJP vote at the district level, while Model 3 approximates the constituency. Measured either way, BJP vote has a powerful non-monotonic effect, following Hypothesis 1b and contradicting Hypothesis 1a. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 compare the association between killings and the percentage voting for the BJP, controlling for social and economic factors.[36] The vertical axis on the left measures the incidence-rate ratio, calibrated to Gujarat's overall BJP vote of 44.7% (where the rate is one, shown by the faint dotted line). The vertical axis on the right measures the predicted number of deaths, setting the Muslim population at 50,000 and all other variables at the median. Curves trace the observed range of BJP vote, which naturally is narrower for districts. Diamonds indicate values for districts (each comprising multiple observations) in Figure 2.2; vertical bars show values for constituencies in Figure 2.3. Where the BJP was weakest, fewer than average killings would be predicted, as expected. Where the BJP was strongest, however, even fewer killings would be predicted, in accordance with Hypothesis 1b. Muslims were most vulnerable in a district where the BJP gained about 36% of the vote (Model 2) or a constituency where it gained 33% (Model 3). This is just

[36] $Y = \exp[\ \beta_1(X - 44.7) + \beta_2(X^2 - 44.7^2)\ ]$

under the threshold at which the party had a better than even chance of winning a State Assembly seat in 1998, which had been 39%. Note that the percentage voting for the BJP is not simply the inverse of the percentage voting for Congress (r = -.42), because one in five votes went to minor parties. A variable for Congress (whether alone or with a quadratic term) has no effect.

While BJP vote has a similar non-monotonic effect whether measured at the district or constituency level, the former yields a better fit (the corrected AIC for Model 2 is lower—better—than for Model 3). This finding suggests that violence was orchestrated to target districts where the BJP anticipated fierce competition in the forthcoming election. Within Gujarat, the district is the basic division, and so is the natural unit of party administration; district boundaries also circumscribe police districts. Model 4 (in Table 2.6) augments Model 2 by adding a variable for the presence of a BJP MLA. Hypothesis 1c is contradicted, because the presence of an MLA reduced the predicted number of killings, by a factor of almost four. Violence was less likely to occur in constituencies already controlled by the BJP. This parallels the finding that killings were lowest where the BJP vote was highest.

Model 5 adds a variable indicating the emotional impact of the triggering event. Killings increased with the number of *karsevaks* from the district who died at Godhra. At maximum (5.7 per million Hindus), this would multiply the number of killings six-fold, compared to the majority of districts where no *karsevaks* had died. The addition of this variable does not diminish the non-monotonic effect of BJP vote. It does attenuate the effects of BJP Member and of marginal workers, which are no longer statistically significant. Now the proportion of Muslims is statistically significant, though the direction contradicts Hypothesis 2a. Muslims were most vulnerable where they formed a smaller minority. The non-monotonic effect of BJP vote is depicted in Figure 2.4. The

vertical axis on the right measures the predicted number of deaths, setting the Muslim population at 50,000 and all other variables at the median (exactly comparable to Figure 2.2). The faint dotted line again marks the BJP's vote in Gujarat. The two curves distinguish the effect of a Member from the BJP, though this is not quite statistically significant at the .05 level.

These results can be probed for robustness. Are they unduly influenced by Ahmedabad, which had by far the highest number of killings? Adding a binary variable for this city to Model 5 suggests that the city had four times more killings than otherwise predicted. The addition barely alters the other effects. Do results depend on inclusion of so many social and economic variables? Stepwise backward negative binomial regression is used, removing variables from Model 5 if $p > .10$. This yields Model 6. The results are very similar. The proportion of main workers is now significantly negative, reinforcing Hypothesis 4. The proportion of workers in household industries also has a statistically significant and negative effect. It can be speculated that this might capture a particular caste configuration in the district of Bhavnagar, where a subcaste of Rajputs works with Muslims in household industries (this will be discussed further in the conclusion) (Census of India 2001c). Did rural areas differ systematically from towns? In Model 6 interaction terms between each variable and the binary variable for towns are added. Only one difference is statistically significant: the negative effect of Muslim percentage is still more pronounced in rural areas. This is the product of two observations, Panchmahals and Dahod, with a high rate of killing and a low proportion of Muslims.

Finally, a hurdle model can be used to differentiate two separate processes in Model 6. First, whether any deaths occurred, identical to logistic regression on a binary variable. Second, if deaths occurred, how many occurred, estimated with truncated negative

binomial regression.[37] In the first process, BJP vote has the familiar non-monotonic effect (the hypothesis that both coefficients are zero is rejected at $p = .002$). Killing was most likely to occur where the BJP vote was 35%: this multiplied the odds by 2.8 compared to the state average (44.7%). Where the vote reached its maximum, 59%, killing was least likely: this multiplied the odds by .006. The second process is estimated with only 46 non-zero observations, which of course—given the first part of the model—do not span the full range of BJP vote (killings did not occur in any district with more than 50% voting for the BJP). I cannot reject the hypothesis that BJP vote had no effect in the second part ($p = .43$), and likewise cannot reject the hypothesis had it had the same effect in the second part as in the first ($p = .40$). Indeed, it cannot be concluded that any single coefficient is different in the second part than in the first part of the model. Because the hurdle model doubles the number of parameters, the corrected AIC (421.6) reveals that it is inferior to negative binomial regression.

In sum, then, various models yield a consistent set of findings. The larger the concentration of Muslims, and the greater the flow of inward Muslim migration, the greater the violence (Hypothesis 2b). The greater the proportion of marginal workers, and the lower the proportion of main workers, the greater the violence (Hypothesis 4). A closer connection to the triggering event increased violence. Most importantly, violence was worst in districts or constituencies where the BJP faced the greatest electoral competition; paradoxically, Muslims were least vulnerable where the BJP was dominant (Hypothesis 1b).

[37] Estimated using hnblogit for Stata, accompanying Hilbe (2011).

5. Discussion

Before discussing the results, their limitations should be emphasised. Most importantly, the data are ecological, and the units of analysis are huge. The Census provides only a limited range of social and economic data. What is most frustrating is that I do not have data to test Varshney's theory of interethnic associations. Despite these limitations, this quantitative analysis has the advantage of systematically comparing places where killings did not occur as well as where they did.

Findings are unexpected in several respects. Violence was higher where Scheduled Castes and Tribes constituted a smaller proportion of the population. Yet literature on 2002 has emphasised the part played by "Hindutvaised" Scheduled Tribes in rural areas and Castes in urban areas. There is no necessary contradiction, but these results highlight the danger of implying that most Tribes and Castes participated in violence.[38] It is suggested that the Sangh Parivar's attempts at Hindutvaisation—branding Muslims as oppressors of Castes and Tribes—were most likely to succeed when these subordinated groups were too small a minority to forge their own class or clan interests. In a study of anti-Muslim violence in Bharuch district in 1993, Pinto (1995) suggests that numerically strong Tribes of Valia sub-district did not participate in the violence, unlike their counterparts in Dediapada and Sagbara sub-districts, because of their strong class identity: they viewed Hindus and Muslims alike with suspicion. Tribes in all these sub-districts abstained from violence in 2002. While almost all the perpetrators of violence remain unidentified, recent convictions for murder in 2002 reveal the involvement of upper castes. Out of 74 Hindus convicted of killing Muslims in 2002, 53 were upper-caste Patidars (Court of Sessions Mehsana 2011; *Times of India,* 12 April 2012).

[38] The Bhil tribe among the Scheduled Tribes is portrayed as more susceptible to Hindutva indoctrination and subsequent violence. But including a measure for Bhil percentage at the district level showed no significant effect. For the role of Bhils, see Devy (2002); Lobo (2002) and Yagnik and Sheth (2005). Data on Bhils sourced from Census of India (2001d).

Another unexpected finding is that literacy did not reduce violence and indeed possibly increased it. The impact of education in eroding ethnic prejudice has found immense cross-national empirical evidence in studies of race and prejudice. Of course, literacy indicates only a bare minimum of education.[39] Nevertheless, this finding accords with the vast qualitative literature that highlights the ethnocentric content of schooling since the BJP came to power in Gujarat in 1995. Comparisons have even been made with the educational systems of Nazi Germany and Hutu-dominated Rwanda (Walker-Keleher 2006; Spodek 2011). More broadly, recent research on less developed countries finds that increased human capital does not produce more secular attitudes; if anything, it strengthens ethnic identification (Friedman, Kremer, Miguel and Thornton 2011; Lange 2012).

Literacy can also be interpreted as a proxy for economic development (e.g. measures used in Wilkinson 2004; Wilkinson and Haid 2010). There is no indication, then, that development reduces violence. Economic deprivation, however, does increase it. The greater the proportion of people who worked for less than six months, and the higher the unemployment rate among young adults, the worse the violence. This finding suggests that where competition for jobs is more severe, Hindus are more likely to blame Muslims for their plight. Even if the urban middle classes take the lead in planning and coordinating violence, they often depend on a reserve of unemployed and underemployed people to do the actual killing—perpetrators are often paid in money, liquor, or kerosene (Tambiah 1990; Devy 2002; Nandy 2002; Shani 2007).

These findings provide further evidence for the BJP's crucial role in orchestrating the violence. This is not surprising, given the weight of qualitative evidence, and the

[39] In India, literacy and education are often seen as distinct from each other. Many certified as 'literate' in the census data are not functionally so; they are 'early literates' who are not proficient in the 3Rs. In Gujarat, 'early literacy' holds true largely for rural areas where poverty compels children to drop out of schools. See Kothari, Pandey and Chudgar (2005).

arguments of scholars like Brass and Wilkinson. What is less obvious, however, is that violence was actually lowest in constituencies or districts where the BJP had won a majority of voters in 1998. By implication, the party had the power to prevent as well as inflame violence. Violence was highest in constituencies or districts where the BJP could expect to face the most intense competition in the forthcoming election. The party apparently anticipated to benefit from the violence, because in July the Chief Minister resigned and dissolved the State Assembly in an attempt to precipitate an early election—nine months before elections were scheduled. Delay was imposed by the Chief Election Commissioner, and the election was held in December 2002.

Did violence actually help the BJP? Opinion polls conducted after the election indicated that a quarter of BJP voters were influenced by the riots and security issues rather than livelihood and development (Wilkinson and Haid 2010). This could be investigated systematically by investigating how BJP's vote share changed from 1998 to 2002. The unit of analysis is the district. While thousands of Muslims had not returned to their homes by December, they generally remained within the same district, and so electoral results should not be affected by the exodus of refugees. The independent variable is the total number of killings expressed as death rate per 1000 Muslim population.[40] Figure 2.5 shows a very strong positive correlation, with $r = .81$.[41] The regression coefficient predicts that moving from the median death rate (.023) to the 90th percentile (.600) would increase BJP vote by over 12 percentage points. One district, Panchmahals, had a much higher death rate than any other, but removing it barely weakens the strength of the association (illustrated by the broken line). The result is not altered by adding the variable for *karsevaks* who died at Godhra, which had no effect. In

[40] This total includes missing later declared dead.

[41] The coefficient of death rate has t-value = 6.6, $p < .001$; a quadratic term is not statistically significant. Alternatively, the death rate reduces the Congress party's vote share, but the effect is only half as large.

short, there is strong quantitative evidence that violence did in fact yield electoral rewards for the BJP.

One final effect of violence can be traced. There are many allegations that the state government rewarded police officials who had permitted violence, while punishing those who repressed it. This can be tested using an affidavit recently submitted by the former chief of the State Intelligence Bureau (Sreekumar 2010). He provides detailed information on police chiefs who were promoted or demoted in the aftermath of the violence.[42] This is used to construct an ordinal variable for 29 police districts: 6 with promotion, 15 with no action, and 8 with demotion. As above, the independent variable is the total number of killings expressed as death rate per Muslim population. Ordinal logistic regression reveals a strong association (p = .005). In a police district with no killings, the predicted probability of demotion is .43 and of promotion is .04. In a police district with a high death rate like Ahmedabad city (the third most violent), the predicted probabilities are .01 and .85 respectively.

6. Conclusion

The terrible violence that occurred in Gujarat in 2002 demands explanation, as one of the worst episodes of ethnic violence that has occurred under a democratic government. Although most observers argue that the state government was complicit—at least—in the killings, this does not explain why violence varied so widely across the state. Having compiled detailed data on the number of killings in each town and in the rural portions of each district, a systematic investigation can be conducted to find which social, economic, and political factors were associated with violence. Findings provide an important corrective to studies that emphasise Scheduled Castes and Tribes as perpetrators of

[42] Information on junior police officers and other government officials is excluded from the analysis.

violence, because places with a higher proportion of these groups tended to have fewer killings. Violence increased with demographic threat, as indicated by the size of the Muslim population and the rate of Muslim in-migration. Violence also increased with the proportion of young people and with economic deprivation, specifically underemployment and youth unemployment. Places with higher literacy, however, were no less prone to violence. Above all, the findings reiterate the importance of political elites, while uncovering an implicit logic behind the BJP's political strategy. The party did not foment violence in places where it had sufficient support to win the forthcoming election. Muslims were most vulnerable where the BJP had previously won around 33-36% of the vote, indicating that the party had to attract more voters to secure victory at the next election. Analysis also demonstrates that violence did indeed boost the BJP's vote in the subsequent election.

These findings pertain to a particular context, of course. This context included an unusually troubled history of Hindu-Muslim relations, a governing party which could gain from accentuating ethnic identity, and a horrific triggering incident. These particularities must be taken into account when applying the findings to other Indian states and to other democratic polities. Future investigations need to consider analysis of the magnitude of violence rather than simply the occurrence of a riot. While the literature emphasises how violence can be triggered by trivial incidents (as in 1969 in Ahmedabad city), not all cases conform to this pattern. Another example is the massacre of Sikhs in 1984 following the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister by Sikh bodyguards. In such cases it is crucial to take into account, as attempted here, how the emotional impact of the precipitating event varied across space.

Future research should analyse more subtle social indicators. One obvious task is to measure the strength of associational ties between Hindus and Muslims. Another is to

incorporate some of the intricacies of caste identities, beyond the simple classification of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. It is notable that the peninsular region of Gujarat—Saurashtra—did not witness large-scale violence in 2002. Before 1948, this region was a mosaic of princely states dominated by Rajput families. They constructed political alliances that excluded upper-caste Hindus (Vaniyas and Brahmins) but often extended to powerful Muslim families, formerly Mughal nobles (Tambs-Lyche 2010). It can be conjectured that this historical legacy helped protect Muslims from violence in areas with a substantial presence of Rajputs. This seems true for Bhavnagar district where the Mahyavanshis, a Rajput subcaste notified as a Scheduled Caste, is found to dominate household industries. A horizontal alliance between Rajputs and Muslims can be speculated in this case. Future research could test this conjecture by mapping the detailed caste classifications provided by the 1931 Census (or the 2011 Census, when it becomes available).

In the rest of the thesis, the analysis of spatial variation in violence is conducted at the local level. Ahmedabad is treated here as a single observation, with one of the highest rates of killing. Across the city, however, there was enormous variation among neighbourhoods. In chapters 4, 5 and 6 the different levels of violence in three intermixed neighbourhoods in Ahmedabad are explained.[43] All neighbourhoods were located in the same electoral ward thus holding the political configuration of the fieldsites constant – an important aspect given the political logic that the macroanalyses in this chapter supports.

[43] Breman's studies (e.g. Breman 2004) of the breakdown of labour hierarchy and the role of retrenched mill workers in Hindu-Muslim violence in Ahmedabad city provide good reason for understanding local dynamics.

Appendix for Chapter 2

Table 2.1: Killings in Gujarat, 2002

Location	*Victims*	*per 1000 Muslims*
Ahmadabad (Ahmadabad)	279	.50
Vadodara (Vadodara)	49	.31
Ode (Anand)	27	23.87
Visnagar (Mehsana)	18	2.98
Himmatnagar (Sabarkantha)	12	1.24
Kadi (Mehsana)	5	.37
Radhanpur (Patan)	4	.43
Petlad (Anand)	4	.25
Modasa (Sabarkantha)	4	.15
Anand (Anand)	4	.15
Godhra (Panchmahals)	4	.07
Rajkot (Rajkot)	4	.05
Prantij (Sabarkantha)	3	.58
Mahemdabad (Kheda)	3	.39
Mahudha (Kheda)	3	.37
Viramgam (Ahmadabad)	3	.22
Junagadh (Junagadh)	3	.07
Bhavnagar (Bhavnagar)	3	.05
Surat (Surat)	3	.01
Santrampur (Panchmahals)	2	.37
Deesa (Banaskantha)	2	.24
Borsad (Anand)	2	.10
Bharuch (Bharuch)	2	.04
Chiloda (Gandhinagar)	1	4.90
Bodeli (Vadodara)	1	.44
Umreth (Anand)	1	.17
Rajpipla (Narmada)	1	.16
Chhota Udepur (Vadodara)	1	.12
Gandhinagar (Gandhinagar)	1	.11
Mehsana (Mehsana)	1	.10
Una (Junagadh)	1	.07
Kapadvanj (Kheda)	1	.06
Anklesvar (Bharuch)	1	.05
Khambhat (Anand)	1	.05
Subtotal: towns	454	.17
Rural Panchmahals	164	4.85
Rural Mehsana	40	.56
Rural Kheda	30	.26
Rural Dahod	23	2.17
Rural Banaskantha	12	.10
Rural Sabarkantha	10	.15
Rural Vadodara	8	.07
Rural Gandhinagar	6	.30
Rural Ahmadabad	5	.09
Rural Bhavnagar	1	.03
Rural Patan	1	.01
Rural Anand	1	.01
Subtotal: rural areas	301	.16
Total	755	.16

Table 2.2: Measures of violence in Gujarat, 2002

Measure	*Source*	*Total*	*Correlation by district (per Muslim population)*
(1) Killings	*Times of India*	756	1.00
(2) Killings plus subsequent missing	*Times of India*	984	.99
(3) Killings	Concerned Citizens' Tribunal	798	.88
(4) Muslims killed	State Intelligence Bureau	704	.92 [a]
(5) Arson to houses and shops	State Intelligence Bureau	23,060	.73 [a]
(6) Killings in 1990-93	Varshney and Wilkinson 2006	539	.14 [b]

[a] Correlation across 29 police districts, excluding Westpol Vadodara

[b] Muslim population in 2001 used as denominator

Table 2.3: Descriptive statistics

	Rural areas (N = 25)				*Towns (N = 191)*			
Variable	*min*	*mean*	*s.d.*	*max*	*min*	*mean*	*s.d.*	*max*
Deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence	0	12	33	164	0	2	21	279
Muslim population	2,792	75,961	60,527	242,037	6	14,104	48,861	561,672
Muslims as % of population	0.7	5.9	5.1	21.8	0.7	16.9	13.9	88.2
Muslim males per 100 Muslim females	99.9	106.7	3.8	119.1	89.1	107.3	6.5	120.0
Literates as % of population aged 7 and over	41.4	61.5	7.6	72.7	32.3	77.6	8.7	93.2
Main workers as % of population	30.7	35.1	2.7	42.9	22.4	31.0	5.3	72.4
Marginal workers as % of population	8.6	12.2	3.4	21.1	0.0	3.0	2.3	16.7
Agricultural labourers as % of population	21.1	33.5	8.7	48.8	0.0	7.7	9.5	62.3
Cultivators as % of population	19.1	37.9	12.7	64.1	0.0	4.5	5.4	28.2
Workers in household industry as % of population	0.9	1.8	1.1	5.6	0.0	3.0	3.9	37.7
Unemployed as % of population aged 15-24	8.0	13.1	2.9	21.0	5.7	13.4	2.7	19.5
Aged 15-24 as % of population aged 15 and over	25.7	28.9	1.9	31.4	27.5	30.1	1.3	32.5
Scheduled Castes as % of population	0.5	6.6	3.5	11.9	0.0	7.1	4.5	29.9
Scheduled Tribes as % of population	0.1	24.5	31.7	93.8	0.0	6.0	9.6	47.9
BJP % of vote in district	27.6	42.8	8.4	58.9	27.6	44.6	7.0	58.9
BJP % of vote in constituency	27.6	41.3	8.5	61.2	7.3	44.6	11.6	73.4
BJP member in constituency	0.0	0.6	0.3	1.0	0.0	0.7	0.5	1.0
Deaths at Godhra per million Hindus in district	0.0	0.7	1.7	5.7	0.0	0.8	1.7	5.7

Table 2.4: Correlation matrix

Variable	*Correlations*																			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)
(1) Deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence																				
(2) Muslim population, logged	.23																			
(3) Muslims as % of population	-.07	.35																		
(4) Muslim males per 100 Muslim females	.05	-.28	-.32																	
(5) Literates as % of population aged 7 and over	-.03	-.19	-.06	.19																
(6) Scheduled Castes as % of population	.01	.09	-.06	-.14	-.09															
(7) Scheduled Tribes as % of population	.03	.01	-.17	.17	-.12	-.29														
(8) Main workers as % of population	.00	-.22	-.41	.38	-.08	-.32	.14													
(9) Marginal workers as % of population	.16	.28	-.21	-.04	-.54	-.10	.40	.08												
(10) Agricultural labourers as % of population	.04	.23	-.20	-.08	-.40	-.08	.29	.20	.76											
(11) Cultivators as % of population	.15	.31	-.26	-.07	-.55	-.03	.36	.19	.84	.72										
(12) Household-industry workers as % of population	-.03	.00	.10	-.13	-.09	.03	-.11	-.18	.06	-.08	-.09									
(13) Unemployed aged 15-24 as % of population aged 15-24	.10	-.04	.00	-.02	-.01	.09	.03	-.24	.12	-.01	.00	-.03								
(14) Aged 15-24 as % of population aged 15 and over	-.08	-.07	.09	-.18	-.08	.26	-.41	-.18	-.25	-.25	-.18	.10	-.31							
(15) Town	-.14	-.43	.26	.03	.52	.04	-.39	-.26	-.77	-.66	-.85	.10	.04	.29						
(16) BJP % of vote in district	-.09	-.01	-.09	-.09	-.09	.16	-.24	.15	-.22	-.12	-.10	.10	-.35	.20	0.08					
(17) BJP % of vote in district, squared	-.08	-.01	-.08	-.10	-.09	.15	-.22	.14	-.21	-.11	-.09	.10	-.35	.19	.07	1.00				
(18) BJP % of vote in constituency	-.03	-.06	-.18	.08	.07	.07	-.20	.08	-.22	-.23	-.13	.06	-.06	.03	.10	.52	.52			
(19) BJP % of vote in constituency, squared	-.03	-.08	-.18	.06	.08	.05	-.21	.08	-.21	-.22	-.14	.06	-.05	.04	.12	.50	.51	.97		
(20) BJP member in constituency	-.05	-.02	-.12	.08	.02	.03	-.22	.07	-.16	-.17	-.11	.05	-.10	.03	.08	.40	.39	.66	.63	
(21) Deaths at Godhra per million Hindus in district	.18	.05	.01	-.03	.11	.06	-.16	-.06	.09	.10	-.03	.03	.32	.03	.00	-.18	-.20	-.20	-.19	-.16

Table 2.5: Deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat's towns and rural areas, 2002 (N=216)

Negative binomial regression		**1**			**2**			**3**	
	irr	se	p	irr	se	p	irr	se	p
Muslim population, logged	3.56	.56	.00 ***	4.32	.72	.00 ***	4.16	.72	.00 ***
Muslims as % of population	1.01	.02	.80	.98	.02	.34	.99	.02	.68
Muslim males per 100 Muslim females	1.18	.07	.00 **	1.16	.06	.00 **	1.15	.06	.01 *
Literates as % of population aged 7 and over	1.11	.04	.01 **	1.06	.03	.05 *	1.10	.04	.01 **
Main workers as % of population	.88	.09	.24	.90	.08	.26	.87	.09	.19
Marginal workers as % of population	1.60	.30	.01 *	1.51	.26	.02 *	1.59	.29	.01 *
Agricultural labourers as % of population	.99	.02	.79	1.00	.02	.90	.99	.02	.79
Cultivators as % of population	1.04	.05	.40	1.02	.05	.62	1.04	.05	.44
Household-industry workers as % of population	.80	.11	.09	.82	.08	.05 *	.76	.08	.01 *
Unemployed as % of population aged 15-24	1.16	.10	.09	1.20	.11	.06	1.15	.10	.11
Aged 15-24 as % of population aged 15 and over	1.25	.26	.27	1.35	.23	.07	1.33	.26	.14
Scheduled Castes as % of population	.87	.06	.03 *	.89	.08	.20	.83	.05	.00 **
Scheduled Tribes as % of population	.93	.02	.00 ***	.93	.02	.00 ***	.93	.02	.00 ***
Town	9.16	10.87	.06	17.05	17.87	.01 **	16.31	17.66	.01 **
BJP % of vote in district				2.41	.57	.00 ***			
BJP % of vote in district, squared				.99	.00	.00 ***			
BJP % of vote in constituency							1.19	.07	.00 **
BJP % of vote in constituency, squared							1.00	.00	.00 ***
alpha (coefficient)	3.42	.76		2.50	.52		3.09	.70	
AIC corrected		433.2			416.9			429.6	

irr: incidence-rate ratio; se: robust standard error (adjusted for clustering by district)

p: p-value (two-tailed), *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05

Table 2.6: Deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat's towns and rural areas, 2002 (N=216)

Negative binomial regression	4			5			6		
	irr	se	p	irr	se	p	irr	se	p
Muslim population, logged	4.46	.82	.00 ***	3.73	.61	.00 ***	3.55	.53	.00 ***
Muslims as % of population	.97	.02	.09	.96	.02	.05 *	.95	.02	.01 **
Muslim males per 100 Muslim females	1.17	.05	.00 ***	1.17	.05	.00 ***	1.19	.05	.00 ***
Literates as % of population aged 7 and over	1.06	.03	.08	1.02	.03	.41			
Main workers as % of population	.85	.09	.13	.83	.08	.07	.75	.08	.00 **
Marginal workers as % of population	1.47	.24	.02 *	1.25	.21	.18	1.15	.05	.00 **
Agricultural labourers as % of population	.98	.02	.32	.98	.02	.14			
Cultivators as % of population	1.02	.05	.75	1.04	.06	.51			
Household-industry workers as % of population	.82	.09	.07	.82	.09	.07	.82	.08	.04 *
Unemployed as % of population aged 15-24	1.19	.11	.06	1.07	.08	.39			
Aged 15-24 as % of population aged 15 and over	1.37	.15	.00 **	1.15	.16	.32			
Scheduled Castes as % of population	.84	.07	.05 *	.81	.06	.00 **	.78	.05	.00 ***
Scheduled Tribes as % of population	.92	.02	.00 ***	.94	.02	.00 ***	.94	.01	.00 ***
Town	7.41	7.30	.04 *	4.05	4.11	.17			
BJP % of vote in district	3.14	.60	.00 ***	2.22	.53	.00 ***	1.79	.46	.02 *
BJP % of vote in district, squared	.98	.00	.00 ***	.99	.00	.00 ***	.99	.00	.01 **
BJP Member in constituency	.27	.15	.02 *	.39	.21	.07	.38	.18	.04 *
Deaths at Godhra per million Hindus in district				1.39	.13	.00 ***	1.51	.11	.00 ***
alpha (coefficient)	2.52	.52		2.12	.45		2.40	.48	
AIC corrected		414.5			410.3			400.0	

irr: incidence-rate ratio; se: robust standard error (adjusted for clustering by district)

p: p-value (two-tailed), *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05

Figure 2.1: Distribution of BJP vote

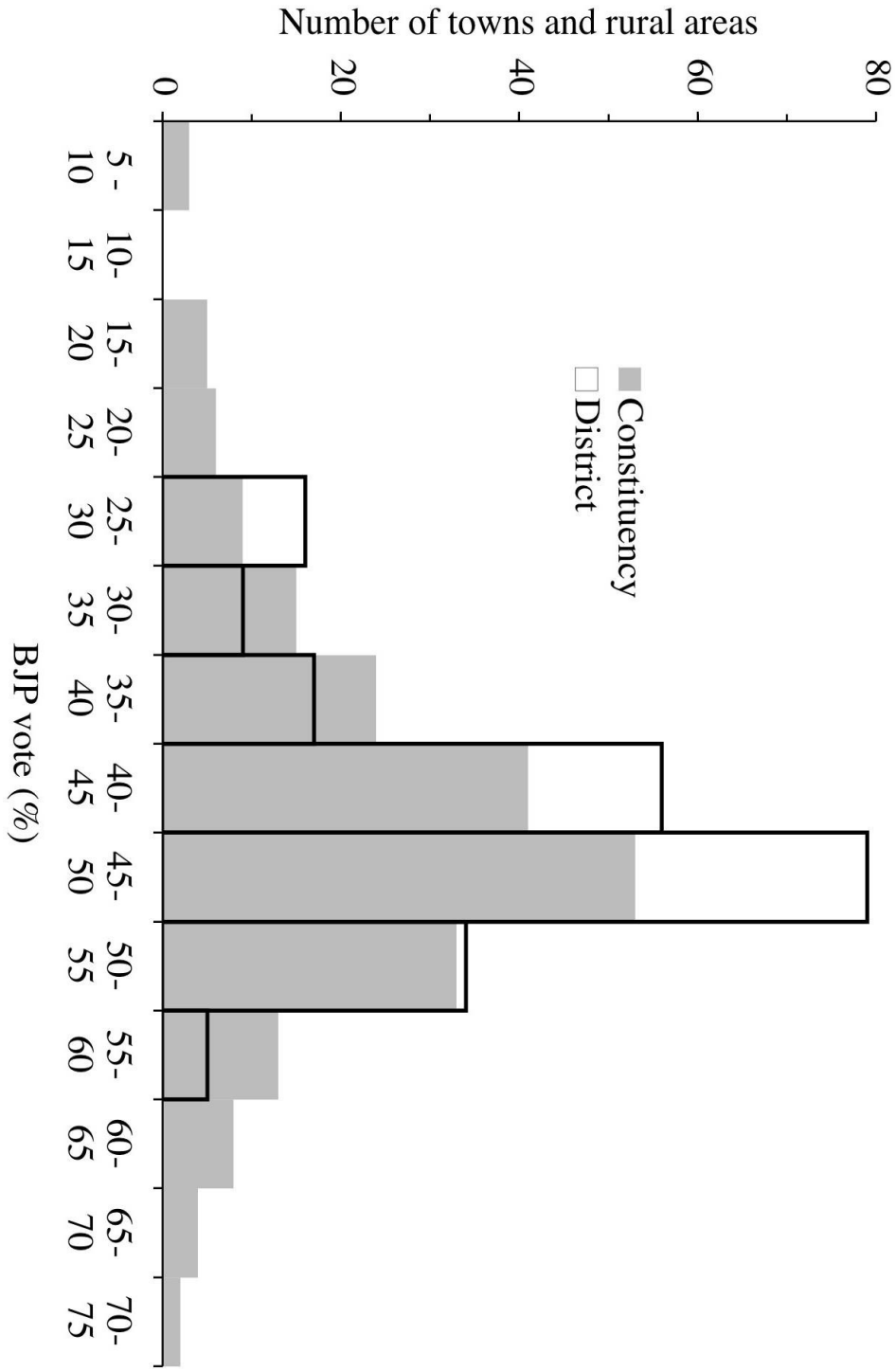


Figure 2.2: Association between BJP vote and killings (Model 2)

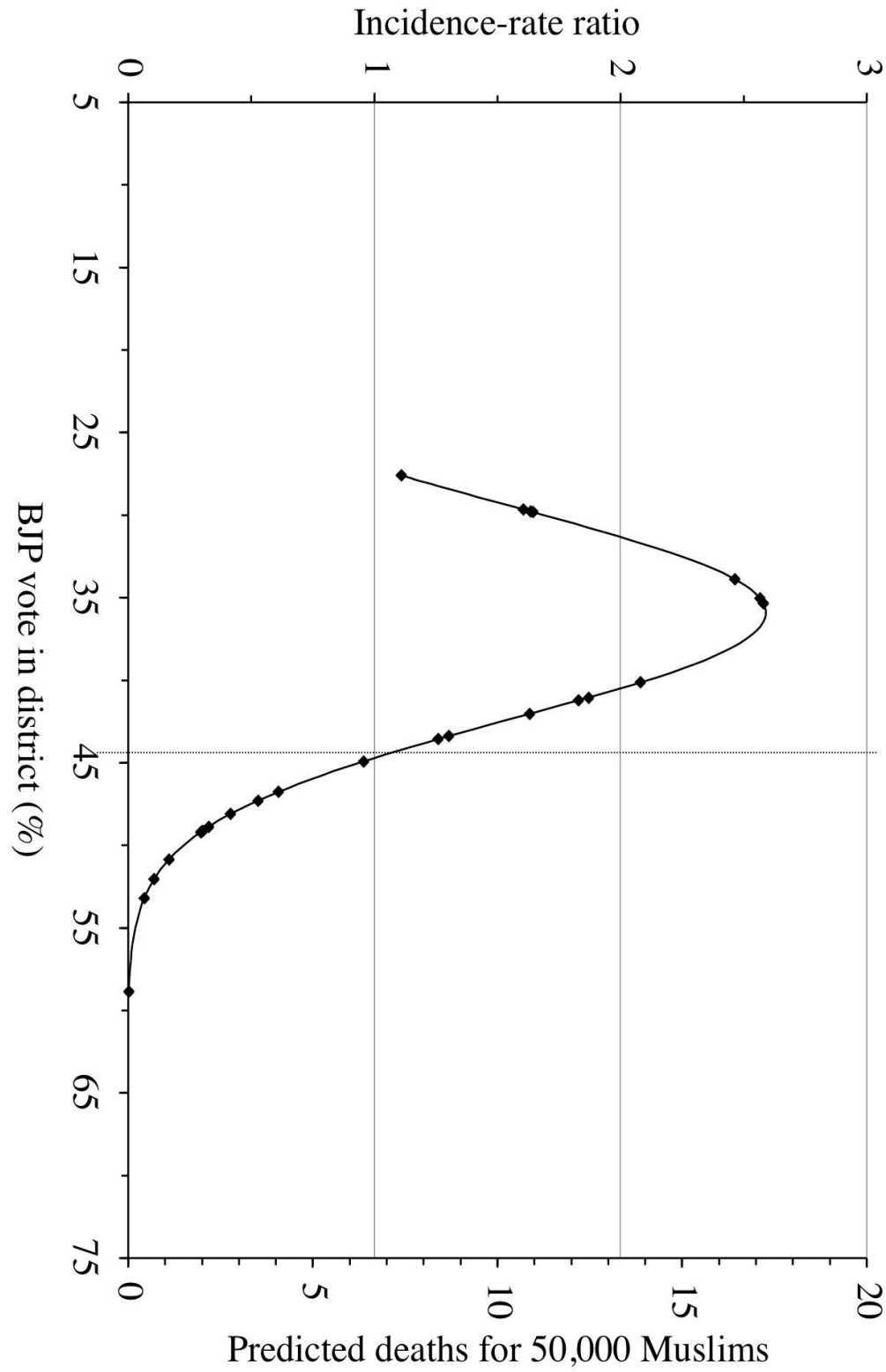


Figure 2.3: Association between BJP vote and killings (Model 3)

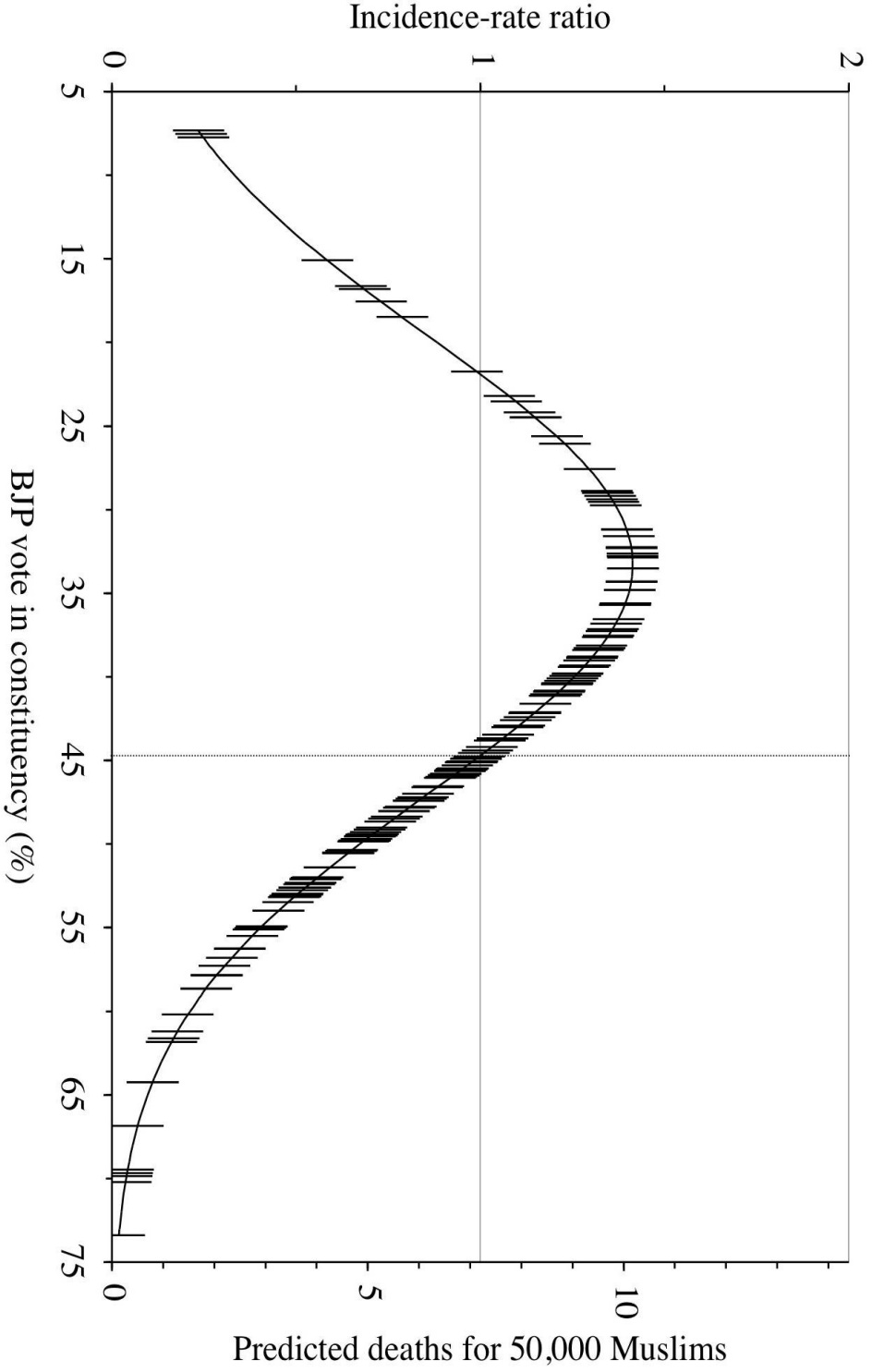


Figure 2.4: Association between BJP vote and killings (Model 5)

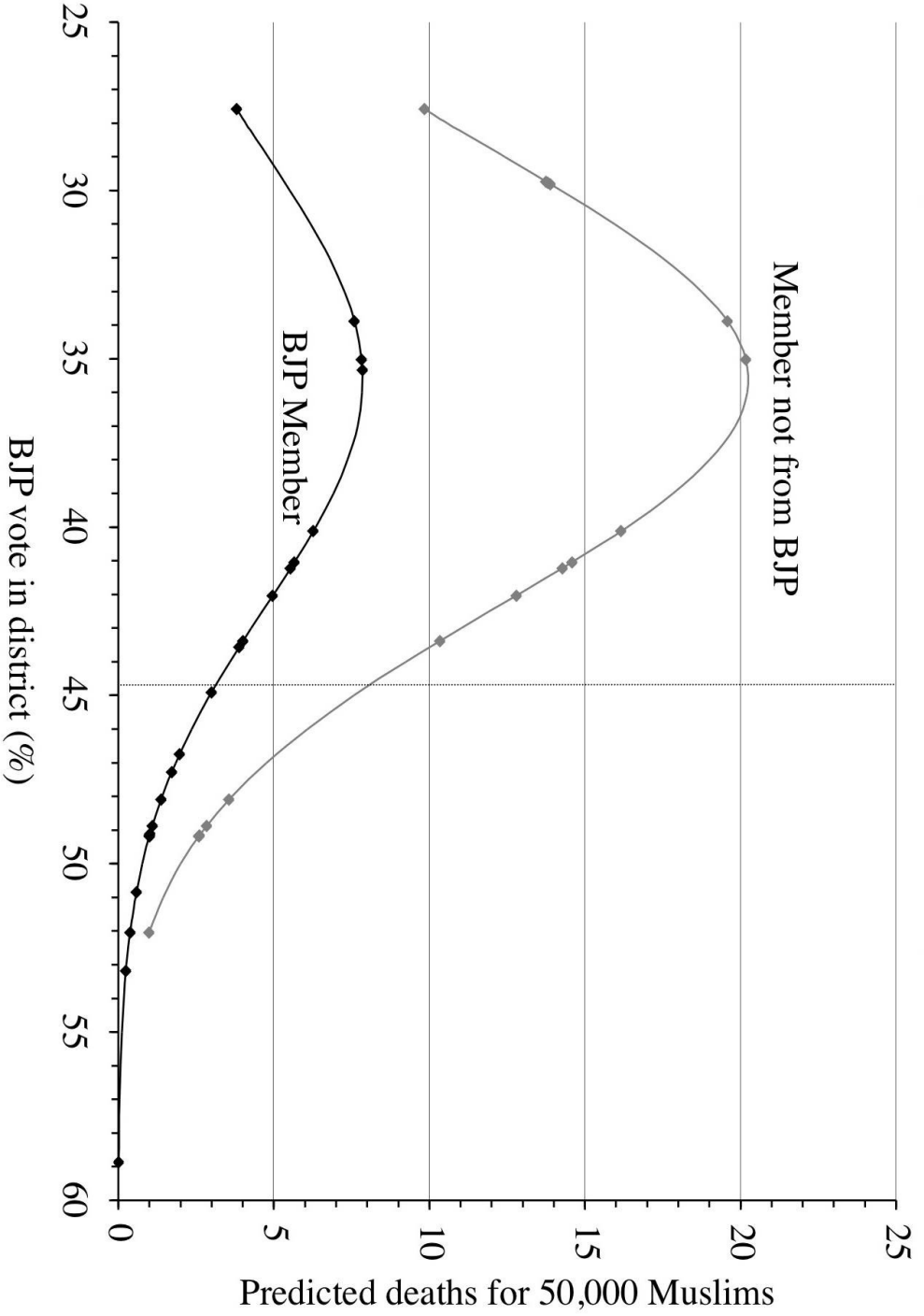
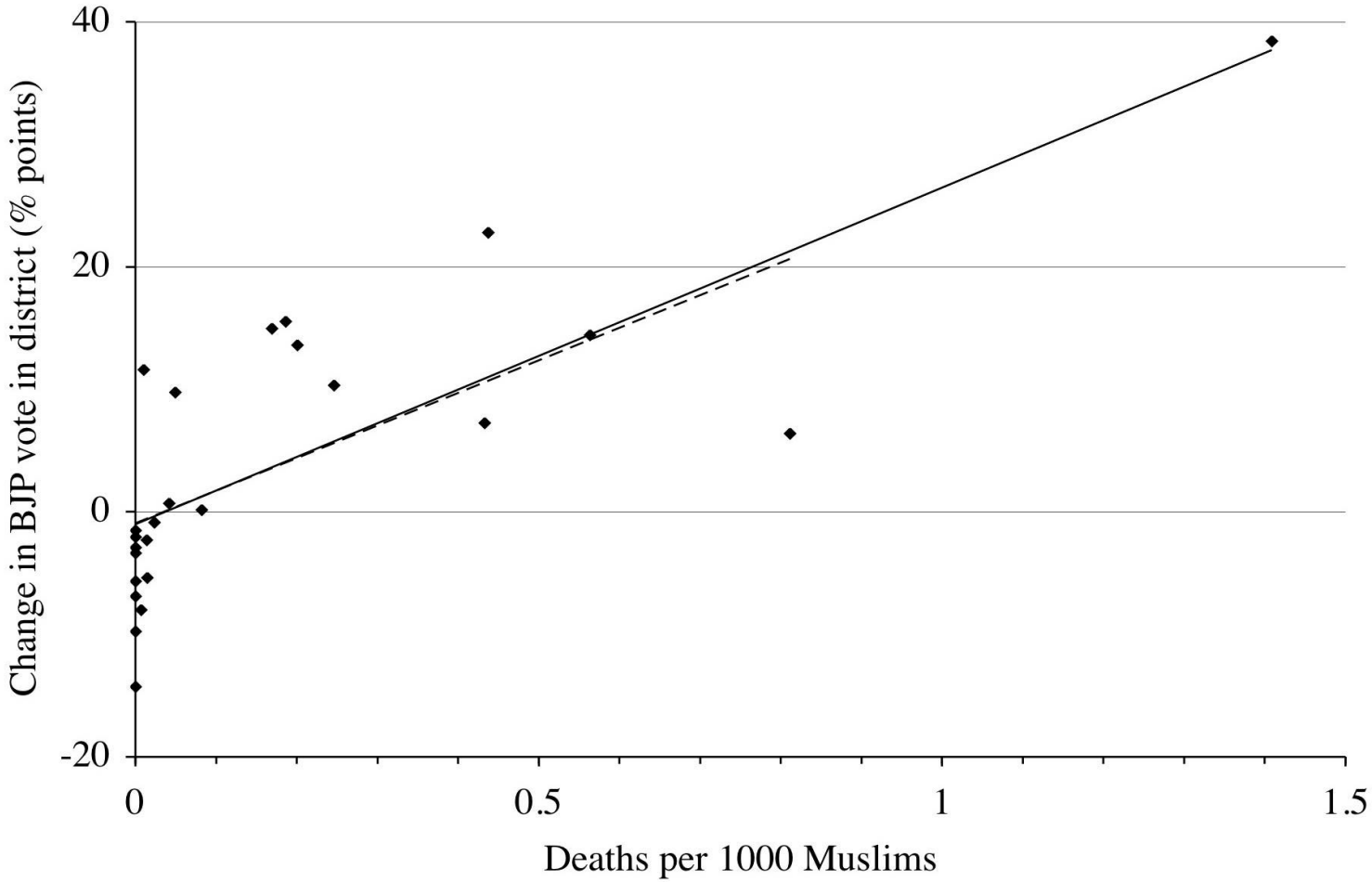


Figure 2.5: Association between killings and change in BJP vote, 1998 to 2002



CHAPTER 3

Ahmedabad: A Profile and Methodological Challenges in Ethnography

1. Introduction

Findings from macroanalyses of towns and rural areas in Gujarat indicated violence in 2002 being a product of electoral logic and economic deprivation. The findings provide a clue to the broader, structural context of why violence varied over towns, opening up further areas of research that can link structural and community-level measures to provide a microspatial explanation of variation in the violence.

This chapter discusses three aspects. First, it provides a brief socio-political history of Ahmedabad city where ethnographic data was collected. This is followed by a description of the three neighbourhoods in Behrampura municipal ward which form the primary fieldsites. I then discuss reasons for preferring ethnography over quantitative analysis, wherein tentative statistical analysis of variation in violence across 43 municipal wards of Ahmedabad is discussed. Finally, my own experiences as a field researcher in Ahmedabad are drawn out – challenges encountered in eliciting information and building trustworthiness are recounted followed by measures taken to circumvent as far as possible the impromptu and standard dilemmas of ethics and methods singular to conflict zones.

2. Ahmedabad: The Business capital of Gujarat

Sultan Ahmed Shah, a scion of the Delhi Sultanate, laid the foundation of a new capital city in the vicinity of the ancient town of Asawal in 1411. He named it Ahmedabad, a fortified 'walled city' of 12 gates and over 6,000 battlements.

Ahmedabad's distinct advantage over the old capital town of Patan was its strategic connectivity through shorter routes with two important port cities, Cambay and Bharuch (Soundara Rajan 1980; Yagnik and Sheth 2011). The incursions made by the Mughals in the 16th century brought Ahmedabad at the forefront of economic development. Prospects of trade attracted the English East India Company to the city in 1615. In 1861, the first textile mill was established in Ahmedabad and by the early 20th century the textile industry had reached its pinnacle. The financial sustenance that Ahmedabad and its citizens could provide had stimulated Gandhi to make the city his home in 1915 until 1930 (Spodek 2011). A few years after Gujarat's secession from Bombay in 1960, Ahmedabad was replaced by Gandhinagar, a town 30 kilometres to the north on the river Sabarmati, as the capital of Gujarat. Ahmedabad continued to be seen as the business capital of the state. By 1961, one-third of the city residents were migrants from Indian states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, working as labourers in the flourishing textile industry. However, the mid-60s also pronounced the beginning of the decline of the textile mills and rising unemployment. By the 1980s the mills had collapsed as a result of domestic restructuring of the textile industry in India, creating a bulk of unemployed, skilled workmen – factors that contributed to the disintegration of interethnic associational ties formed in the mill industry between Hindu and Muslim workmen and a spurt in Hindu-Muslim rioting (Varshney 2002; Breman 2004).

The collapse of the textile industry in the 1980s did not halt the economic growth and urbanisation of Ahmedabad. The entrepreneurial spirit of the city was reflected in the upsurge of pharmaceutical, manufacturing and chemical industries. In 2001, the city was seventh in the country in terms of economic growth. From 25 square kilometres in Gandhi's day Ahmedabad had grown to 190 square kilometres. At around 5 million, its population had increased three-fold from what it was in the mid-1960s (Spodek 2011).

What transformed in the new millennium was the decline of the walled city area as a political and industrial centre as it was replaced by the upscale western suburbia. While the civic governance of Ahmedabad's city limits was under the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), the new western suburbs came under the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority (AUDA) formed in 1978. In 2001, 43 municipal wards – 80% of the city – were governed by the AMC and 20 *nagarpalikas* (municipalities) by AUDA. Unlike the dominance of the BJP in the state since 1995, the Congress intermittently came to power in the AMC as it was at the time of the violence in 2002.

2.1. Spatial segregation

A unique architectural aspect of Ahmedabad's walled city is the *pol*—a neighbourhood of tightly packed houses along narrow lanes. Although contiguous and proximate the *pols* were spatially segregated, with different Hindu caste groups residing in distinct *pol* neighbourhoods; Muslims resided in separate homogenous *pols* or *mohallas*. The textile industry had its own caste-based hierarchy. Dalits spun cloth, never weaved because when threads broke during weaving they had to be joined with saliva which once handled by Dalits would not be touched by other castes (Yagnik and Sheth 2011). Weaving departments were handled mainly by Muslims and lower peasant caste Patidars. Yet, Dalit Hindu and Muslim mill workers lived in contiguous *chaalis* or chawls (densely packed one-room houses) in the eastern fringes of the city, segregated from Hindus from other castes. The rise in migrant population and the development of the upper-class western suburbia carved the city into three different segments spatially: the original walled city – the nucleus – comprised the traditional markets and segregated *pols* of mainly Dalit Hindus and Muslims; the133,000 mill workers of the once prolific textile industry came to form the 'eastern labour belt' on the outskirts; the extension of

the city towards the west was dominated by upper-caste and upper-class Hindus. Unlike the relatively higher intermixing in the AMC areas (moving from the walled city outward, the intermixing decreased), AUDA areas were, almost exclusively, Hindu. Among the main exceptions was the Juhapura neighbourhood, established in 1973 to rehabilitate flood victims but became a refuge for Muslim riot evacuees after the 1985 violence (Jaffrelot and Thomas 2012). With each subsequent riot refugees to Juhapura increased as Muslims from the walled city, eastern Ahmedabad and also the inhabitants of the isolated Muslim neighbourhoods in the west took refuge there. By 2001, its population was around 200,000 (Spodek 2011; Jaffrelot and Thomas 2012).[44] Government laws, such as the Gujarat Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provision for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from Premises in Disturbed Areas Act, 1991 (also known as Disturbed Areas Act), which sought to prevent distress sale of properties, and subsequent religious segregation, could be circumvented using the power of attorney. One consequence of spatial segregation was the economic segregation of Muslims because Muslim ghettos were 'red-lined' as unsound investment prospects. Muslims, therefore, were denied housing loans driving rents further upwards (Rajagopal 2010).

2.2. History of ethnic and caste violence

Amid the tribulations of economic prosperity Ahmedabad has consistently jostled with some of the most horrific episodes of Hindu-Muslim violence. Since Partition, small and big incidents of Hindu-Muslim violence occurred in every decade. In the period 1950 to 1995 Ahmedabad and its neighbour Vadodara accounted for nearly 80% of the total

[44] Only an estimate can be reached about Juhapura's population because 'Juhapura' as a neighbourhood officially did not exist in 2001. It was a conglomerate of local villages whose total population in the census was around 100,000.

deaths in Gujarat (Varshney 2002). As if inured to violence, the people of Ahmedabad saw riots as a "natural" additive to economic prosperity, evident from Kodnani's reference to Hindu-Muslim violence being part of Gujarat's *prakruti* (chapter 2). The spatial segregation of the city deepened after every episode of violence, with the intermixed areas in the walled city and eastern Ahmedabad bearing the brunt of attacks. To illustrate, it was not uncommon for a schoolchild living in the urbanised AUDA areas to wish for a Hindu-Muslim riot to break out, for it would mean a day off from school. If lucky, the riot would last more than a day and so would the school break.[45] The scenario was quite different for a schoolchild living in the eastern labour areas. Unlike in the western suburbs, images of a riot had etched deep into the minds of people here. Riots were considered endemic in these parts ever since the first major riot broke out in 1969. It claimed around 600 lives in five days. The roots of the violence lay in a trivial triggering event: a herd of cows had disrupted a Muslim *urs* (religious gathering) near the Jagannath Temple in Jamalpur ward of Ahmedabad, resulting in an altercation between the Hindu *sadhus* (priests) of the temple and the Muslim devotees. Within hours a protest meeting was called by the Hindu priests and a day later violence erupted. The first attacks took place in Behrampura and Jamalpur wards in the walled city, later spreading to the eastern mill areas (Shah 1970). Apart from the economic crisis of the mill industry the political situation of the day bore heavily on the events preceding the violence. The Congress of the 1960s under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had found strong appeal with the Muslims, the working class and backward classes among Hindus and the left-wing political groups. A strong opposition comprising the Hindu nationalist BJS (later the BJP), the upper-caste Swatantra Party and the party formed by Indira's dissidents, the Congress (Organization) raised divisive ethnic issues which would appeal to Hindu

[45] This is based on conversations I had with parents of school children in 2001.

voters. The rise of the Hindu nationalist groups had gained strength following the assassination of Gandhi in 1948 by RSS member Nathuram Godse. "*Ogan-sittair*" (sixty-nine) as it colloquially is called today was the beginning of the transformation of the city's spatial character. The Sabarmati river became a natural border separating "Hindu Ahmedabad" (western Ahmedabad) from "Muslim Ahmedabad" (walled city and eastern labour areas).

The 1980s strengthened Ahmedabad's reputation as a hub of ethnic violence, with rioting in 1981, 1985 and 1986. This was a period also riven with student unrest. The Navnirman Movement of 1974 had begun in student hostels in protest of rising food bills and went on to become an all-Gujarat struggle, eventually compelling Gujarat chief minister Chimanbhai Patel of the Congress to resign. The movement had strengthened the caste divides among Hindus which culminated in anti-reservation movements by upper-caste Hindus in the 1980s. It is notable that a significant proportion of students in the Navnirman and anti-reservations protests belonged to the RSS and its affiliated young wings (Yagnik and Sheth 2011). The anti-reservation violence of 1985 suddenly took an ethnic turn in a month. Conflicting caste dynamics were seen as the principal cause, heightened by the political context of backward caste reservations (Spodek 1989). Localised factors also played a role in the violence, such as the nexus of the illegal liquor trade and also slumlords and land developers.[46] By then, the BJP had realised that in order to increase its electoral base it needed to widen its social base by pooling its Hindu votes. Political Hindutva and its electoral rewards thus established base in Ahmedabad. The affiliates in the Sangh Parivar began a series of *yatras* (mobilisation tours) to mobilise upper-caste and backward caste Hindus. The Gangajal or Ekatmata *yatra* in

[46] In the 1980s, about 83% of slum dwellers belonged to lower and backward Hindu communities and 15% were Muslims (Shani 2007). Slum dwellers that paid rent for a long period of time acquired legal rights over the land, and the slumlords were restricted from removing the residents. Riots were seen as one means of vacating the slum lands (Engineer 2003).

1983 was followed by Ram-Janki *dharm yatra* in 1989 which set the tone for the Ayodhya temple campaign in the 1990s. Indeed, the BJP chose to officially begin the Ayodhya temple campaign from the city of Somnath in Gujarat in September 1990. The temple of Somnath represented the 10th century incursions of the Muslim invader Mahmud Ghazni, strategically reviving memories of Muslim aggression. Nearly 200 people were killed in Ahmedabad in the period September 1990 to January 1993 in country-wide violence that escalated after the demolition of the Babri Mosque (Varshney and Wilkinson 2006).

2.3. Violence in 2002

Godhra town, where the Sabarmati Express train was set alight leading to the death of 59 Hindus, was 160 kilometres away from Ahmedabad. Until 2002, the major waves of violence in Ahmedabad were precipitated because of either national-level incidents, such as in 1969 and 1990, or generated out of caste conflicts, as in the 1980s. The death of Hindus in the train was by far the trigger of the greatest magnitude.

As discussed in chapter 1, on February 28 the government brought the 59 corpses of Hindu *karsevaks* burnt alive in the train to Ahmedabad railway station. Testimonies to the inquiry commission investigating the Godhra train incident suggest that the government had initially decided to take the burnt coach itself with the bodies to Ahmedabad. Following protestation by the Godhra collector that the incident was an accident, the corpses were instead taken by road (Sreekumar 2010). Violence began in the city within twenty-four hours; 174 people were killed in the first three days of violence. The eastern labour areas – predominantly Naroda Road and Asarwa municipal wards – witnessed the most brutal massacres. Muslims were targeted irrespective of class. Retired judge of the state high court Akbar Divecha's house in one of the Muslim

neighbourhoods in an affluent part of the AMC-governed city was vandalised; he has since lived in Juhapura. A former Congress MP (member of Parliament), Ahsan Jafri, was killed and dismembered outside his residence in Asarwa on February 28; his desperate phone calls to the city police commissioner yielded no help. The case continues in Indian courts.

Orchestration of the violence was immaculate. Keshavram (Keka) Shastri, the late founder and president of the VHP said in an interview: "We prepared a list of shops owned by Muslims on the morning of February 28… It had to be done. We were terribly angry" (Dayal 2002). Average membership of the RSS *shakhas* (local branches) in Ahmedabad rose from 12 in the months preceding the violence to 40 by April 2002; special *shakhas* were opened for college students (*Economic Times*, 9 April 2002). Violence extended to economic and educational boycott of Muslims as upper-class Hindu homes in western Ahmedabad became accustomed to receiving anti-Muslim propaganda leaflets along with their regular post by the middle of 2002. Passive resistance to violence was indicative not only of a highly communalised Gujarati Hindu society but also of the fear of upsetting the BJP that patronised much of the upper-class and upper-caste Hindus. Much of the violence that occurred in AUDA areas was on the border separating Juhapura from the Hindu-dominated neighbourhood of Vejalpur. A new Muslim neighbourhood of riot evacuees emerged in the eastern labour areas during the violence, known as Bombay Hotel. Unlike Juhapura where the affluent intermixed with the middle and working classes, Bombay Hotel was a slum neighbourhood of former mill workers which grew to hold about 2,500 houses by 2003 (Spodek 2011).

3. Quantitative analysis for 43 municipal wards

Data and Method: The unavailability of ward-level data on population distribution by religion limited the scope of statistical analysis. Conducting a survey to collect data on caste and religion was ill-advised for the risk it entailed for the researcher as well as the respondents because important riot cases were under investigation at the time, witness subjugation was common and few had been convicted of riot offences. Although the findings of the quantitative analysis are tentative, they provided me with initial hypotheses to conduct my field research.

To estimate ward-level data on religious groups, the initial proposition was to use random samples from electoral rolls from the Election Commission of India in February 2002, prior to the Godhra train incident. Religion could then be codified from the surnames and names of electors. But this was not possible. Both the central and state election commissions confirmed to me that old electoral rolls are destroyed or replaced with every fresh count conducted. I therefore resorted to the informed judgement of three people in Ahmedabad city – two journalists (AMC beat reporters) and a senior administrator from the AMC. Each was given a form with the list of 43 wards and three columns, namely 'Hindu', 'Muslim' and 'Mixed'. The objective was to mark the column using their occupational judgement with regard to the religious group that they perceived to be in the majority in that ward when the violence occurred. The journalists used their own sources in the AMC to confirm their input, in case of doubt. The modal value was used in each case; where there was none across the three forms, I spoke with the municipal corporator[47] of the respective ward to confirm.[48]

[47] Municipal councillors in Indian cities are frequently referred to as municipal 'corporators'.

[48] This happened in the case of ward number 4, Shahpur.

Data on prior municipal elections of 2000 was obtained from the AMC's election office. As per convention, elections were contested for three seats per ward totalling to 129 seats for 43 municipal wards. Three variables were constructed to capture two phenomena: the first to examine whether greater electoral support for the BJP was associated with higher Muslim deaths. This was measured using the BJP's vote percentage per ward ('BJPpct'). The effect of the presence of a BJP municipal corporator in the ward on killings was measured in two ways: as a binary variable measuring whether the BJP won or lost in the ward (seats>0) and the number of seats won by the BJP (0 to 3) ('BJPwin').

The municipal ward was the unit of analysis and the number of killings was the dependent variable. The dataset of killings compiled from the *ToI's* Ahmedabad edition could be traced down to the level of the neighbourhood in the case of 263 deaths (of the total 279). Analysis was restricted to the 43 municipal wards. The 20 AUDA areas were excluded for two reasons. First, as indicated in Figure 1.2, 92.4% of the total traceable deaths in the city occurred within the 43 AMC wards yet there was significant variation in the violence across the wards. Twenty-two wards were completely peaceful. Second, the absence of Juhapura in the census or official documents made estimation of the population and socioeconomic indicators difficult.

The limited number of observations (N=43) meant that results would tend to highlight those variables which distinguish wards with significantly higher killings, in this case Naroda Road and Asarwa wards which experienced 62.5% of the total traceable killings. Excluding the two wards as outliers would further reduce the degrees of freedom. One solution was to use logistic regression which would differentiate between wards with no killings (total 22) from wards with one or more killings. Conversely, the limitation of this was the failure to distinguish between the intensity of deaths. The approximation of

religious groups in wards was used to estimate the Muslim population in each ward. I describe the estimation method below. The variable was transformed by taking the logarithm. In view of literature on violence suggesting the participation of Scheduled Castes in urban areas and of Scheduled Tribes in rural areas, there was reason to believe that the measure for Tribes on its own would either be a weak or a spurious explanatory factor for violence. As the ST population in the 43 wards in 2001 ranged from 0.06% to 5.12% of total population in the wards it seemed reasonable to pool it with the population of SCs (ranging from 1.27% to 35.8% of total population in wards) to create a measure for a group most vulnerable to Hindutva and subsequent participation in violence.

Estimation of Muslim population in wards: To estimate each ward's Muslim population, it is necessary to estimate the fraction of Muslims in a predominantly Muslim ward, the fraction in a predominantly Hindu ward, and the fraction in a mixed ward. Let us denote these fractions as μ_M, μ_H, and μ_X. The most obvious estimates would be .95, .05, and .5, or perhaps .9, .1, and .5. Such estimates, however, would imply a total Muslim population in Ahmedabad that far exceeds the actual number. More formally, the fractions must satisfy the following constraint:

$$\hat{\mu}_M \sum P_M + \hat{\mu}_H \sum P_H + \hat{\mu}_X \sum P_X = M_C - \hat{M}_S$$

where M_C is the entire city's Muslim population, $\sum P_M$ is the total population of wards classified as predominantly Muslim, $\sum P_H$ is the total population of wards classified as predominantly Hindu, and $\sum P_X$ is the total population of wards classified as mixed, all known from the Census; M_S is the suburban Muslim population (outside the 43 wards), which must be estimated, along with the fractions of interest, μ. Estimating M_S as 100,000, the constraint is satisfied by $\mu_M = .8$, $\mu_H = .03$ and $\mu_X = .26$. (Other combinations would also satisfy the constraint, of course.)

Results: Table 3.1 gives the results. Models are compared using the corrected AIC, which is most appropriate for a small number of observations (Burnham and Anderson 2004). I also consider findings at the 0.1 significance level because of the few observations. Percentage of BJP vote in the previous municipal elections is not statistically significant although Model 1 (logistic) provides modest evidence that wards where the BJP had won at least one seat ('BJP win' variable) were likely to have more killings. Although tentative, it is suggestive of the role that an elected BJP politician could play in orchestrating killing. A higher sex ratio (number of males per 1,000 females) is likely to lead to lower killings. This is unexpected and, admittedly, an anomaly resulting from the small number of observations. Model 2 (negative binomial) shows the percentage of non-workers to be positive and significant at the 0.1 level, indicative of the economically deprived or the youth (as non-workers also comprise students) being more likely to participate in killings. I would reiterate that Model 2 is inevitably driven by the two wards with very high killings. Inferences, of course, are to be made with caution yet the findings do suggest the likely role of the BJP in instigating killings and the association of economic deprivation with killings, in line with findings of chapter 2.

4. A case for ethnography

One of the most demanding tasks of conducting research in a conflict zone is the ambiguity surrounding events and subsequent data. Apart from the partisanship that the researcher can unwittingly be drawn into, reliability of data sources and of the data itself becomes suspect. Hindu-Muslim violence in India is widely suggested to present the delicate situation of a partisan state, including the police. I recall my meeting with a local police inspector that illustrated the bias. The meeting with the inspector was to verify the

deaths of two Muslim men in Kabadi Market no. 2 (KM2), a commercial scrap market (section 4.2), on February 28, 2002. The killings were brought to my notice by KM2 shop-owners and the wife of one of the men who had been killed. However, arrest records of 708 attackers that I was provided earlier by the police did not state the two killings, which made verification necessary. Excerpts from my fieldnotes of February 13, 2012:

> Me: (About the deaths) "Yes, your police records don't show anything. But some Muslims I met said that there was trouble. Would you mind checking it for me please?"
>
> Police Inspector PAS: "If there is nothing in our records, nothing must have happened."
>
> He offers to help, however. He calls one of his subordinates and asks him. The man says nothing had happened. PAS then phones a man whom he addresses as 'Salim' – I assume he is a Muslim informer – and asks him.
>
> PAS (on phone, in Hindi): "Oh.. two watchmen died? Ah, okay… they got burnt when the market caught fire."[49]
>
> He tells me, after hanging up:
>
> PAS: "Yes, two men were killed. They were both watchmen. The market must have caught fire and they both died in it." (He makes it seem as a case of 'accidental death' and not murder).[50]

The point here is not only that the records were missing but also about the ambiguity surrounding the deaths: were they killed or was it an accidental death? Even if care is taken to validate gathered data, statistical findings emerging from it can at best be

[49] Original Hindi: "*Aag lagi thi toh jal gaye"*. Transcripts are translations from Gujarati, Hindi or Urdu. Verbatim words of the respondents are italicised.

[50] The deaths could be confirmed later through a police *panchnama* (investigation report) dated March 3, 2002 and hospital records dated March 5, 2002, documents made available to me by the family of one of the deceased. The fact that records the police gave me do not contain the same information indicates the difficulty in ascertaining veracity of riot accounts based only on documents provided by officials.

considered crude risk factors. Ethnography, on the other hand, gives the researcher the scope to disentangle ambiguity in the given conflict situation and reach a reasonably logical argument. Thus, apart from the unavailability of data on religious groups the above theoretical reasons gave me more confidence in using ethnographic methods.

4.1. Research design

As introduced in section 2.3, killings in Ahmedabad were concentrated in Naroda Road (104 dead) and Asarwa wards (72 dead); killings in these two wards alone accounted for 62.5% of the total traceable killings in the city. These wards were avoided for focused study because of the limited range of variation they presented. Killings were of the nature of ethnic cleansing as the Muslim population was restricted to isolated neighbourhoods. However, I did conduct a preliminary investigation of Naroda Patiya neighbourhood (93 killed) in Naroda Road ward for a comparison, which is discussed in chapter 4. As the principal research site, I chose Behrampura municipal ward. Behrampura ward captured a range of spatial variation in the violence. Neighbourhoods lying within two kilometres of each other in this ward had either been peaceful or violent, where violence, again, varied between lethal and non-lethal. The total deaths in the ward were 10 (12.9 per 100,000 population) which were higher than the average of six deaths (7.93 per 100,000 population) for the 43 wards. Formerly a thriving mill area, Behrampura further intensified the puzzle, in view of literature associating unemployed mill workers as participants in Hindu-Muslim violence (Breman 2004; Yagnik and Sheth 2011). Three intermixed slum neighbourhoods were my fieldsites in Behrampura; all three neighbourhoods were located within two kilometres. As mentioned in chapter 1, the research design was such that the political configuration of the neighbourhoods was held

constant, thus departing from existing microspatial studies of Ahmedabad (e.g. Berenschot 2011).

While segregation had increased after the violence the population in 2010 had remained nearly identical, for many had continued to live in the same neighbourhood. Almost entirely, Hindus here belonged to the Scheduled Caste and OBC (Other Backward Classes) categories. The Scheduled Caste population in the ward was the highest among AMC areas: 0.79% (mean 0.29%) of total population in 43 wards and 35.8% (mean 12.46%) of total population in Behrampura ward. A majority of Muslims were OBCs. Occupations were primarily small trade (e.g. scrap dealers) and daily wage (e.g. autorickshaw drivers). The characteristics of the neighbourhoods are briefly listed below. A detailed description is provided in section 4.2. Map 3.1 shows the position of the three fieldsites on a Google map image of Behrampura ward.

1. Ram Rahimnagar (RRN): Semi-legal slum neighbourhood of 9,000 people; estimated Hindu-Muslim ratio in 2002 was 40: 60.[51] The neighbourhood was perceived as an exemplar of interethnic harmony for keeping peace in 1969, 1985, 1992 and 2002. Slum residents received the Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration in 2002.

2. Santoshnagar (STN): Government-notified neighbourhood of 3,800 people, contiguous to RRN; estimated Hindu-Muslim ratio was 70:30. STN was attacked twice: on March 1 and April 14 when Muslim shanties were looted and burnt; no killings occurred.[52] Map 3.2 depicts RRN and STN.

3. Parikshitlalnagar (PN) and Kabadi Markets 2 & 3 (KM2 and KM3):

[51] Total population of RRN and STN sourced from the Census of India (2001e); population of PN and Hindu-Muslim ratio in all three neighbourhoods is estimated from respondent conversations.

[52] A Muslim man was found dead on the road leading into STN. Respondents claimed he was injured outside STN and then staggered in. Police records mention the death of the man on March 1, 2002 although the Indian Penal Code (IPC) applied to the accused excludes charges for murder (IPC 302).

PN was a government-planned settlement for municipal workers with an estimated population of 3,500 and Hindu-Muslim ratio 40:60. One-third of PN permeated into a different ward, Danilimda, though the identical political configuration of the principal ward, Behrampura with Danilimda in 2002, made them comparable (Table 3.2). Rioting occurred in PN until August 2002; respondents recalled intense attacks that left four dead and several injured on February 28, March 1 and May 5. The Kabadi (*kabadi* = scrap) markets were Muslim-owned markets that traded in discarded machinery for their primarily Hindu customers from neighbouring Rajasthan state and rural Gujarat. Two men were killed in KM2, located half a kilometre from PN. KM3, located on the street across PN, was looted and burnt though no one was killed. Maps 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 indicate the spatial structures of PN, KM2 and KM3 respectively.

4.2. Description of fieldsites

Ram Rahimnagar (RRN)

This slum neighbourhood of impoverished Dalit Hindu and Muslim inhabitants had acquired a solid reputation for peace-keeping since the 1969 riots. In four subsequent episodes of large-scale Hindu-Muslim violence – 1985, 1992 and 2002 – RRN had stayed peaceful. The unity of Dalit and Muslim residents in RRN was particularly remarkable and incomprehensible in a city which had gained notoriety for endemic ethnic violence. In particular, it had challenged the Hindutva fusion of upper and lower caste Hindus against Muslims engineered by the Sangh Parivar in the mid-1980s. I recall one of my early visits to RRN in August 2010 when the sight of two men being chased by residents was termed a Hindu-Muslim skirmish by Salman, my Muslim informant.[53] It was startling (to outsiders like me) that anything of concern related to Hindus and

[53] Names of respondents are pseudonyms; names of places are unchanged.

Muslims should occur in this "oasis of peace" (Malekar 2009). When I expressed my concern, Salman laughed and said, "*H-M* is a separate issue.[54] These are just scuffles, between drunks… *H-M* doesn't happen here."

The year 1969 was the beginning of the creation of a unique ethos in RRN where the supposedly antagonistic primordial relations between Hindus and Muslims were to be given a new meaning by an inter-religious group of like-minded people. A few months before he died, Hindu RRN resident Jivabhai repeated to me the story he had narrated several times earlier to journalists: that of the slum's establishment and how he was part of the historic formation of the slum's intermixed self-governing committee of 21 Hindu and Muslim members, the Ram Rahimnagar Jhupdavasi Mandal (henceforth 'Mandal'). "Our slum settlement has a very *filmi* history, like *Amar, Akbar, Anthony*!" he had joked. The movie in Jivabhai's analogy was an archetypal feel-good Hindi movie about three brothers who separate during childhood and grow up as a Hindu, a Muslim and a Christian each. It was released in 1977. RRN came together much earlier, in 1966, though the analogy was quite appropriate. Three friends Madarsinh, a Hindu, Gulabbhai, a Muslim and Amar Singh, a Sikh started renting out private land close to the Calico Mills for Re 1 per sq ft. in 1966. A friendly business venture of 100 hutments soon became a safe haven for Hindu and Muslim refugees fleeing the horrific violence of 1969. "Following the violence, we ensured that people felt safe and welcome. You see, the three founders were of the right mix to sustain this place – Madarsinh was a Congress leader and union representative in Calico Mills, Gulabbhai was a local thug and Amar Singh was a trader. They could get jobs for us in the mill, network with the local leaders for all basic amenities and break a leg if needed! *Jyaan neta, abhineta ane vepari hoy to badhun barabar thaay!"* (Gujarati: "Where you have a politician, a 'player' and a trader,

[54] "H-M" is a colloquial expression in Ahmedabad for "Hindu-Muslim violence", suggesting discretion. Similarly, Hindus and Muslims are often referred to as "H" and "M" in public. People use the English letters although many would not know the language.

things work out!"), Jivabhai had said. A local Christian missionary body also joined the team, providing subsidised medical treatment.

Like the majority of Hindus in RRN, Jivabhai was a Dalit (Thakor caste) Hindu from Banaskantha district and among the first to settle in RRN. Many other Dalits from the district followed, making their population among Hindus to be the highest. Most Muslims were interstate migrants, a majority notified as OBCs in the Gujarat state list. They had migrated to Ahmedabad to find employment in the textile mills and then stayed back. After the mills collapsed in the 1980s, Hindus and Muslim residents took up manual labour jobs in the municipal corporation or entered daily-wage occupations, such as driving autorickshaws, vending vegetables, apprenticing at dyeing factories that surrounded RRN. All associational interethnic ties that the Hindus and Muslims had cultivated working in textile mills had long disappeared. Many were unemployed in 2002 and in 2010 as well. Apart from the peacekeeping, there was nothing extraordinary about the residents of RRN: their needs (civic amenities, job, house) and vices (liquor, drugs, gambling and prostitution) could be expected of any regular slum dweller.

Commentators in the media had attributed RRN's peacefulness to a unique mechanism of vigil and vigilantism that residents professed to practice each time there was a riot (e.g. *Times of India,* 3 March 2002*)*. In 2002, as news of the Godhra incident reached RRN, a group of Hindus and Muslims inhabitants had stood guard on RRN's three entrances, closing the boundaries to outsiders. This was their tried and tested strategy in past riots, and had successfully excluded Sangh Parivar members from "polluting" RRN even during times of peace. The authority of the founding members ('elders') of the Mandal was a singular aspect of the success of this mechanism. I discuss this in detail in Chapter 5.

Santoshnagar (STN)

The intermixed slum settlement contiguous to RRN became the first suitable comparison site. In the municipal ward map, STN could easily be distinguished from its neighbour RRN. In reality the demarcation was fuzzy. Years of slum encroachments had blurred visual dividers between the two slums – one began where the other ended. Pointing to a municipal water pumping station during my earlier visit to the slum, an STN inhabitant said, "Do you see this pumping station here? You could say that STN ends here and RRN begins" (Map 3.2). It was remarkable how distinct the two slums were to the inhabitants and their neighbours.

STN was founded on the Sabarmati banks in 1973 to rehabilitate flood-affected poor of the vicinity. The privately owned land was passed on from the hands of its Muslim proprietor to a Hindu Congress party member and union leader at a nearby textile mill and eventually to the oldest inhabitant of STN, a Muslim man called Harun who began selling off the land on a 30% commission to Hindus and Muslims. By 2002, Hindus comprised around 80% of the slum, divided between Kshatriya Hindus from Gujarat's peninsular region of Saurashtra and Sargara Hindus (OBC) from the neighbouring state of Rajasthan.

Harun witnessed the first attack on March 1: "Crowds of 500-600, carrying weapons and flags bearing the words '*Jai Shri Ram*' (Hail Lord Ram), had arrived from the slums of Khodiyarnagar (K Nagar) towards our west. They set fire to my house and also to the ground floors of Muslim-owned factories adjoining our homes." Like all Muslim respondents here, he claimed that attackers were "our own neighbours in STN who colluded with K Nagar attackers and were goaded by a Hindu police inspector of the (local) police station". Mistrust between Hindus and Muslims in STN was extremely

tangible –following the violence on April 14, residents built about three-foot high walls demarcating Hindu from Muslim lanes.

Parikshitlalnagar (PN) and Kabadi Markets (KM2 and KM3)

PN was colloquially known as a "political den" and "communal tinderbox". I was given names of seven prominent political leaders from the Congress and the BJP who had intermittently lived there since the 1970s. Frequent rioting had become a temporary distraction in the dreary lives of inhabitants, "like a festival", and had prepared the residents for a good fight if the situation demanded. Both my Muslim informants in PN, Munna and Rauf, had rioted in 2002. Residents of Bhilvas, a Hindu slum, sharing its southern wall with PN, also took pride in their ability to "keep the *bandiyas* under control".[55]

PN was a two-storeyed building, built in 1966 for municipal workers, comprising 840 houses stacked like matchboxes. They were distributed across 31 "Quarters", each Quarter accommodating 32 or 24 houses (Table 3.3). The *kachcha* (sandy/unpaved) roads made navigation after dusk difficult and mobile phones often doubled up as torches. A 10-foot unpaved road segregated Hindu Quarters from Muslim Quarters, with only two Quarters (nos. 1 and 21) intermixed (Map 3.3). This road, colloquially called 'Wagah Border', had existed before 2002 and residents had made use of the natural boundary to create their community-specific spaces over time. Photo 3.1 shows the road separating Hindu from Muslim PN; the police outpost in the centre marks the junction.[56] The colloquial use of "border" or "Wagah border" in many parts of India, including Ahmedabad, is meant to imply the India-Pakistan division line and in a wider sense signifies informal or formal boundaries which not only separate Hindus from Muslims

[55] *Bandiya,* referring to circumcision, is a common slur used in Ahmedabad for Muslim men.

[56] The police outpost was set up during May 2002, after a period of intense attacks on PN.

but also zones where ethnic hostility is displayed to reinforce separateness and irreconcilability (Breman 1999). Both Hindus and Muslims were victims of violence in PN. A Hindu man died on March 1 in PN Quarter 17, a Muslim man on May 5 in PN Quarter 23 "fighting rioters and police" and another Muslim man succumbed to injuries in a hospital. Respondents claimed intraethnic trade rivalry as the reason for his death, which remained unconfirmed, as perpetrators were not identified (*Gujarat Samachar*, 6 May 2002). A four-year-old Hindu boy died in a stampede caused by "thousands of rioters" on May 5. Respondents from each community claimed that theirs was a "counterattack". A Hindu rioter in Bhilvas, Yatin, who would have been 15 years old in 2002, excitedly recalled his experience on March 1: "On the first day the *bandiyas* won! They killed one of our men in Quarter 17. We had to give it back to them, so next day onwards we collected stones from around here and all of us joined in against them. We won that day! That's how it went on and on for many days and weeks..."

Of the five Muslim-managed Kabadi Markets in Ahmedabad, No. 2 and No. 3 were located in PN's vicinity. KM3, located on the side opposite to PN Quarters 2 to 5, was looted and burnt whereas two men were killed in KM2, located half a kilometre away from KM3 (and PN) towards the north. Automobile machinery in KM3 was valued to be "three times higher" than agricultural appliances sold in KM2. The markets were of no significance electorally as shop owners lived in Shah Alam, a Muslim-majority neighbourhood located a kilometre away from KM2.

The lethal attack on KM2 occurred at 9am on February 28, half an hour before the market had begun the day's trading. Hearing news of the Godhra incident, five shop-owners had reached KM2 to preview the situation. "Shops opposite to ours had started downing shutters. We decided to leave, but asked the security guards to stay… we had no idea their lives could be in danger. In 1969 and 1992, the market was attacked but only

on the outside. Rioters had not entered it," said Arbaaz, a shop-owner. In what turned out to the worst lethal attack in Behrampura, two of the five Muslim security guards were burnt alive within the next hour. KM3 was attacked at 10am on February 28, half an hour after the day's trading had begun, then again at 1.35pm on May 5; no one was killed. Perpetrators of KM3 did not enter the market, but damaged shops on the outside. This was surprising considering the higher value of scrap machinery inside KM3.

5. Methods

5.1. Data-gathering

My primary method of data-gathering follows from what ethnographers working on sensitive issues use: unstructured, free-flowing conversations that are memorised and later reproduced as fieldnotes (Varese 2001; Wood 2006; Hamill 2011). Although eight years had passed since the 2002 violence, antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims was pervasive even in 2010. The violence continued to remain in public memory on account of legal prosecutions and convictions constantly highlighted in the media. Any direct questions of the violence (I tried 'direct questioning' in the first week of fieldwork) were either met with, "Why do you want to rake up old wounds?" or "Which political party are you with?" (These answers, of course, also followed from the ignorance of my role as a 'researcher' or a 'PhD student from Oxford' for the largely illiterate slum-dwellers of the fieldsites. I will elaborate more on this in section 5.4.

As Hamill and Varese suggest, unstructured conversations work best in sensitive research where direct questioning, impersonal surveys and tape-recorded (sometimes even pen and paper) interviews can be perceived as a threat by the respondent. They make the respondents uncomfortable, therefore, evasive. This approach would also allow me to refine or change the initial problem focus, and to adapt the data gathering process

to ideas that occur during later stages (Whyte and Whyte 1984). However, in using the strategy of 'memorising', there is certainly a danger of introducing bias in the data for memory can fail you, but given that any other alternative would be likely to generate superficial communication from a guarded respondent this is the best approach (Hamill 2011; Densley 2012). My previous experience of six years as a journalist helped. It was not uncommon to memorise conversations of a sensitive nature and meticulously reproduce them in the newspaper, where the consequences of erroneous factual reporting could be very serious. Like Hamill (2011), much of the data was gathered during hundreds of spontaneous conversations over cups of *chai* (tea). Indeed, liquor prohibition in Gujarat had made roadside tea-stalls the perfect recourse for formal and informal conversations, especially for the working class population who, almost entirely, vended the tea shacks. After speaking with respondents on a given day my practice was to sit either at a place designated by my informant as 'safe' or at one of the newly constructed Janmarg bus-stops in the city, which had a convenient seating space, to reproduce the events of the day from memory in my notebook.[57] Once trustworthiness with the respondent was established I would be permitted to take notes during conversations and, in some cases, even allowed pen and paper interviews. Most political elites did not object to pen and paper interviews or note-taking. Tape-recorders were risky at all times; a series of media stings for the Gujarat violence using hidden cameras and tape-recorders had made people wary of recording gadgets.[58]

I also utilised special public occasions to understand the nuances of the three sites. One such occasion was a cricket match between India and Pakistan – an event that invites national-level political diplomacy and a heightened feeling of nationalism in both

[57] The 'safe' spaces were a tea shack for PN and its vicinity and my informant's autorickshaw for both RRN and STN.

[58] *Tehelka,* a news magazine conducted an undercover on-camera sting in 2007 where several Sangh Parivar members confessed to killing and rioting.

countries. Hindus in Ahmedabad believe most Muslims support Pakistan and it is common to have a Hindu-Muslim riot triggered in post-cricket frenzy. The aim was to gauge the differences in perceptions of safety that people of each fieldsite and also investigate issues of identity and religious prejudice.

5.2. Validity and veracity

Following free-flowing conversations over time in repeated meetings respondents began to reveal their participation as perpetrators in the violence. Admitting participation in stone-pelting, arson and other kinds of non-lethal violence came relatively easily – Hindus either spoke of it as a matter of "self-defence" or of collective pride or an act of revenge not only for the Godhra train burning but also for personal antagonistic experiences with Muslims in the past (such as in school). However, disclosure of the fact that they had participated in killings was difficult. Although evidence of state protection for riot accused was strong, legal investigations had also gained strength under pressure of international human rights advocacy. Hindu respondents would not confess to a killing. This is an inevitable challenge in civilian riots. Perpetrators are unlikely to confess to their action or, indeed, "explain" their actions (Tambiah 1997: 1178; Frøystad 2009). In an innovative method to collect data on perpetrators of lethal attacks in Nigeria, Scacco (2008) used a secret ballot-type method in which enumerators read out questions to anonymous respondents standing behind an opaque screen where they filled out their answers on a form. In an informal conversation with a police officer about the possibility of doing so in my fieldsites, I was told, "You could try but who would allow you to do it?" An attempt, albeit foolhardy, to conduct such an exercise might have worked but it was better, given the time constraint, to triangulate respondent data with police first information reports (FIR), arrest records of 708 attackers, legal documents and human

rights reports (Table 3.4). Police records were detailed, listing the date, nature and location of incident, the name and address of both the complainant and the rioter, the charges held and the action taken. As mentioned in section 4, police data, on its own, was unreliable.

I can recount here another incident that illustrates the difficulty of reconstructing events from police records. A Hindu man had died (or was killed) on March 1 in PN Quarter 17.[59] The police filed a complaint in this regard and arrested 26 persons – three Hindus and 23 Muslims, among whom was Munna my Muslim informant. Of note here is the fact that the complainant was a Muslim man. Munna, of course, claimed it to be an "accidental death": "The (dead) man was my friend. We had travelled together to Palanpur for a wedding. He returned on February 26 and I came later. Apparently, he died because of a heart failure but these Muslims who were jealous of my political clout named me as the murderer… the complainant was APD (names a Muslim man), who was killed two years later by his own people."[60] Two Hindu respondents of PN had a different story: "The (dead) man was standing in the balcony of his house, trying to see what was going on. The Muslims of PN hit him on his chest with a brick and killed him. One of the Muslims was paid to lodge a complaint... it saved us court wrangles for he would be summoned whenever there would be a hearing."[61] Brass, during extensive fieldwork in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh encountered similar problems:

> 'I found it impossible to present an "objective" account that explained each case or all of them fully, that is, which accounted for the event as a whole. Instead, I found more or less persuasive and unpersuasive, more or less scrupulous or self-serving, more or less

[59] Death recorded as murder in police records dated 1 March 2002.

[60] Date of interview: 9 April 2011.

[61] Date of interview: 7 February 2012.

dispassionate or prejudiced accounts, some of which contained elements of a whole "truth" of the event, but none that could explain the whole...' (Brass 1997: 8).

Although truth was slippery an attempt was necessary to reconstruct it, if I were to understand the inherent differences in ecological and behavioural patterns of lethal and non-lethal violence.

5.3. Consent

Since the topic of the research was allowed to emerge gradually over the course of the discussion, the issue of subject consent arose. I could not announce my purpose of the conversations upfront as that could lead to the same reaction as the one I got through direct questioning. Varese (2001) would give the subject a long, detailed list of 'issues' that he planned to study and, if they consented, the interview would begin. This was a technique that became useful to me as well: my list included personal and family background, caste and religious practices, political opinions, occupational details. These were verbally expressed as slum dwellers were illiterate or semi-literate. Oral consent was also more advisable as a written record would have linked the respondents to my work, putting them at risk (Wood 2006). At times consent was obtained, in my presence, by my key informants. They were either political party members or 'reputable' men who were trusted within the community; respondents were either obliged to listen to them as part of returning favours or because they held them in high esteem. Usually the topic of the violence in 2002 and earlier would emerge during the discussion about transformation in political attitudes and flow in with the rest of the conversation.

I interviewed or had long discussions with 81 respondents (core respondents), many of whom I repeatedly met for follow-ups. There were around 30 others whom I met and

chatted with during conversations with the core respondents. The 81 core respondents included Hindus (n=32), Muslims (n=48) and one Christian. Of these, rioters (n=6), victims and witnesses of attacks (n=25), elected politicians and political party members (n=12), police (n=4) and other residents (n=34). For chapter 6, 18 additional respondents were interviewed in three additional fieldsites, details of which are described in section 3 of chapter 6. Tables 3.5 and 3.6 list the core and additional respondents.

5.4. Challenges in negotiating access

My decision to begin research with the investigation of the peaceful slum was well-founded. This was a slum I thought I knew. I had visited it several times in the past five years, as a journalist and then as a social worker, and had excellent rapport with five of the most influential members of the slum's official committee. My last meeting with them before I began fieldwork in 2010 was a year before, in 2009, as a social worker. Upon a request by the Mandal elders, I had organised their meeting with 10 local NGOs that year to brainstorm on self-sustaining economic measures, such as building a room to set up a computer centre and sewing machine centre for the women of the slum. With these positive experiences in mind I assumed fieldwork would be easy. My naiveté was soon exposed. The vast difference that the slum dwellers perceived between a journalist/social worker and a student (be it from Oxford) came as a distasteful realisation. In 2010, upon my return to Ahmedabad, I was thrilled to find that a new room had been built in the Mandal office where sewing machines for women residents of RRN had been set up; the room below had been converted into a computer training classroom for adolescents. However, I was soon told by the new president of the Mandal – a young Muslim man, disliked by the elders – that the computers and machines were a consequence of his personal connections with a local NGO with BJP connections and

reminded me that I had only given an idea and not money. Again, when I used to visit RRN as a journalist with an English daily my visits were seen by the residents as justifiable: the newspaper would speak of their chivalry which would enhance their positive social identity among their peers. I, in turn, would show them the copy of the newspaper the next day thus reinforcing my functional role in their community. However, without my newspaper and without material benefits, I was perceived as a free-rider. This was difficult in terms of fieldwork but very useful in confirming that material benefits were crucial to the RRN slum dwellers, thus intensifying the puzzle of what made them keep peace in 2002 (and earlier).

McPhail (2004) describes a similar experience in a completely different setting – a sports club. In an admirably honest account she discusses the failings and benefits of having a dual role: that of an ethnographer who was conducting field research of a sport she actively engaged in and in the same sports club of which she was a member. She writes:

> I believe I was naive to think that my already established practice of being an athlete at FAC would enhance my role as a researcher in the same club. While I maintain that my background in sport and continued involvement in athletics in particular encouraged conversation and access to information from some research informants, it was not necessarily aided by my role as an athlete at FAC..." (McPhail 2004: 243).

Like McPhail, my previous experiences helped me to access my key informant, Salman, quite quickly. Salman was a 37-year-old autorickshaw driver and son of Muslim Mandal elder, Juzar Chacha, whom I had known for over five years. What made Salman an asset in the months to follow was his astute knowledge of every lane and street of Behrampura, his witnessing the violence of 2002 and the death of his own friend as they

rioted on the streets of Behrampura, and his extra-legal links with the slum's female *"don"*.[62] To reach the slum dwellers beyond the elders, I had to start from scratch. It had never occurred to me until then that the gatekeepers would not allow anyone (even journalists) to go 'beyond the gate' and meet the people, in their absence. The evasiveness of the slum dwellers to my seemingly purposeless daily visits to the slum eventually led Salman to explain to me: "They think you are a political spy." Their closure, however, gave me an important insight into their peacekeeping: the authority of the Mandal was carved in stone; the slum dwellers would not speak to strangers whom they suspected to have political motives, unless they were assured by the Mandal.

I continued to toy with a variety of strategies to suggest my trustworthiness. I had discovered that 'researcher from Oxford' meant nothing to a majority of the respondents in all the fieldsites. *'Sanshodhan',* the Hindi and Gujarati equivalent for 'research' also drew a blank. A switch to '*abhyās'* – Hindi and Gujarati for 'study' – helped in breaking ice, although it meant that my conversations and questions were to be taken casually, for students are perceived as insignificant. Yet, this was to become an advantage for they took my ignorance as nothing unusual, thus encouraging candid responses. My subject of study, *samāj vigyān* (sociology), continued to be mistaken for *samāj sevā* (social work) even towards the end of the fieldwork. Evidently, they had not met local researchers before, except for surveyors "who came with questionnaires to ask about our civic facilities". Thus I was given errands suitable for a social worker: making widow pension applications, calling up the local electricity station to lodge complaints in English (the voice-over was often in English), speaking to the local police to reclaim confiscated rickshaw licences, summoning municipal officers to fix or supply the slum with drainage facilities, resolving marital issues etc. This helped insofar as I knew local authorities

[62] This term is likely to have been popularised in India following Hindi movies based on the life of Mumbai underworld gangsters, such as Haji Mastan, in the 1970s. Chapter 5 discusses the role of the don, Zulekha (pseudonym), in detail.

from my previous days as a journalist, though eventually I ran out of steam because a lot of this work needed repeated follow-ups. But, by then, they knew I was at least a well-wisher who tried to help. Talking to people in RRN and also the adjoining STN, which had similar problems, became much easier. Sometimes luck was on my side**.** On one occasion, I spent a week enquiring about drainage problems with the residents of STN. One day when I returned I saw a pile of brand new steel pipes lined up in STN and municipal workers digging the ground. A Hindu man I had spoken with earlier ran up to me and, to my astonishment, thanked me for what I had done. Salman was with me that day and later told me, laughing loudly: "You should just play along. They see you as a person with a lot of political clout now. Ask them anything and they will tell you." Had I been a journalist there would be less hesitation to play along, but as a researcher this would have been deceptive. I told the residents later that what happened was a matter of chance. To my advantage they did not mind and acknowledged my concern. That brought me closer to the respondents.

Unlike what I intuitively believed, accessing the violent area of PN and its vicinity and speaking to residents was much easier. Respondents were enthusiastic and willing to share their trauma and histories with me; it was more out of necessity than goodwill (Wood 2006). By then I had also realised that calling myself a 'student of politics' (Gujarati: "*politics nu abhyās karu chhu")* worked very well. It was not deception either because politics was an important element of my research question. Munna, my Muslim informant in PN, was sourced through a local Congress politician. He was Salman's counterpart, albeit with a varied criminal record and substantial political connections. He was a heavy for the Congress – a "frontrunner" in the Congress-supported militant Shakti Dal – a Congress-supported militant body established in the 1990s to oppose the Bajrang Dal, an affiliate of the Sangh Parivar – and later (in 2010) for the BJP. His pride lay in

his double murder charges and his multiple jail terms. I recall how he once got into an argument with a petty thief in PN over who between them had spent more jail terms. "I can create a riot in one month here… though, of course, that is never my intention. I am a *social worker*," he had said. A 'social worker' is often used as a euphemism in India for an intermediary between politicians and citizens (Michelutti 2007). Munna had enough skill and clout to procure *desi* (countrymade) weapons, make petrol bombs and break a few legs for his political godfathers – Congress, BJP or any other party whose patronage would be of benefit at the time. His Hindu-sounding name was "an asset" as he was considered trustworthy by both communities. My ease at access and interviews using political party members and a political role confirmed to me the significance that politics and governance held for the respondents. Two of my key informants in PN, for example, refused to accept material benefits from me. However, they would often ask me my future plans after the study. "Will you become a politician or someone who can influence them? Don't forget us then, we will need your support whenever there is *H-M* next... and even for day to day affairs," Munna told me once. Salman often said he could have been powerful had he got *peeth* (backing), which indicated the importance of having political connections.

A good source of accessing respondents could have been non-government organisations (NGOs) who had been working incessantly for transitional justice of Muslim victims since 2002. I opted to access respondents through local Congress and BJP leaders instead of the NGOs in order to avoid perceptions of a pro-victim bias (Wood 2006). This was especially in context of my being a Muslim. This brings me to the most challenging aspect of the fieldwork – the ethical dilemmas.

6. Ethical dilemmas

In conflict zones, ethics necessarily become flexible in order to protect respondents' lives and for the researcher's own safety. As Wood says: "There are some settings where research cannot be ethically conducted and should not be attempted or should be curtailed" (p. 374). Aiming for objectivity is naive, yet the dilemma arising out of the need for a researcher who is an 'insider' to be self-aware or reflexive deserves to be taken account of.

6.1. Reflexivity and 'telling'

I was born a Muslim and brought up in the Muslim part of a deeply segregated Ahmedabad, having lived there for over 30 years and having witnessed at least three major waves of Hindu-Muslim violence at very close quarters. As a social science researcher, working with the largely Muslim victims of the violence of 2002 is likely to have emotional and methodological ramifications. Unlike an 'outsider' I did not have an external vantage point and there remained the danger of my findings being an artefact of my presence. I was aware that respondents will ask me about my religion and caste, as is customary in Gujarat.[63] I was faced with the ethical dilemma: When asked, should I announce my real religion and generate an interviewer bias and perhaps also a risk to my life or should I lie, thus establishing deception? The bigger challenge was that even if I chose to neither announce nor lie and simply skirt the question, how would I avoid being identified as a Muslim simply by what Burton (1978) refers to as 'telling' in context of Northern Ireland 'Troubles'? 'Telling' – the pattern of signs and cues by which religious ascription is arrived at in the everyday interactions of Protestants and Catholics – is, as Burton suggests, endemic to conflict societies, acting as a mechanism to determine the identity of the 'other' and subsequently to build and sustain areas of trust. Finlay (2001)

[63] In Ahmedabad, "*Tamey kevā*?" (literal: What kind are you?) is a customary form of introduction referring to one's caste or religion.

recalls his experience interviewing a Catholic woman in Northern Ireland who could pick up familiar signals during the course of the interview and 'tell' that he was a Protestant although she was not explicitly told so. If both the interviewers and the interviewees engage in 'telling', depending on the outcome of the process, they may never, or only rarely get beyond the bland, superficial, coded communication (Finlay 2001: 60). This can be dangerous because reflexivity is one of the central elements of ethnographic activity; it 'signifies the researcher's part in the social world that is being investigated and that subjects' responses to the presence of the researcher, and the researcher's response to the context, are as valuable as any other aspect of the study (Hodgson 2000: 3).

To my advantage, few respondents could 'tell' my religion outright. Religion-revealing cues are largely the name, dress and language. In Ahmedabad, these also comprise the diction of the language and the area of residence. My name is common to both Hindus and Muslims the only difference being in the English spelling. No one asked me to spell my name as it would mean nothing to them. I wore loose *salwār-kameez* with a *dupatta* – a dress common to both religions, and spoke both Hindi (and Urdu) and Gujarati. A majority of Muslims in Ahmedabad speak Urdu or Hindi; Gujarati is spoken by the small community of Dawoodi Bohras and Khojas of the Shia sect and the diction is very distinct from the Gujarati spoken by a Hindu. Frequent usage of all these languages as part of my journalistic profession earlier had removed traces of a specific diction. During a conversation about fasting during Ramazan with a 16-year-old Muslim girl of RRN whom I'd known for about six months, I told her that I knew about fasting because I was a Muslim too. She said: "You are too kind to say that! We feel proud to make you feel one of us."

6.2. Deception

None among Hindus could 'tell' my religion with certainty which is why they would often ask: '*Tamey kevā*?' or 'Are you Hindu or Muslim?' Following is one such conversation which shows my attempt to respond to the question:

Respondent: Are you Hindu or Muslim?

Me: Let's not get into that (with a laugh)

R: "What's the harm? Just tell me, I am curious."

Me: My husband is Jewish.[64]

R: So you are Jewish... yes... But what religion were you born into? What's on your birth certificate?

Me: Actually I cannot recall because I've lived away from India for quite some time...

To illustrate further, the area of my residence was a bigger problem. Although I grew up in an intermixed neighbourhood in the walled city, in 2010 I lived in the Hindu-majority western suburbs with my husband. Often respondents could not tell my religion from the other cues and would ask where I lived. If I named the current area (Satellite in the western suburbs), Hindus felt more comfortable and Muslims did not. To Muslims, therefore, I would say: "My parents' house is in Khanpur (walled city)." Both the strategies were useful to avoid further questioning though they also implied an attempt at deception. As ethnographers have suggested, deception in sensitive research is inescapable as long as deliberate deception of subjects is avoided. "The deliberate deception of subjects is hard to defend but to outlaw all deception in social inquiry would

[64] My husband is, indeed, Jewish. Therefore this was not a lie. Few Hindus in my fieldsites, however, knew about the existence of Jews ('Yahudi' in Hindi and Urdu), until I mentioned Israel and explained the association. The Israel-Palestine conflict is a familiar subject to many Indians and Israel (and Jews) are looked upon as allies (situated along the lines of the India-Pakistan conflict). Because of a patrilineal society, it was understood that the religion of my husband is my religion.

be as unrealistic as it would be to outlaw it in social interaction." (Davies 1999, quoting a statement of the Association of Social Anthropologists: 62). It, however, did not efface the possibility of raising suspicion in the mind of the respondent. As one Muslim respondent warily asked: "If you have a house in Satellite and your parents' house is in Khanpur, who are you? It doesn't make sense..." These were issues of concern.

At the same time I did feel that my intrinsic non-religiosity helped me to maintain distance and avoid intervening when Hindu respondents made references to "killing the *bandiyas*" or expressed their prejudice. Of course, in the study of violent conflict both the demand for objectivity and the requirement for honest reflexivity are very difficult to meet (Davies 1999). But the constant watchfulness of 'not being caught' on account of my religion made me question that had I been not been a Muslim would it have made the Hindu respondents more comfortable? Secondly, did I, as an 'insider', risk an early saturation of my data by assuming several cultural and political events to be of relatively lower significance on account of my familiarity with the context? Hermann (2001) suggests that being an 'insider' is in fact an asset when it comes to the data-gathering process on account of their proficiency of the local language and social customs, access to primary informants and resources and familiarity of the socio-political context. Often the validity of an analysis is impaired, for example, when 'outsiders' rely entirely on translations of vernacular text and fail to understand the intended cultural or historic nuances of idiomatic expressions, such as the English translations of Hebrew documents in the Israel-Palestine conflict. The problem for an 'insider', she notes, arises during the analysis stage where the researcher is faced with the dilemma of being caught in taking sides with their community and maintaining academic standards, thus leading to either a self-deprecating approach or a pro-victim bias.

6.3. Personal concerns

Some of these involved impromptu occurrences, such as my RRN informant Salman's sudden disappearance and reappearance after six months. The reason was a mixture of problems he faced. One was on account of my gender ("People have been asking me why I move around with a woman alone"), the other perhaps because he did not intend to return money he owed me and the third, and most likely, on account of his alliance with a Muslim woman gangster who I will call Zulekha (chapter 5) who had grown suspicious of my everyday visits. He never explicated the real reason and there was no point in pursuing it.

Being a woman did prevent me from making visits to the violent slum in the night-time but it also helped me become trustworthy for respondents very early on in my fieldwork. Personal health was also a concern in the slums mainly because of social norms that did not permit me to refuse a glass of water or share meals. Doing so would be at the risk of offending the host and losing any trustworthiness established. Finally, living in the same city as the area of research has more advantages although one disadvantage is being unable to detach from the community. Two years after the end of my ethnographic research, I continue to receive phone calls from all three neighbourhoods for help with sanitation, legal and domestic problems.

Appendix for Chapter 3

Table 3.1: Deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence in Ahmedabad, 2002

Table 2: Deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence in Ahmedabad, 2002 (N = 43)

	1			2		
	any deaths			number of deaths		
	(logistic regression)			(negative binomial regression)		
	odds	se	p	irr	se	p
Males per 1000 females	.96	.01	.00 **	.99	.01	.42
Non-workers as % of population	1.21	.39	.56	2.12	.83	.05 †
Literates as % of population aged 7 and over	.85	.10	.18	.95	.13	.70
Marginal workers as % of population	.55	.54	.54	.49	.93	.71
Scheduled Castes as % of population	.99	.06	.87	1.07	.10	.50
BJP	6.13	6.23	.07 †	2.19	3.43	.62
Muslim population (logged)	1.00			1.00		
alpha (coefficient)				4.17	1.19	.00 ***

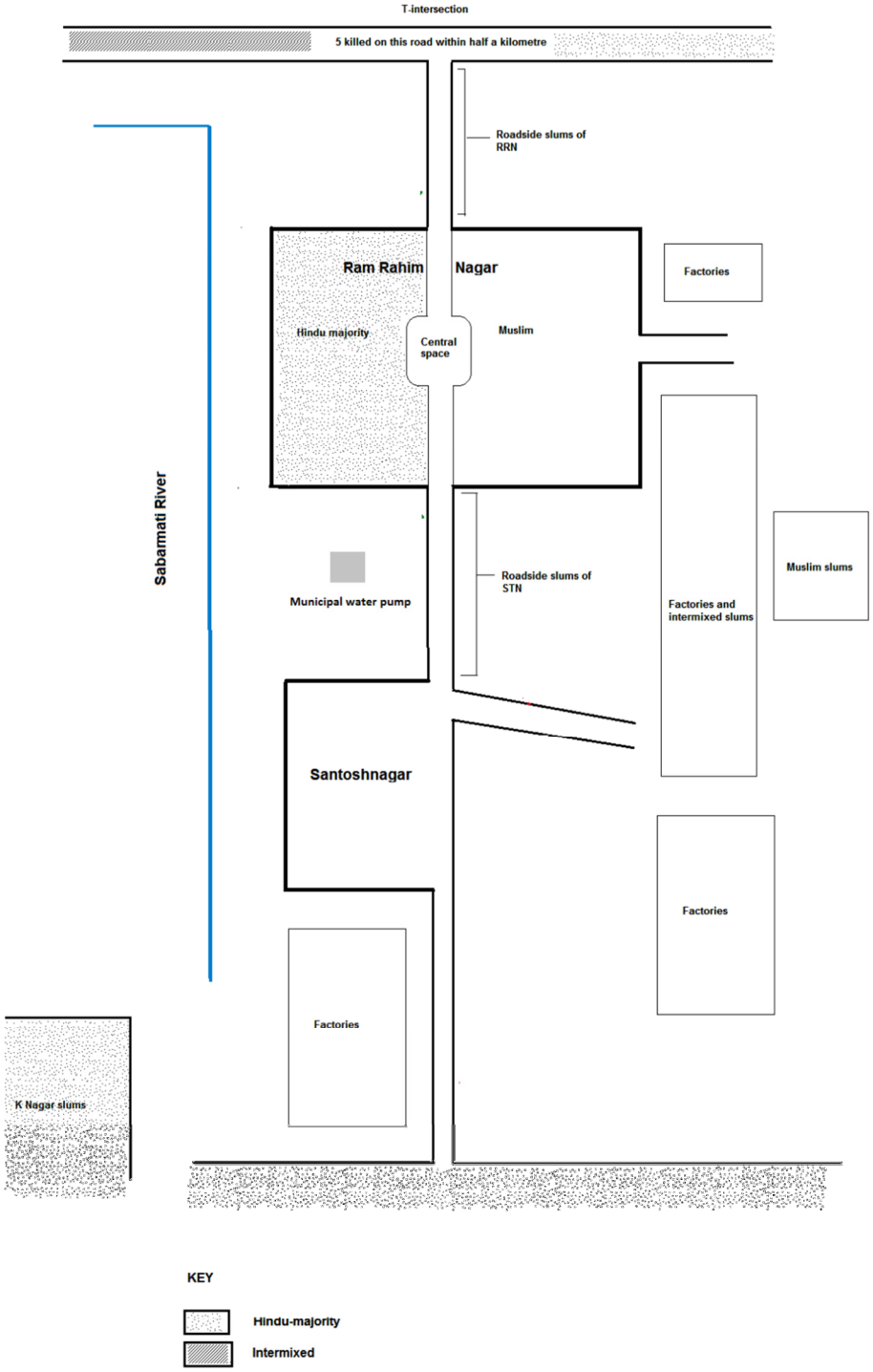
odds: odds ratio; irr: incidence-rate ratio; se: robust standard error

p: p-value (two-tailed), *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05, † p < .1

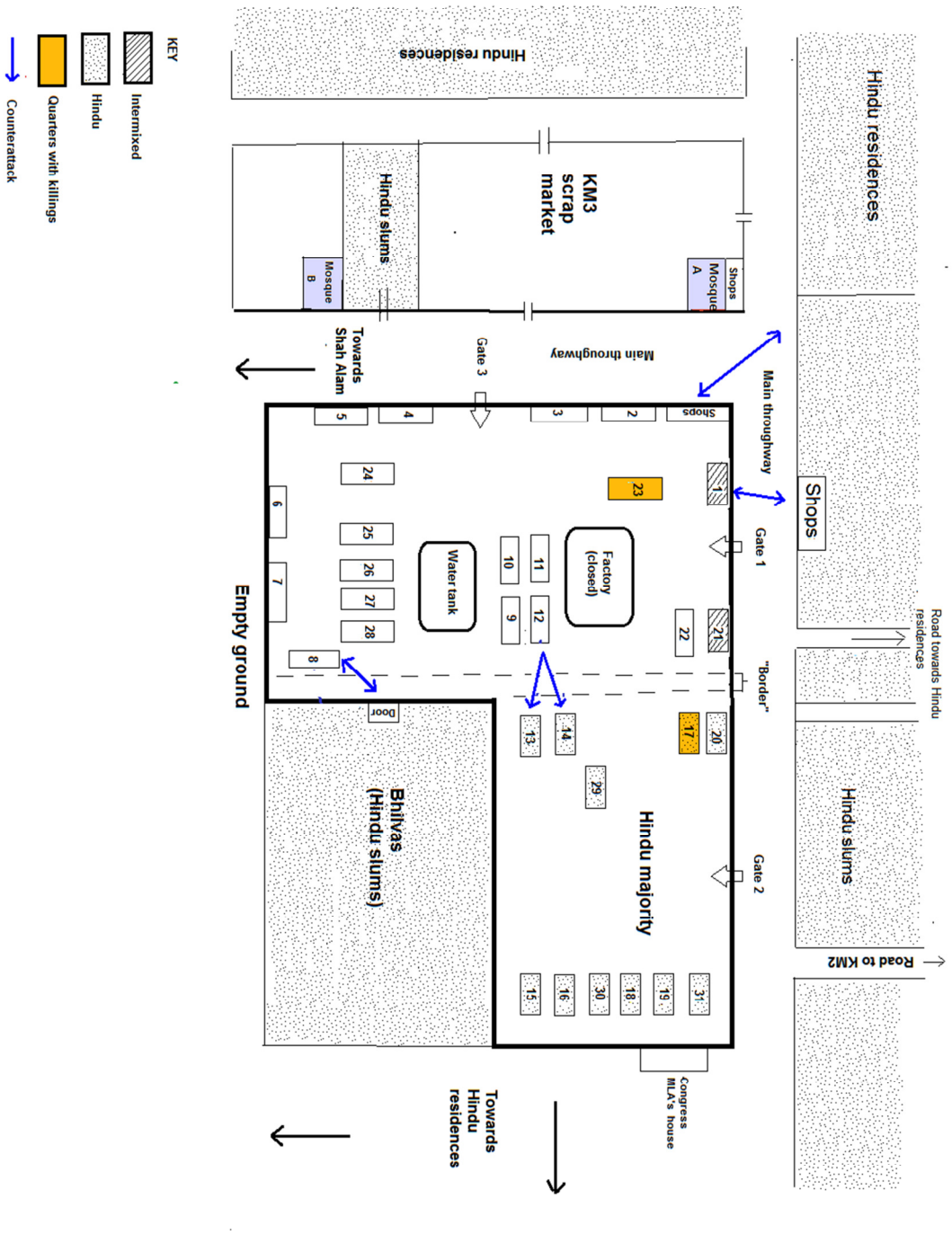
Map 3.1: Google map of primary fieldsites in Behrampura



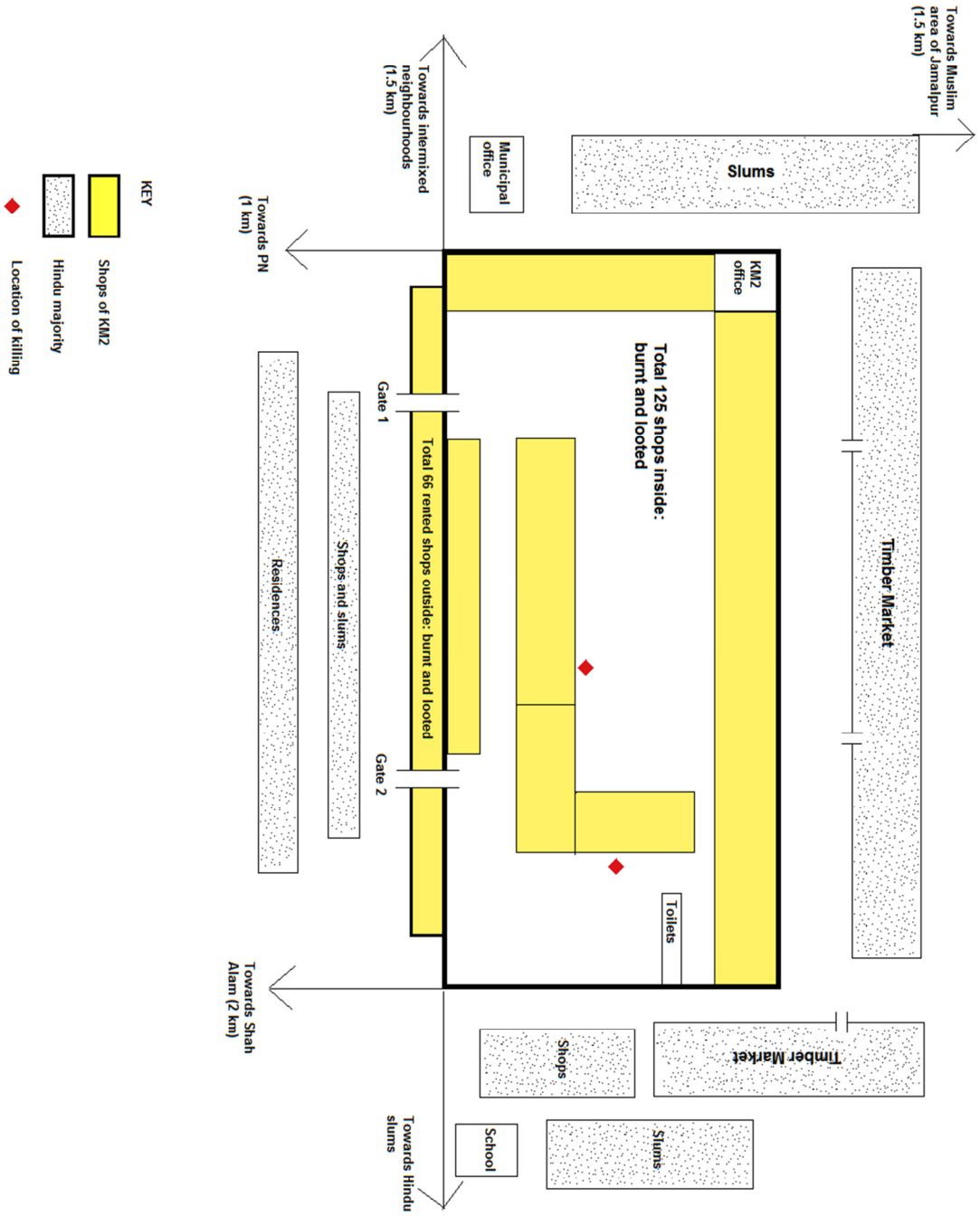
Map 3.2: Contiguous neighbourhoods RRN (peaceful) and STN (arson/looting)



Map 3.3: The lethal neighbourhood of Parikshitlalnagar (PN) and vicinity



Map 3.4: Kabadi Market no. 2 (KM2)



Map 3.5: Kabadi Market no. 3 (KM3)

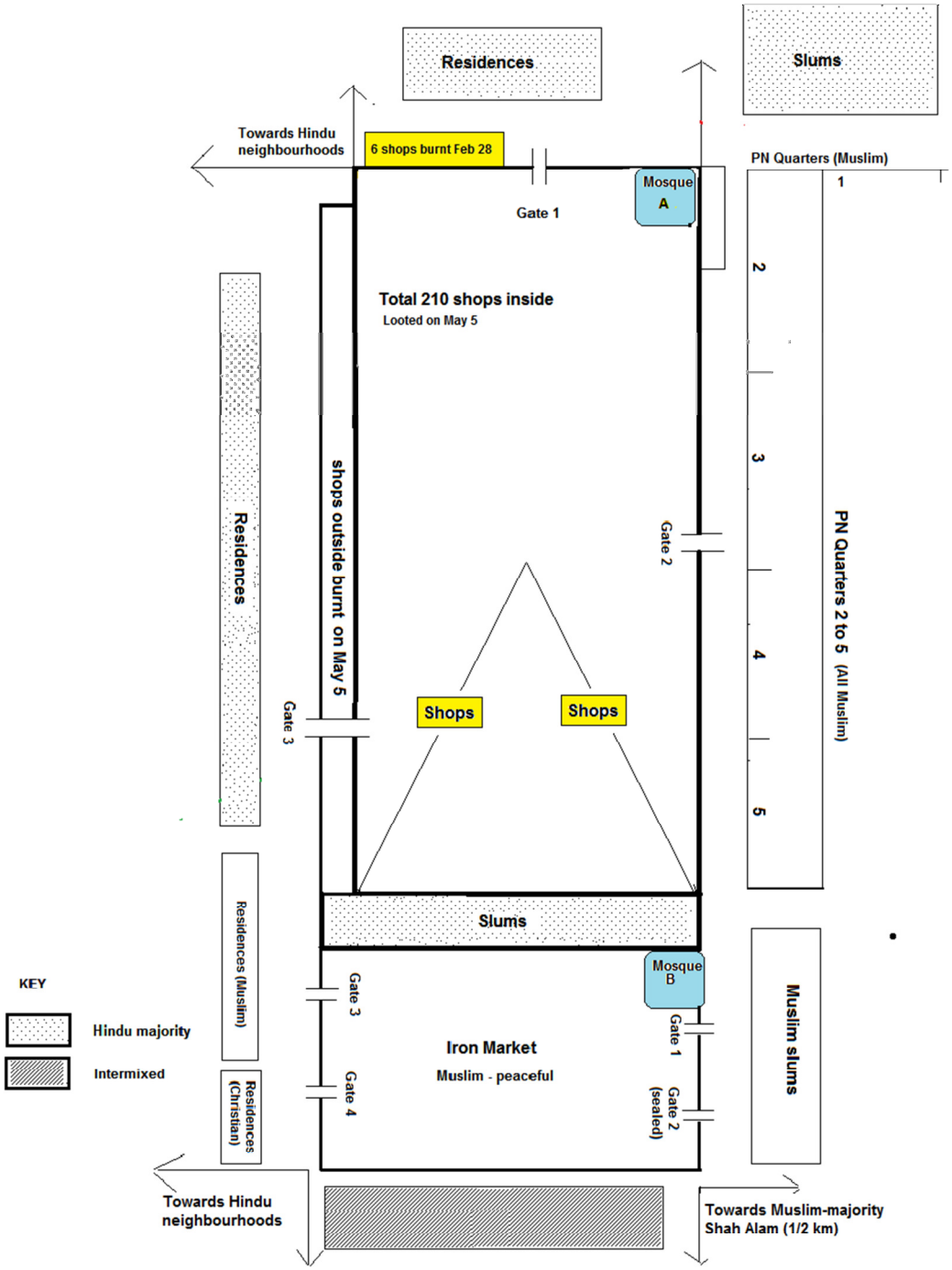


Table 3.2: Electoral constituencies of the three primary fieldsites

Fieldsite	*Municipal ward/s*	*Assembly constituency*	*Remarks*
Ram Rahim Nagar (RRN)	Behrampura	Jamalpur	
Santoshnagar (STN)	Behrampura	Jamalpur	
Parikshitlalnagar (PN)	Behrampura- Danilimda	Jamalpur-Sarkhej	
Kabadi Market 3 (KM3)	NA	NA	Not listed in ward electoral rolls
Kabadi Market 2 (KM2)	NA	NA	Not listed in ward electoral rolls

Table 3.3: Composition of Parikshitlalnagar (PN)

Quarter No.	*No. of houses*	*Municipal ward*	*Assembly constituency*	*Religious group*
1	24	Danilimda	Sarkhej	Mixed with Hindu majority
2 to 12	288	Danilimda	Sarkhej	Muslim
13 to 20	192	Behrampura	Jamalpur	Hindu
21	24	Danilimda	Sarkhej	Mixed with Hindu majority
22 to 28	216	Danilimda	Sarkhej	Muslim
29	32	Behrampura	Jamalpur	Hindu
30, 31	64	Behrampura	Jamalpur	Hindu

Table 3.4: List of documents used as data sources

Type	Document details	Notes
Police	(a) Statistics of murder, Hindu-Muslim violence, rioting, illegal liquor, narcotics and other serious cognisable offences registered with Danilimda and Kagdapith police stations of Ahmedabad, which cover my core fieldsites, for the period 2001 to 2010	This was acquired by request from the Police Commissionerate of Ahmedabad. Records are a mix of hard and soft copies.
	(b) First information reports (FIR) filed by Danilimda and Kagdapith police stations	Provided to me by residents of Santoshnagar (STN)
Media	(a) Reports from the *Times of India* newspaper, Ahmedabad edition, covering events in my fieldsites, for the period February 28 to December 31, 2002	
	(b) Online reports from *The Indian Express* newspaper, Ahmedabad edition, covering events in my fieldsites	
Maps	(a) Administrative map of Behrampura ward, of the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation	Provided by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation
	(b) Google map of fieldsites	
	(c) Sketches of each fieldsite	With help of informants
NGO	Concerned Citizens' Tribunal, *Crime Against Humanity: An Inquiry into the Carnage in Gujarat, Vol. I-III* (Mumbai: Anil Dharkar for Citizens for Justice and Peace, 24 October 2002).	
Independent documentary	*Chet'ta Rejo* ('Be Warned'): Documentary in Gujarati by Rakesh Sharma, comprising interviews with victims and accused in Behrampura and other areas of Ahmedabad	Provided by an informant

Table 3.5: List of core respondents in primary fieldsites of RRN, STN and PN[65]

A. Ram Rahim Nagar (RRN)

R1. Razak: Muslim male, aged around 70 (August 23, 2010).

R2. Javed: Muslim male, aged 38 (August 23, 2010).

R3. Juzar Chacha: Muslim male, aged 75 (August 23, 2010).

R4. Salman: Muslim male, aged 37 (August 23, 2010).

R5. Jivabhai: Hindu male, aged around 70 (September 5, 2010)

R6. Shafibhai: Muslim male, aged around 50 (September 28, 2010)

R7. Nimesh: Hindu male, around 40 (September 30, 2010)

R8. Nilesh: Hindu male, aged around 25 (September 30, 2010)

R9. Shaji: Hindu male, aged 40 (October 4, 2010)

R10. Razia: Muslim female, aged around 55 (October 6, 2010)

R.11 Noorbanu: Muslim female, aged 25 (October 6, 2010)

R12. Madhavbhai: Hindu male, aged around 55 (November 2, 2010)

R13. Haribhai: Hindu male, aged around 45 (November 2, 2010)

R14. Santoshbhai: Hindu male, aged around 60 (January 4, 2011)

R15. Nazroobhai: Muslim male, aged around 40 (February 20, 2011)

R16. Yusuf: Muslim male, aged around 45 (February 20, 2011)

R17. Kamru: Muslim female, aged around 40 (February 20, 2011)

R18. Pooriben: Hindu female, aged around 50 (March 1, 2011)

R19. Sadhana: Hindu female, aged around 25 (March 1, 2011)

[65] Names of all respondents are pseudonyms, except Pol2 (RB Sreekumar) whose name is provided with consent. Chapter 2 uses documents submitted by Mr. Sreekumar to the commission investigating the Godhra and post-Godhra events.

R20. Ravi: Hindu male, aged around 25 (March 1, 2011)

R21. *Pujariji*: Hindu male, aged around 75 (March 5, 2011)

R22. Tasneem: Muslim female, aged 16 (March 10, 2011)

R23. Afreen: Muslim female, aged 16 (March 10, 2011)

R24. Sharfu: Muslim female, aged around 55 (March 10, 2011)

R25. Shafiq: Muslim male, aged around 35 (March 11, 2011)

R26. Shazia: Muslim female, aged 35 (April 10, 2011)

R27. Qutub: Muslim male, aged 38 (April 20, 2011)

R28. *Maaji:* Hindu female, aged around 65 (May 10, 2011)

B. Santoshnagar (STN)

S1. Jamal Mohammed: Muslim male, aged around 60 (October 6, 2010)

S2. Shankar: Hindu male, aged around 45 (October 6, 2010)

S3. Arunbhai: Hindu male, aged around 45 (December 7, 2010)

S4. Harun: Muslim male, aged around 55 (December 10, 2010)

S5. Jaideep: Hindu male, aged around 30 (January 2, 2011)

S6. Rubaab Khan: Muslim male, aged 72 (January 4, 2011)

S7. Mohammed Yunus: Muslim male, aged around 40 (January 4, 2011)

S8. Zebunnisa: Muslim female, aged around 55 (January 6, 2011)

S9. Sairaben: Muslim female, aged around 55 (January 6, 2011)

S10. Kanakben: Hindu female, aged around 40 (January 6, 2011)

C. Parikshitlalnagar (PN) and vicinity

P1. Jivan Parmar, Christian male, aged around 35 (October 6, 2010)

P2. Juzar Memon: Muslim male, aged around 50 (March 10, 2011)

P3. Munna: Muslim male, aged 37 (March 16, 2011)

P4. Hasanbhai: Muslim male, aged around 45 (March 16, 2011)

P5. Maqsood: Muslim male, aged around 30 (March 16, 2011)

P6. Maqsood's mother: Muslim female, aged around 60 (March 16, 2011)

P7. Munaf: Muslim male, aged around 40 (April 11, 2011)

P8. Amjadbhai: Muslim male, aged around 65 (April 11, 2011)

P9. Rashid: Muslim male, aged 70 (April 11, 2011)

P10. Rauf: Muslim male, aged around 40 (April 22, 2011)

P11. Arbaaz: Muslim male, aged around 40 (April 24, 2011)

P12. Mahmud: Muslim male, around 60 (April 24, 2011)

P13. Ajmal: Muslim male, around 60 (April 25, 2011)

P14. Rakesh: Hindu male, around 35 (April 28, 2011)

P15. Women of Choriyasi ni chali (April 30, 2011)

P16. Mrs Sajid: Muslim female, around 50 (May 2, 2011)

P17. Mangaldas: Hindu male, around 60 (May 9, 2011)

P18. Amir: Muslim male, around 35 (February 7, 2012)

P19. Babu: Hindu male, around 55 (February 7, 2012)

P20. Kanu: Hindu male, around 50 (February 7, 2012)

P21. Vrajesh: Hindu male, aged 27 (February 7, 2012)

P22. Naresh: Hindu male, aged 37 (February 9, 2012)

P23. Akshay: Hindu male, aged 21 (February 9, 2012)

D. Politicians

L1. Shakir Saiyed: Congress elected politician, Muslim male, aged around 50 (September 2, 2010)

L2. Jameel Khan: Congress elected politician, Muslim male, aged around 55 (September 18, 2010)

L3. Babubhai: Congress party member, Muslim male, aged around 60 (October 4, 2010)

L4. Asad Shaikh: Congress party member, Muslim male, aged around 45 (October 4, 2010)

L5. Aslam Khan: BJP party member, Muslim male, aged around 40 (October 4, 2010)

L6. Mohammed Ashfaq: Independent candidate, Muslim male, aged around 45 (October 4, 2010)

L7. Javed Patel: BJP party member, Muslim male, aged around 40 (October 6, 2010)

L8. Kalaben Prajapati: BJP party member, Hindu female, aged around 35 (October 6, 2010)

L9. Sanjay Chauhan: BJP party member, Hindu male, aged 35 (March 1, 2011)

L10. Shahid Bhati: Congress party member, Muslim male, aged around 45 (March 10, 2011)

L11. Ganesh Chauhan: Congress elected politician, Hindu male, aged around 50 (January 17, 2012)

L12. Sadashiv Makwana: BJP party member, Hindu male, aged around 50 (February 13, 2012)

E. Police

Pol1. Zahir Shaikh: BJP party member, Muslim male, aged around 65 (February 17, 2011)

Pol2: RB Sreekumar: Hindu male, aged 65 (November 11, 2011)

Pol3. KKR: Hindu male, aged around 50 (February 11, 2012)

Pol4. PAS: Hindu male, aged around 50 (February 13, 2012)

F. Others

O1. Kanti Parmar: Hindu male, aged around 50 (October 4, 2010) – Khodiyarnagar

O3. Mohammed Umar: Muslim male, aged around 30 (February 20, 2011) – Allahnagar

O4. Altaf Saiyed: Muslim male, aged around 40 (November 6, 2011) – Naroda Patiya

O5. Akram Pathan: Muslim male, aged 25 (November 7, 2011) – Allahnagar

Table 3.6: List of respondents in additional fieldsites of Bombay Hotel, Juhapura, Shah Alam[66]

A1. Junaid Shaikh: BJP party member, Muslim male, aged 40 (December 11, 2010) – Juhapura

A2. Shabbir Khan: BJP supporter, Muslim male, aged around 65 (December 11, 2010) – Juhapura

A3. Rasool Azam: Congress party member, Muslim male, aged around 55 (December 11, 2010) – Juhapura

A4. Idris Daruwala: Congress supporter, Muslim male, aged around 45 (December 11, 2010) – Juhapura

A5. Abdullah Shaikh: Congress supporter, Muslim male, aged around 70 (December 11, 2010) – Juhapura

A6. Aijaz Sufi: BJP supporter, Muslim male, aged 35 (February 1, 2011) – Juhapura

A7. Mehmood: BJP party member, Muslim male, aged around 40 (November 4, 2012) – Shah Alam

A8. Shaukat Hussain: BJP supporter, Muslim male, aged 44 (November 4, 2012) – Shah Alam

A9. Suraiyya: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged 35 (November 10, 2012) – Bombay Hotel (up to A18)

A10. Rabiya: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 35 (November 10, 2012)

A11. Asiya: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 40 (November 10, 2012)

A12. Amroo: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 35 (November 10, 2012)

[66] This section is applicable to chapter 6 only.

A13. Ruqaiyya: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 40 (November 10, 2012)

A14. Shabnam: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 35 (November 10, 2012)

A15. Bismillabibi: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 45 (November 10, 2012)

A16. Shehnazbanu: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 35 (November 10, 2012)

A17. Aliyah: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 35 (November 10, 2012)

A18. Mehjabeen: BJP party member, Muslim female, aged around 35 (November 10, 2012)

Photo 3.1: The 'border' separating Hindu from Muslim houses in PN



CHAPTER 4

The Ecology of Ethnic Violence: Attacks on Muslims in Ahmedabad

1. Introduction

This is the first of three chapters based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Ahmedabad city. This chapter makes two unique contributions to existing micro-spatial literature on variation in violence (e.g. Berenschot 2011). First, as discussed in detail in chapter 3, the research design takes account of the influential political argument by comparing three neighbourhoods located within the same electoral constituency (municipal ward). Second, and more importantly, it argues that microspatial differences in violence cannot be explained without taking account of ecological factors and ecology-based strategies. I draw upon Zhao (1998) to define 'ecology' as the impact of the physical environment or design factors of the targeted space on attackers and targets and their reaction toward the environment.

The second point forms the key arguments of this chapter. While my fieldwork in Ahmedabad was guided by the dominant theories of political incentives and interethnic ties discussed earlier, the repeated mention of ecological factors in respondent conversations could not be ignored. Interethnic civic engagement partly explained the peaceful neighbourhood but could not account for the lethal violence in another neighbourhood where Hindu-Muslim ties were "cordial". In addition, data indicated that a state-supported IRS (Brass 2005) was operational across the ward yet not all neighbourhoods experienced the same level of violence. To illustrate from my fieldwork, a crowd of Hindu attackers killed two men in the scrap market KM2 on February 28, 2002 even as KM3 half a kilometre away, bearing goods worth "three times more", could

not be breached despite a similar potent attack. Respondents called the first market an "easy" target; perpetrators had gauged the low risk of attacking a target that posed negligible threat of a counterattack. This was unlike the second market where, during the attack, a countermobilisation affected the outcome of the attack. My argument is analogous to the Simmelian idea that socioeconomic relations indeed lead to a certain spatial relation, but once the spatial relation is formed, it can act functionally as a social structure influencing the emergence and progression of collective action (Spykman and Frisby 1964; Zhao 1998).

While this chapter takes account of prevalent antagonisms, explicating the motivations of attackers to mobilise is not its objective. Rather it draws upon Collins' (2008:20) central claim that any process of organising violence involves the overpowering of confrontational tension: "No matter how motivated someone may be, if the situation does not unfold so that confrontational tension/fear is overcome, violence will not proceed." Thus the focus of this chapter's arguments is on discussing the strategic ecology-based decision-making practices that attackers, mobilised through various processes including ethnic hatred, engaged in before and during the course of attack that eventually contributed in explaining the different outcomes of attack. It also discusses practices adopted by potential targets during an attack.

2. Space in collective action

There is vast scholarship that construes spatial relations to be a reflection of social relations, such as in class studies (e.g. Molotch 1979); segregated street networks influencing racial compositions (Grannis 1998); or the effect of spatial segregation on Hindu-Muslim violence and of violence on the nature of existing segregated spaces (Desai 2010; Rajagopal 2010; Jaffrelot and Thomas 2012). But how do existing spatial

configurations explain dynamic patterns of mobilisation? This question emanates from the second type of scholarship that acknowledges actors can exercise agency through space, exerting power through the active manipulation, deployment, and exploitation of spatial contexts, while also being constrained by spatial structures (Massey 1994; Zhao 1998; Martin, McPhail and McCarthy 2009; Martin and Miller 2000; Tilly 2000; McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Sewell 2001; Dochartaigh and Bosi 2010). It recognises that actors are driven by a 'practical consciousness' (Giddens 1986) that enables them to engage spatial strategies and approaches in processes of contention given that "contention always takes place in humanly occupied space, often including the built environment" (Tilly 2000: 138). To illustrate, a line of police containment can in some circumstances constitute a source of power for those who are limited by it, contributing to the creation of a relatively 'safe space' beyond the line from which stones and missiles can be thrown at the police or at countermovement rivals (Tilly 2000). I use 'spatial' here to include the 'abstract' i.e. measurable or Cartesian space and the 'concrete' i.e. space as we visualise it (Sewell 2001).

Some spatial structures attain symbolic and cultural interpretations over time. An example being the Simmelian interpretation of a 'borderline', either between countries or within a neighbourhood: a symbolic partition that announces a world within that is subject to its own norms and completely detached from the world outside (Spykman and Frisby 1964). The Partition of India in 1947 continues to lend a symbolic meaning to boundaries in cities bearing a context of troubled ethnic relations. The colloquial use of "Wagah border" (chapter 3) for zones that separate Hindus from Muslims is one example.

Ecology-based strategies in contention are aptly demonstrated in the Beijing student movement in 1989 (Zhao 1998). Zhao established that the physical design of university

campuses was vital to the strategic calculations that students made to initiate and then steer the movement successfully. Zhao's argument is a unique departure from dominant studies in social network analysis, where actors are assumed to have pre-existing social relations that act as interpersonal influences and channels to disseminate information and resources. Instances of microspatial explanations of complex contentious processes such as violence occur, albeit fleetingly, in literature. Examples include the effect of residents' routine of spending leisure time on the streets on the sudden eruption of black riots in American cities (Feagin and Hahn 1973; Zhao 1998) or Jallianwala Bagh's built environment, comprising high walls and only two narrow exit gates, contributing to the magnitude of casualties once shooting began during the Amritsar massacre of 1919 (Lloyd 2011). A more informative input emerges from interviews with young rioters in the London riots of 2011 which showed that urban planning acted as a "nudge" or tug factor that either encouraged or inhibited them from participation. Private spaces such as Canary Warf were less attractive to loot because of high levels of surveillance and security, unlike the "typical" high street (Morrell et al. 2011: 37). Notably, rioters acknowledged having weighed their risks believing that they did not need to fear any consequences because the police would not be able to come after everyone. Indeed, rational value-maximising strategy in crowd behaviour in contexts of deep ethnic antagonism finds considerable empirical support (Schelling 1963; Berk 1974; Horowitz 2001; Collins 2008). Attackers in a crowd may have the look of being out of control yet adopt rational calculation as part of their strategy even during a period of 'forward panic' – a zone in time where the emotional impulses are overwhelming (Collins 2008: 121). Horowitz (2001: 527) notes: "There is not a single riot ... in which rioters miscalculated their own tactics and power, the intentions of the police, or the response of their targets, such that the rioters suffered more casualties than the targets did."

Crime prevention studies provide further evidence to show that people often act by comprehending the situational aspect which, argues Coleman (1989), is not mutually exclusive of dispositional aspects: growing up in a crime-prone environment that poses architectural situations vulnerable to crime can teach children to adopt criminal decisions and maximise opportunities for crime by rational action. For example, the public housing highrise, Pruitt-Igoe, in the American town of St. Louis became a hub of petty crime primarily as a consequence of its physical design. However, crime reduced by 26% and violent crime by 50% after public access was limited in a way that criminals would no longer have a multitude of exit routes; they would have to leave the same way they entered (Newman 1996).

2.1. Spatial configuration

Two significant factors that enabled large-scale massing in the Beijing student movement were the physical proximities of the campus and the emotional effect of public spatial massing (Zhao 1998). Apart from serving as an effective method of intimidation, 'force of numbers' overcomes the resource inferiority that the victims have in comparison with the attackers (Sewell 2001).

Based on this I conceptualise 'spatial configuration'. 'Spatial configuration' denotes the combination of the physical environment and the population distribution of the target group. This configuration helps determine whether rioters can attack victims in a specific location with minimal risk to themselves. Even if attackers are inflamed with ethnic hatred, they still act with some regard to self-preservation – at least in selecting which location to attack. I argue that rioters will attack a location only if two conditions are met. Firstly, the victims must be present in sufficiently small numbers to be outnumbered by the attackers. Secondly, the spatial configuration must provide an alternative escape route

for the attackers, separate from the point of entry. Attackers will be averse to entering an enclosed space without such a potential escape route, in case their point of entry is subsequently blocked either by the police or by victims massing for a counterattack. In the case of Ahmedabad in 2002, of course, collusion by the police ensured that attackers need only be concerned about counterattack by victims.[67] The availability of a potential escape route depends on population distribution as well as on physical environment: if a lane passes through a neighbourhood where the victim group resides in large numbers, it will not serve as an escape route for the attackers. While the spatial configuration informs the choice of location to attack, it also shapes the consequence of that attack. Fatalities will occur where victims have no escape route. Again, the availability of an escape route depends on population distribution as well as on physical environment: escape can be blocked by a neighbouring concentration of the attacking group. Thus, a route that would serve to minimise risk to their own lives could be termed 'optimal' for the attackers and the targets respectively.

Spatial configuration is not fixed, of course. When a riot is threatened, people can rapidly alter the physical environment, by blocking up a door for example. The population distribution of the victim group is especially changeable, because the threat of a riot often leads potential victims to flee. Their flight makes the remaining individuals more vulnerable to being outnumbered by rioters.

Using these concepts and frameworks I demonstrate in the context of the Gujarat pogrom that attackers were sensitive to cost-benefit considerations – assessed from the target's situational factors – notwithstanding visceral motivations. Decisions of attack could be made even at the spur of the moment, during an attack. Potential targets also

[67] There is substantive qualitative evidence of police collusion with rioters in 2002. See for example Gupta 2002; Nandy 2002; Concerned Citizens' Tribunal 2003; Engineer 2003; Brass 2006; Spodek 2011; Yagnik and Sheth 2011.

employed spatial strategies to create credible threats of a counterattack. These strategies became an important factor towards the different outcomes of attack.

3. Examining dominant explanations in the field

In this section the two most influential explanations in the variation of Hindu-Muslim violence are discussed: electoral logic and interethnic civic ties. Based upon ethnographic data collected from the three neighbourhoods, it became evident that the BJP had an electoral incentive to foment violence in the municipal ward which enabled large-scale mobilisation of the state machinery, including the police, BJP politicians and Sangh Parivar affiliates. Yet not all neighbourhoods experienced the same level of violence. Interethnic quotidian ties were present in the peaceful and, notably, also in the lethal neighbourhood. I provide evidence of the existence of political motivation for violence and the extent of interethnic ties in Behrampura in sections 3.1. and 3.2.

3.1. Political incentive

Findings of chapter 2 indicated that BJP-supported violence was worst in towns and rural areas where the party faced the greatest electoral competition; in turn, the violence yielded dividends for the BJP in subsequent elections. Electoral incentive to foment violence also existed at the municipal ward level. In Behrampura ward, the BJP had defeated the Congress in 1995 (Congress 35.09% and BJP 49.06% of total valid votes) but could not repeat the victory in the elections in the year 2000. This was the election prior to the 2002 violence. The BJP polled 22.77% votes; Congress 38.29%; independents and others 38.93% (Table 4.1). The number of seats for the BJP had reduced from 107 in 1995 to 59 in 2000. A local BJP politician from PN attributed the 1995 victory to the *"1992 effect",* referring to the nation-wide ethnic violence following

the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992. The simultaneous victory of the BJP in the Gujarat state assembly in 1995 vindicated the anti-Muslim rhetoric. Referring to the khaki shorts worn as uniforms by members of the RSS, Kanu, a Dalit Hindu resident of PN said: "Dalits and Muslims were friends earlier… we were both poor, shared the same food habits unlike upper-caste Hindus. There was no difference. But the split happened because of the *khaki chaddis* (shorts) after 1992. They would hold *meetings* for Dalits and poison their minds… I have attended a couple of these *meetings*. They make Dalits commit sinful acts against the Muslims to get votes."

The meetings that Kanu described fit Brass' concept of the IRS in that they were polarising strategies to keep a town or city in a permanent state of awareness of religious conflict, its actors embedded in civil society. Until 1992 a bootlegger network, protected by the incumbent Congress, dominated the local IRS in Ahmedabad; the BJP with its affiliates in the Sangh Parivar became active from the 1990s in the backdrop of the Ayodhya temple campaign. Munna, the PN informant, introduced earlier in chapter 3, knew the workings of both the BJP and Congress for whose leaders he would "break shops and threaten the public". Munna described a distinction in the IRS of the Congress and the BJP:

> "Both parties orchestrate violence … their *methods* are different. The Congress has a long history of supporting influential henchmen, like Abdul Latif you would remember.[68] All you do is get a stabbing done here or stone-pelting there and that starts off a riot. The BJP is much more organised. They hold *meetings*, distribute weapons… it's all well *planned*."

[68] Abdul Latif was a Muslim illegal liquor don in Ahmedabad in the 1980s and 1990s. He died in 1997 in an extra-judicial police shootout.

In Behrampura, in 2002, the "unprecedented scale" of mobilisation was given impetus by the BJP's civic-political networks, "a collusion of local politicians and police with the rioters". This was in line with qualitative evidence from across Gujarat suggesting that attackers came in crowds of at least a hundred, often taking hours or an entire day to loot, burn or kill (Gupta 2002; Engineer 2003; Mann 2005). Muslim respondents in Behrampura named a former mayor of Ahmedabad from the BJP and four officiating members of the VHP as part of crowds orchestrating the violence. A few months before the conviction of BJP MLA Kodnani in the Naroda killings, a local BJP politician in Behrampura I met had expressed sympathy at her "wrongful victimisation": "Yes, we can guide people about what to do but it is wrong to insinuate she had weapons". Police sentiment of the time was reflected in my conversation with a police inspector in Behrampura in 2012: "You see, a lesson had to be taught… we Hindus are tolerant people and, unlike them (Muslims), believe in the concept of *paap* and *punya* (sin and virtue). But there is a limit to tolerance." The "lesson" is typically indicative of justified resistance against the 'aggressive' minority by a 'defenceless' majority, as applied to the Sikhs by Hindus in India in 1984 and to Tamils by Sinhalese in Sri Lanka in 1983 (Tambiah 1986; 1990). Indeed, Hindu respondents in Behrampura emphasised the "inability" of the police in controlling the thousands of vengeful Hindus, justifiably stimulated by intense anger following the Godhra killings. Muslims unanimously claimed that "the police never came" or "sided with Hindus".

While in STN "next-door neighbours collaborated with Hindus of neighbouring KNagar slums encouraged by a local policeman" RRN was peaceful yet tense – Hindu respondents claimed how "*Sanghis* provoked us that we wore bangles and were cowards for not attacking the Muslims". Whether the police colluded with the attackers or were outnumbered, it was evident that their role as law-enforcers was vestigial. In PN, Munna

remembered the March 1 attack: "Until the 28th Hindus here were unaware that the government had given them a free hand to kill Muslims and that the police were with them. Soon they realised this and from 9am to 2.30pm, members of the Bajrang Dal began attacking in large numbers."

Based upon the testimonies, the unprecedented mobilisation of attackers was associated with political incentive to allow anti-Muslim violence across Behrampura ward. That it did not meet equally with the desired intent was also evident from the different levels of violence in the three neighbourhoods. In PN, as mentioned in chapter 3, violence intended to be a pogrom against Muslims assumed a two-way confrontation as below:

- Between Quarter 8 (Muslim) and Bhilvas (Hindu)
- Between Quarter 12 (Muslim) and Quarters 13 and 14 (Hindu) across the 'Wagah border'

As seen in map 3.3, the 10-foot wide 'Wagah border' separated the Hindu Quarters from the Muslim Quarters. It had existed before 2002 and residents had made use of the natural boundary to create their community-specific spaces over time.

3.2. Interethnic engagement

In context of Varshney's (2002) thesis of interethnic quotidian and associational ties as a key factor in explaining microspatial variation in Hindu-Muslim violence, Chandra (2001) emphasised on the economic dimension of such ties. Chandra argued that associational ties cultivated in the textile mill industry in Ahmedabad prevented violence in the 1940s and 50s because of economic interdependence of Hindus and Muslims and

not because of contact per se. Conversely though, in all my fieldsites respondents reported mutually exclusive occupations. Associational interethnic ties formed in textile mills had long disappeared following the demise of the industry in the 1980s. Respondents in all fieldsites were engaged in economic activities independent of the other community's participation, e.g. autorickshaw driving or manual labour. To illustrate further, the owners and lessees of the 191 shops in KM2 and 210 in KM3 were Muslims who claimed that the prohibition of accepting interest (*riba*) under Islamic law was the main deterrent for Hindus to enter the trade. Munaf, a shop owner in KM2, said: "We store machinery that is sometimes many years old. If you consider appreciation of a product, we should earn interest on it but that is forbidden in our religion, so we sell it at a flat rate despite passage of time. For a Hindu, this is a *ghaate ka sauda* (unprofitable deal)." Sanjay, a BJP Yuva Morcha (youth wing) member claimed Muslims "circulate their ware in the market rather than legally buying and selling which has affected our (Hindus) credibility". Thus economic interdependence did not exist between Hindus and Muslims. I now demonstrate the existence of interethnic ties of a non-economic nature in both RRN and PN yet outcomes of attacks were different.

As introduced in Chapter 3, RRN's slum committee or Mandal of 21 members, both Hindu and Muslim, existed in RRN since 1966.[69] The Mandal's concerted effort in RRN to maintain interethnic alliances during times of peace (example, visiting each other on festivals) had created a social norm wherein peacekeeping efforts were sustained because the entire settlement approved of it. Hardly any comparable engagement was apparent in STN where neighbourly mistrust was tangible. Notably, however, interethnic engagement in lethal PN had a higher perceptible presence than that in STN. On February 28, anticipating trouble, Hindus and Muslim "friends and neighbours" of PN

[69] I discuss this in Chapter 5 in detail.

and residents of adjoining Hindu slum, Bhilvas, staged a symbolic peace demonstration on the 'Wagah border'. Bhikhabhai, a Hindu resident of PN recalled:

> "There were 10-12 of us sitting on the *border*. The police arrived at 10.30 pm and started a *lathi charge*, as if they wanted to incite violence. We continued to sit there to signal we did not mean to provoke violence… but things did not look good. Next day 50-60 Hindus from nearby slums entered PN through Gate 2. I called up the *police commissioner's* office from my landline phone at 11 am but there was no response"

There were similar quotidian ties between Muslims of KM2 and their Dalit Hindu neighbours, a reason that prevented Sajid, one of the two watchmen killed on February 28, from staying away from work on the 27th. His wife told me he had little reason to be afraid: "In the riots of 1985, he did not come home for a month. He didn't need to… neighbouring Rabaris (OBC Hindu) gave him food and water. In 1992, policemen helped him to return home. He thought this too would pass. What happened in 2002 was unexpected and very sudden." Previous episodes of violence had not been lethal for KM2. "We left the market but asked the security guards to stay… we had no idea their lives could be in danger. In 1969 and 1992, the market was attacked but only on the outside. Rioters had not entered it," said Arbaaz, a shop-owner in KM2, indicating the scale of mobilisation in 2002.

The unexpected outcomes of interethnic contact can be drawn from the ambiguity that lies in defining the nature of such ties in context of violence and conditions under which 'cordial' neighbours would attack one another. Pettigrew (1998:76) argues that for contact to be effective "'friendship potential' is an essential, not merely facilitating, condition for positive intergroup contact effects that generalize". In RRN neither community could ignore the objective differences they saw in the other. A common sign

that Hindus of RRN used to indicate RRN Muslims was a finger slicing across the throat in a swift movement. It was not merely indicative of an occupational stereotype of Muslims (butchery) but also of their disposition. RRN Muslims called the Hindus "back-stabbers and liars". Interethnic ties were neither strictly friendly or economy-dependent nor a gradual outcome of cultural and social contact, but emerged from meticulously cultivated interaction.

Contact theory also finds less resonance in the study of whites and black Americans in the US given the legimitisation of hatred against blacks, both before and after the Civil War (McLaren 2003). This is similar to India where Muslim national identity is commonly questioned (Gupta 2002) and is particularly true of the troubled ethnic environment of urban Gujarat where the state champions the right of the majority community to violence against the minority (Rajagopal 2010). Whereas proximity of houses and design factors increase the opportunity for contact (e.g. Festinger, Schachter and Back 1950) to affect social action, it does not necessarily bring about interethnic alliances. Grannis (1998), in his study of trivial streets in American cities, demonstrates that racial relations developed not as an outcome of spatial proximity but as a consequence of the pattern of the residential or tertiary street networks which rarely crossed racial lines. Urban residents in neighbourhoods were aligned so as to not be "down the street" (provided it is a residential street) from people of a different race rather than to be distant from them "as the crow flies" (p. 1559). Mere distribution of groups in close proximity geographically does not automatically guarantee optimal contact. The limited explanatory power of dominant theories draws attention towards ecological factors.

4. Spatial configuration in fieldsites

The following section describes the strategies adopted by attackers and potential victims that affected the outcomes of attacks in the three neighbourhoods.

4.1. Ram Rahimnagar (RRN)

My earlier dozen-odd visits to this slum dwelling in the previous five years were mainly as a journalist, my 'news perspective' often oblivious to the apparent sights and sounds of the place. Or it could be that my awareness of the spatial structure of the slum dwelling came about only when I first travelled there in an autorickshaw – the driver had refused to enter the narrow, slushy road (in Map 3.2, it is the T-intersection leading into RRN). "I will be unable to get out easily," he had told me. It was the congestion he was hinting at. The road was narrowed by years of encroachments on either side. The narrow road ran along half a kilometre into the slum till it reached an open central area. On either side were 29 lanes, housing Hindu and Muslim homes, the former mostly aligned along the river Sabarmati. The other end of the central area connected another narrow road leading into the slum neighbourhood of STN.

Although RRN maintained peace a few respondents like Salman were aware of the scale of mobilisation. Salman's awareness emanated from his experience as a rioter that year – "on the *border"*. The "border" in RRN was the T-intersection which separated the encroachment-congested road leading into RRN from the main throughway to the north. An attacker could access RRN from four approaches: (A) South: Road contiguous with STN. (B) North: T-intersection. Five persons were killed on the main road, within half a kilometre from RRN's entrance (C) East: Dominated by Muslim-majority slums (D) West: Towards the riverbank.

RRN's vigilantes were active at all times of day and night. Yet rioters could easily have entered through road (A) following riots in STN on March 1 when an estimated crowd of 500-600 had set Muslim houses on fire (Police FIR, 1 March). Roads (B) and (D) were both convenient entry points, the latter because the river was dry at that time of year. Factories randomly surrounded RRN were closed since the VHP had called for the nation-wide *bandh* on February 28.

Even as attackers took (D) to enter STN they did not enter RRN plausibly because of the "famous *sangathan* (unity)" that respondents in all my other fieldsites often spoke about. RRN Hindus were neither seen as antagonists by the RRN Muslims nor as potential collaborators by the STN attackers. "We were all keeping vigil on the banks… Hindus and Muslims. Anyone with a plan to attack would be afraid because everyone in our vicinity knew that our people would never go against us," said Hindu respondent Nilesh.

However, the magnitude of the triggering event in 2002 had activated intense fear among inhabitants. Closure of boundaries meant that, in the beginning, none knew who the intended target of attacks was. Each perceived their own to be the potential target. "I had heard that the Muslims were attacking from the riverbank!" an elderly Hindu woman told me. She had locked herself up in her hut, whereas some of her Hindu neighbours fled to homes of relatives outside RRN on the evening of February 27, before trouble began.

A few Muslims had also locked their houses and fled to nearby Muslim slums but others adopted a unique deterrence method to ensure that no more Muslims fled. On February 28 and March 1, the woman gangster Zulekha instructed Salman and other young Muslim inhabitants to apply a second lock on already locked houses of Muslim residents who had fled. Salman said: "If Muslims fled, we would become vulnerable. So

if they would return to their double-locked houses, we would make them promise not to do this again and make them pay for the second lock! This of course did not apply to the Hindus… it did not matter to us if they fled." Respondents from PN and STN affirmed the high Muslim proportion in RRN to be an important deterrent as also RRN's built environment. "Its *naksha* (map/geography) is intimidating. Even if you managed to enter, going back would be tough… the Muslims would surround you," Vrajesh, a Hindu rioter from PN said. The strategy of manipulating the ethnic balance and maintaining population equilibrium worked both ways. After the first three days of violence, 15-20 Muslim inhabitants hired vans with the help of the Zulekha to "defend" Muslims in neighbourhoods towards the north. "It was self-defence… we did not go there to riot. Our brothers needed us and so we went," a Muslim man who had been part of the team discreetly said.

4.2. Santoshnagar (STN)

Like RRN, STN had four approaches: (A) the road in the north contiguous with RRN, (B) the main road to the south, (C) a side-road passing through Muslim-majority slums on the east and (D) the riverbank side on the west (Map 4.1). Respondents testified that attackers predominantly came from K Nagar, accessing (D). Given the density of Hindus in south-west STN on account of K Nagar (estimated population 6,000 in 2001) their disproportionate representation among attackers would not be surprising. It is, therefore, notable that a few Hindu attackers also belonged to the intermixed slums on the east but chose to attack from the riverbank side. Shankar, a Hindu BJP member from STN, said: "The eastern slum attackers could not have managed to return the same way because of a large number of Muslims on the eastern side." The eastern road was a high-risk exit for the attacker who faced the eventuality of a Muslim counterattack.

Muslims of STN were less vulnerable to lethal attacks as they found an optimal escape route into RRN or the eastern slums (Police FIR, 18 March). Muslim respondent, Zebunnnisa, did not regret her Rs. 50,000 worth of property loss on March 1: "I ran towards RRN on February 28 itself when we heard something terrible had happened. There was no one to guard my house and it got looted and burnt. At least I lived." After the April 14 attack, small brick walls were put up to separate the Hindus from the Muslims as a deterrent to future attacks as well as a signal to "keep within your territory".

4.3a. Parikshitlalnagar (PN)

In PN the attacker had to first select the road of entry into PN's vicinity and then the entry points to access PN Quarters. The PN Quarters could be imagined as an inverted L-shaped block, the vertical L part being Muslim-majority and the horizontal Hindu-majority. I use Quarter 1 as the point of reference, in which case a throughway each ran along towards the north and the west of the Quarter. The northern throughway connected with Hindu-majority neighbourhoods and the western connected with Muslim-majority Shah Alam, a kilometre southwards. The "Wagah border" not only separated the Hindu and Muslim parts but also the Hindu slums of Bhilvas to the south-east. KM3 was to the west of PN. The market was bounded on its northern and southern end by a mosque each, A and B in maps 3.3 and 3.5. The entire length of the market – approximately 300 metres – was the distance between the mosques. The mosques are important evidence, for Mosque B was completely unaffected whereas Mosque A could be burned. Entry gates 1 and 2 of PN opened out on to the northern throughway and Gate 3 towards the western.

Respondent testimonies and police records document that mobilisation of attackers in PN's vicinity was exceptionally strong on the northern throughway. Muslim respondent

Rauf explained: “The western throughway connects to Shah Alam in the south. Had Hindus tried this way their escape could not be guaranteed! They could not touch the mosque on this side (B).” Once PN’s vicinity was breached, accessing the Quarters was possible from all the three gates. Testimonies indicate that attackers accessed only Gates 1 and 2 towards the north and not Gate 3 in the west which posed the eventuality of a counterattack from the south. Muslims had prepared to counterattack after their peacekeeping attempt on the border had failed. March 1 onwards, the ‘empty space’ of the border had transformed into a ‘safe space’, a point of counterattack. On May 5, a few attackers had entered Gate 1 intending to target Muslims in the intermixed Quarter 1. But their attempt was thwarted. “They could not see us but we could from atop Quarter 8. Once they entered, we mobilised in front of Gate 1 and they ran away,” said Muslim respondent, Amir, who lost his hand in the counterattack. In another such clash, a Muslim man was killed in police firing in Quarter 23. Map 4.2 shows the spatial configuration of attacks in PN.

The architecture of PN contributed in enabling counterattacks and disabling new attacks. For example, illegal rooms constructed on the mezzanine floors of Quarters 9 and 12 connected with each other and, subsequently, created a pathway for inhabitants of Quarter 12 to make a quick escape to Quarter 9, while fighting the attack from Quarters 13 and 14. This reflects Coleman’s (1989) demonstration that the removal of overhead walkways that joined buildings in two Westminster Estates halved the crime rate. On May 5, Hindu residents of Bhilvas constructed a large iron door between their area and Muslim-majority PN (Photo 4.1). “Things calmed down after we made this door. It was *psychology…*worked as a barrier for both of us. It could have been brought down by them (Muslims), but they knew this was a territory they were not supposed to enter any longer,” said Naresh, a Hindu rioter from Bhilvas. The psychological benefit of

constructing new doors and barricading existing ones gained momentum in the middle of the violence. Kanu pointed out one such strategy that the Hindus of Quarter 13 had employed: several Hindu Quarters, like Quarter 13, had a small door that could be accessed discreetly from the 'other side' to climb up the stairs of that Quarter. This was permanently barricaded (Photo 4.2). "What if a Muslim entered this and climbed up to kill us? We did not take chances."

Similar to RRN Muslims, those in PN also ensured they had "strength in numbers". One strategy, as Amir said, was to "stay and fight, else leave our locked houses vulnerable". From March 2, Quarter 7 to the south became an access route for Muslims of Shah Alam to join PN Muslims in counterattacks.

4.3b. Kabadi Markets (KM2 and KM3)

Architecturally, nothing had changed in the markets since 2002. Four high walls, accessible by two iron gates, circumscribed the markets and only the terraces of Hindu residences were visible from inside, over the walls. Self-owned shops were clustered on the inside; rented shops lined up the outer walls of the markets. Gas cylinders, oil, petrol, rubber tyres were strewn around – "easy fuel for arsonists". Both markets were attacked on February 28, 2002. The lethal attack on KM2 occurred at 9am, half an hour before the day's trading had begun. Two of the three Muslim security guards were burnt alive within the next hour; one of them, Rashid, managed to escape. The market was looted consistently over the next three months. KM3 was attacked at 10am on the same day, half an hour after the day's trading had begun, and again at 1.35pm on May 5; no one was killed. Perpetrators of KM3 did not enter the market on February 28 and damaged six outer shops. This was surprising considering the higher value of machinery inside KM3.

How could the difference in outcomes of attacks be explained? The attack on KM3 had weakened considerably and the gates could not be breached because of a counter mobilisation of Muslims near Gate 3 (Map 4.3). Unlike the KM2 shop-owners who had left the market, 30 Muslim shop owners were present inside KM3 as trading had started for the day. They had by then heard about the attack on KM2. Both a physical obstacle and a counterattack became operational as a result. Muslims inside ensured the gates were guarded on the outside. The counterattack outside Gate 3 was mobilised with the help of a local Hindu Congress MLA, whose patronage of Dalit and Muslim voters of the vicinity was well-known, and Muslim residents of PN. "Attackers fled after managing to burn six shops and the mosque near the north," said Rauf. On May 5 there was another attack at 1.15pm. "This time it was easier to attack shops inside the market because the area was under curfew… the fire brigade was stopped from attending to the fire. Curfew was only for Muslims you know, so we were all in our homes," said Muslim respondent Mahmud.

KM2 could be accessed from the south by two iron gates, facing Hindu-majority residences. Watchman Rashid witnessed attackers climbing over the gates using its pillars as footholds: "The attackers then let in thousands of others who faced little risk of a counterattack from the three of us inside." In the absence of an optimal route for escape, hiding in one of the shops of the vast market was the only life-saving strategy that occurred at that instant to the watchmen of KM2. Rashid recalled the day's events: "I called up the police control room around 9am but no one answered. I called up my family in Shah Alam who advised me against fleeing… our home was 2 km away and they feared I could get killed on the way. They were right, for there is no Muslim *basti* (settlement) outside KM2." Rashid hid in a pitch-dark spot in the corner of a shop inside KM2 for three days, without food and water. "Those two guards got killed because they

came out of their hiding place to see what was happening. The mob set them alight right there." On March 3, a police patrol van rescued him. "The market was looted repeatedly over the next three months. There was no one to stop them because there were no Muslims around."

5. Summary

First, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this research. This is a small-N study with three detailed comparable cases. As discussed in chapter 3, the selection of the primary cases was dictated by methodological reasons. Secondly, incomplete police records posed the methodological problem of inaccessibility to participants of lethal attacks making it difficult to know the local origin of the attackers, whether the same crowd overlapped at the target or were they characteristically different at both places. It was possible that the same individual had engaged in a lethal attack more than once and at more than one place. Of course, tracking down riot participants is "most difficult" in civilian riots and "even more difficult (is to) engage with them in dialogue to describe and "explain" their intentions and actions" (Tambiah 1997: 1178).

Despite these concerns, the strength of this study lies in its in-depth investigation of microspatial differences in violence in a research design that holds the political configuration of fieldsites constant. Indeed, the horrific Godhra incident had triggered widespread anger. En masse mobilisation and state-supported machinery intent on electoral gain was operational across the ward. Yet not all neighbourhoods experienced the same level of violence. Interethnic civic ties – a factor argued to be a deterrent to such operational riot systems – could partly explain the peace in one neighbourhood but not the high level of violence in the lethal neighbourhoods despite existing ties. These findings urge an understanding of the mechanism of contact as a deterrent for violence,

firstly, within contexts where legitimisation of prejudice would absolve state-supported violence and, secondly, in face of mass mobilisation produced as a result of state support. This is in view of evidence that historically hostile environments where prejudice (even violence) finds social legitimacy and is condoned may not produce expected effects of contact (McLaren 2003). While I do not debate the effect of contact in the reduction of prejudice, which finds substantive evidence in a variety of contexts, the most pertinent question is the effect of spatial proximity on optimal contact. For example, residents of RRN shared interethnic ties that were neither strictly friendly nor economy-dependent. They were not a gradual outcome of cultural and social contact, but emerged from meticulously cultivated interaction.

A crucial factor emerged during my fieldwork: the ecological framework of the neighbourhoods. Despite the heightened emotions triggered by the Godhra incident perpetrators did not ignore their own level of risk associated with attacks, which they assessed by the target's situational factors. I conceptualise the situational context as 'spatial configuration', a collective of two factors: (1) Built environment and (2) Population concentration. Either or both factors had to be considered to explain the different levels of violence over space. The spatial configuration enabled the attackers and the targets to assess routes that would pose minimal risk to their own lives.. The built environment variably provided a means of opportunity or constraint. Respondents had a keen knowledge of their space, its architectural strengths and weaknesses that were exploited. Population concentration was indicative of the perceived power of the 'space'. An attacker perceived the space to be powerful if its occupants could signal a formidable counterattack.

How did these factors translate at the microspatial level? In RRN, while carefully crafted interethnic ties helped in sustaining cooperation between Hindus and Muslims

within the enclosed space of RRN, residents adopted an ecology-based strategy of maintaining the concentration of the Muslim population. An innovative sanctioning mechanism of double-locking the doors of Muslims to prevent them from fleeing ensured the population concentration of Muslims did not reduce. In STN, the minimal risk of counterattack resulted in attacks, but an optimal escape into RRN ensured no fatalities. In PN, the pre-existing political context had positively led to a higher frequency of attacks. However, I demonstrate that the combined effect of the architecture and the population concentration was significant in enabling some of the attacks to turn lethal and, in other cases, could convert a potentially one-sided attack into a two-sided confrontation; killings and property damage was restricted to the northern end whereas a strong counterattack on the southern end deterred killings. In lethal KM2 attackers were predisposed to the fact that the market posed negligible risk to them and very high risk to the targets who had no optimal escape route. In KM3, the built environment enabled the targets to manipulate a counterattack and the attackers to pre-empt their risk of attack. Table 4.2 summarises the factors.

6. Conclusion

Ahmedabad city in Gujarat witnessed the highest number of killings in anti-Muslim violence in 2002. Yet neighbourhoods experienced different levels of violence even within a single municipal ward. Within existing explanations of Hindu-Muslim violence the most influential body of work flags the role of political elites in violence (Wilkinson 2004), facilitated by an IRS at the microspatial level (Brass 2003). Interethnic civic engagement is argued to be a deterrent to strategically organised violence (Varshney 2002).

In this paper I focus on three neighbourhoods with varying violence, within the same ward. Constructing the events of the violence by months/hours/days, I argue that the different outcomes of violence could not be explained without investigating the functional power of existing space and value maximising ecology-based strategies. Crucially, emotions of hatred and anger notwithstanding, attackers were unlikely to ignore risk factors to their own self, weighed on the basis of the ecology of the targeted space. This is conceptualised here as 'spatial configuration' – a combination of the population concentration of the target group and the built environment. An attack would be posited as high risk if both factors existed simultaneously: high probability of counterattack and an impeding built environment.

The importance of ecology discounts neither the role of pre-existing networks as a factor behind the spatially different levels of mobilisation nor that of ethnic hatred – embedded, in this case, in a context of unusually troubled ethnic relations – as the raw stimulus behind the unprecedented mobilisation. What this study seeks to highlight is that actions motivated by ethnic hatred could also respond to rational calculations. Substantial field evidence indicates that decisions of attacks could be made at the spur of the moment, during an attack. Agents aware of their ecological environment (having grown up in a certain neighbourhood) could proactively maximise opportunity (e.g. KM2) or exploit existing spatial contexts to transform the proposed outcome of an action (e.g. KM3).

Can these findings be generalised? Preliminary investigation of Naroda Patiya neighbourhood where the worst massacre occurred on February 28 was indicative of the importance of ecology. Ninety-seven Muslims were killed in Naroda Patiya, a Hindu-majority neighbourhood in Naroda Road ward on February 28. Victims disproportionately comprised women (35) and children (36) (*Times of India,* 2 September

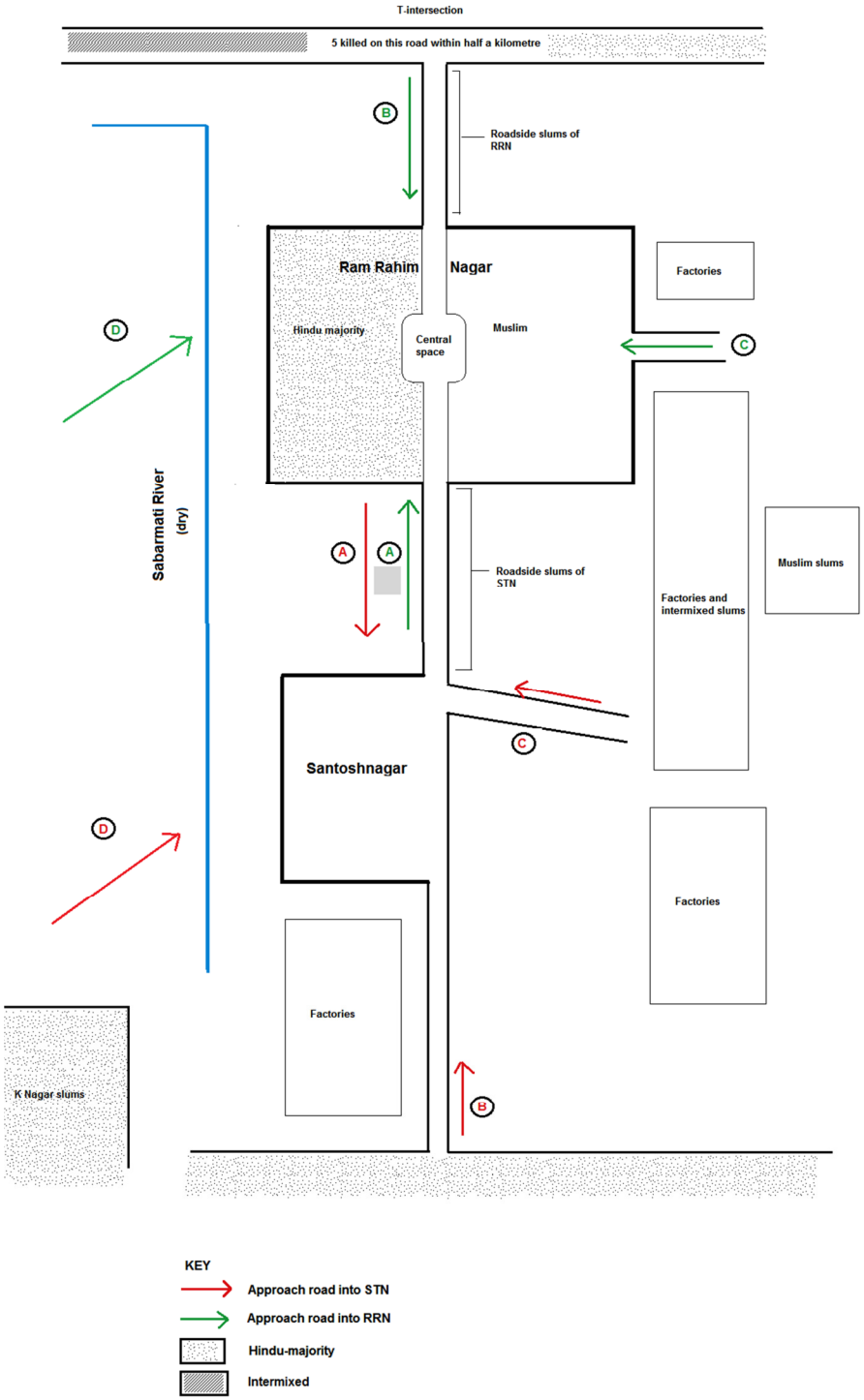
2012). The closest Muslim-majority neighbourhood was two kilometres away towards the south. Fleeing there meant first climbing over a tall concrete wall, which Muslim respondent Altaf from Naroda Patiya showed me, and then running a distance. "Among those who could escape were mostly men because women were not accustomed to physical exertion and a few of them were carrying infants and escorting children."[70]

These findings open up observable implications to test in future research, such as the systematic understanding of the links between spatial structures of street networks, contact, prejudice and violence for intermixed neighbourhoods. It would be also be useful to investigate the ecological strategies employed by attackers in societies where violence is legitimised by the state as against where it is non-normative. For example, findings of Baudains, Braithwaite and Johnson (2012) who investigate the London riots of 2011, a non-normative form of violence where the cost of participation in violence would be greater than that in Gujarat, resonate with mine. They suggest that although the riots were spontaneous they subsequently formed quite distinct spatial patterns which emerged as a result of the interactions between different actors – in their case the rioters and the police. As one exercise, they explore patterns in the destinations of rioters and find that most rioters travelled only short distances to engage in the disturbances. A topic of future research that they raise, and so do my findings, would be to explore patterns in offenders' journeys to crime by locating the destination they travelled.

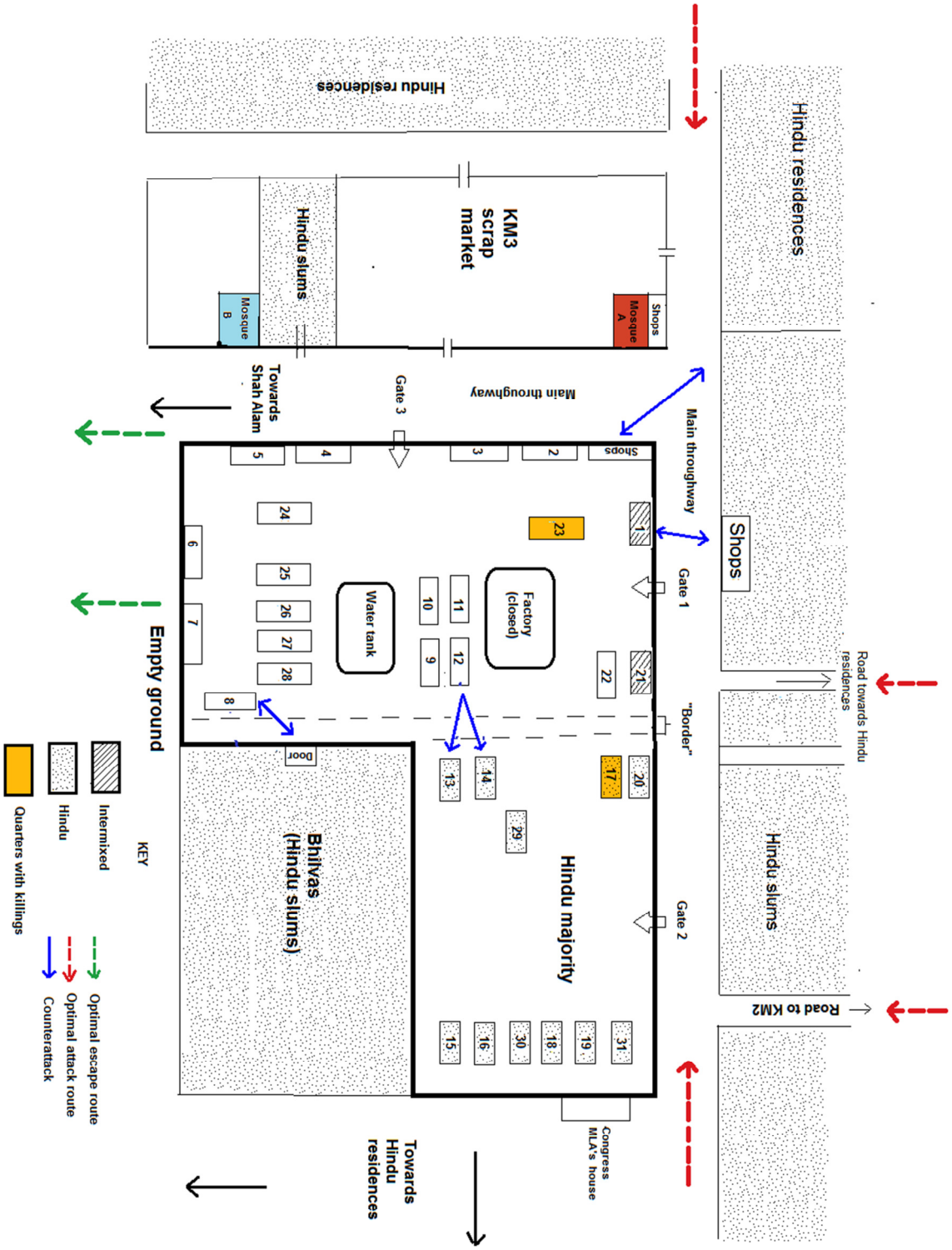
[70] The presence of a large pit in one of the lanes of the neighbourhoods contributed to the magnitude of killings. Victims could not climb out of it once they entered it or were thrown into it (Transcript of perpetrator Babu Bajrangi's admission of killings: *Tehelka*, 1 September 2007). Bajrangi was convicted of the killings and sentenced to life imprisonment in August 2012.

Appendix for Chapter 4

Map 4.1: Spatial configuration of RRN and STN attacks



Map 4.2: Spatial configuration of PN attacks



Map 4.3: Spatial configuration of KM3 attacks

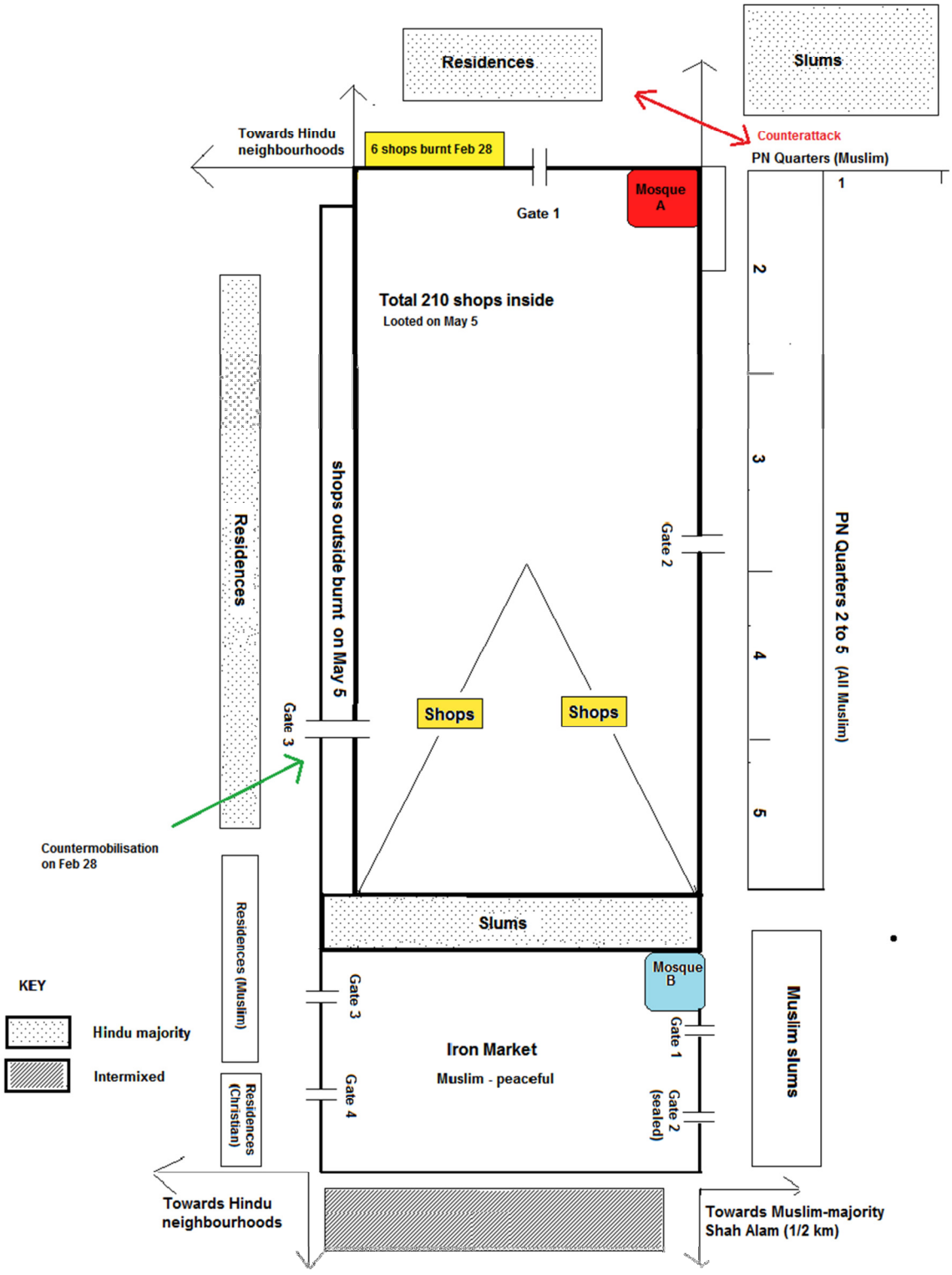


Photo 4.1: Door constructed in May 2002 separating Hindus from Muslims in PN



Photo 4.2: Example of barricaded door in PN Quarter 13



Table 4.1: Electoral performance of BJP and Congress in Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation elections, 1995-2010

Municipal ward	1995		2000		2005		2010[a]	
	%Cong	%BJP	%Cong	%BJP	%Cong	%BJP	%Cong	%BJP
Behrampura	35.09	49.06	38.29	22.77	31.34	29.53	48.29	23.03
Danilimda	45.10	38	41.18	27.16	32.22	35.99	78.57	17.75

[a]The number of wards increased from 43 to 64 in 2010 following delimitation of constituency boundaries

Table 4.2: Summary of ecological factors for each primary fieldsite

Site	*1. Interethnic civic ties*	*2. Built environment*		*3. Population concentration*	*Outcome*
		a. Attack route	*b. Escape route*		
Ram Rahimnagar (RRN)	High, intentionally created	Alternative exit lacking	Present on the eastern side	High; Muslims prevented from fleeing	Peaceful
Santoshnagar (STN)	*Low*	*Optimal on the southern side and the riverbank side to the west*	*Present*	*Low*	*Looting and arson*
Parikshitlalnagar (PN)	Medium	Optimal only on northern side	Present only on southern side	Medium, increased by neighbouring Muslims	Two-way fight: three killed towards northern side; arson towards southern side
Kabadi Market 2 (KM2)	*Medium*	*Optimal*	*Absent*	*Low*	*Two killed*
Kabadi Market 3 (KM3)	Medium	Optimal	Present	Medium, increased by neighbouring Muslims	Looting and arson

CHAPTER 5

Cooperation and Protection in a Peaceful Neighbourhood

"People in our surrounding areas have always laughed at our amity. They say, "Oh here come the Hindu-Muslim bhai-bhai (brother-brother) guys! The VHP and Bajrang Dal provoked us in 2002, that we wore bangles, we were cowards for not attacking the Muslims... we ignored them all."

-Haribhai, a Hindu resident of RRN

1. Introduction

Chapter 4 drew upon Collins' (2008) central argument that any process of organising violence involves the overpowering of confrontational tension. Despite the heightened emotions triggered by the Godhra incident, perpetrators did not ignore their own level of risk associated with attacks which they assessed by the target's situational context or spatial configuration, a collective of two factors: the built environment and population concentration of targets. One implication of the findings was that interethnic engagement (Varshney 2002) was insufficient to resist the unprecedented scale of attacks. In the peaceful neighbourhood of RRN, despite meticulously cultivated interethnic alliances, Muslim residents had to devise ecological strategies to maintain a population concentration that deterred attackers.

This chapter examines the peaceful neighbourhood more closely. What makes RRN an extraordinary case for study was its complete peace in an environment where anti-Muslim violence had acquired political and social legitimacy. For a Hindu in Ahmedabad, violence against Muslims was normative and portrayed low risk and

potentially high benefit, both emotional and material. Emotionally, violence harnessed ethnic pride of being able to defend the majority group and the country against anti-national aggression. Protest against anti-Muslim attacks was viewed as an act of cowardice. The magnitude of the triggering event had justified the anger and resentment against Muslims as natural and acceptable. It had also provided a raw stimulus for mobilisation and engagement in physical violence. The material benefit was, of course, looting and taking possession of Muslim property. Hindus of RRN were also potential beneficiaries of Muslim houses.

The principal question this chapter attempts to answer is: why did Hindus of RRN choose to cooperate with Muslims in RRN in keeping peace than behaving opportunistically at a time when violence was more beneficial and acceptable than peace? This question is addressed first of all discussing, in particular, a recent important microspatial study by Berenschot (2009, 2010, 2011) of two Ahmedabad neighbourhoods[71] which draws upon the literature on clientelistic exchanges between voters and the government to advance an understanding of how a neighbourhood's level of violence is linked to the "intermediaries" (Berenschot 2010: 224) facilitating access of state resources to citizens. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first provides a context to the 2002 violence by discussing the institutionalisation of interethnic harmony in RRN in the years preceding the violence (section 3). The founding members or elders of the intermixed slum committee in RRN – the Mandal – had acquired credible authority over the years which played a substantive role in monitoring the behaviour of residents during the attacks of 2002. This credibility can certainly be viewed as an outcome of their capacity as facilitators of patronage-based resources of the municipal Congress government in the ward for RRN's residents. The second section dwells on the choices

[71] While Berenschot anonymises the violent neighbourhood, he retains the name of the peaceful neighbourhood which is also RRN.

that the members of each ethnic group faced at the time. Given the legitimacy of anti-Muslim violence and mobilisation of the Sangh Parivar's riot networks in Behrampura ward, as discussed in chapter 4, Muslims of RRN were less likely to initiate an attack. They either had the choice to flee from RRN; stay back; or keep peace voluntarily. For Hindus the choices were either to attack RRN Muslims; abstain from attack; or keep peace voluntarily. Three questions subsequently arise: how were outsiders prevented from destabilising harmony in RRN? Why did RRN Hindus not attack RRN Muslims? Why did RRN Muslims not flee? I primarily draw upon theoretical aspects of commitment resolution between principals and agents in collective action to answer these questions.

Only after repeated visits to RRN over several months did I discover the hidden force of enforcement underpinning what seemed to be communal cooperation**.** Although the Mandal's authority had legitimised peacekeeping in RRN at the time of the attacks, this mechanism alone was insufficient to ensure total compliance of Hindu residents. Basing my argument on the specific issue of compliance in cooperation through monitoring and sanctioning of principals, I argue that a paradoxical combination of legitimate and illegitimate institutions in RRN doubled up as an enforcement mechanism that overcame commitment issues between Hindus and Muslims. The legitimate institution was the intermixed slum Mandal and the illegitimate was an extralegal operator, a Muslim woman whom I anonymise as Zulekha. Both collaborated to enforce cooperation through coercive measures. The Mandal proscribed outsiders from entering RRN through methods best described as physical vigilantism, thus clearly defining its boundaries whereas Zulekha enforced compliance by threatening to punish fellow Muslims of RRN who attempted to flee RRN, thereby preventing a decrease in their population which would have made the rest of their group vulnerable to attacks. The latter is partly the

answer to why Hindu residents did not attack Muslims. Indeed, the norms of 'good behaviour' instilled by the Mandal in the years preceding the 2002 violence meant that keeping peace was a matter of pride and positive social identity for one section of Hindus. Plausibly, these Hindus kept peace voluntarily. The challenge was to prevent RRN Hindus who held deep prejudice for RRN Muslims (section 3.2) and RRN Hindus who had rioted outside RRN (section 4.2) from attacking Muslims of RRN. Positive feedback suggests that even a small change (one person starting a riot) could lead to large unexpected effects because dynamic processes of collective action are contingent on the action of others (Biggs 2003). By using methods that deterred Muslims from fleeing, Zulekha and her network of heavies in RRN ensured that Hindus continued to face a credible threat of Muslim counterattack. In section 4.2.1 I discuss Zulekha's operations and how she cultivated a perception of fear among residents over the years.

2. Existing explanations of RRN's peacefulness

Berenschot's ethnographic study compares a peaceful neighbourhood with a violent neighbourhood in Ahmedabad. It draws upon the influential work of Brass (1997, 2003) and Wilkinson (2004) on ethnic violence and links it to clientelistic – more narrowly, patronage – systems of governance in developing democracies (e.g. Scott 1972; Stokes 2005; Chandra 2007a, 2007b; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007; Stokes 2007).

In this section, I will briefly introduce the concept of clientelism (and patronage) and the ways by which patron-client associations in electoral mobilisations survive. I then discuss Berenschot's argument and the limitations of explaining dynamic forms of mobilisation, such as ethnic violence, within a patron-client framework.

A clientelistic political linkage between the voter and the politician/government is characterised by *"the direct exchange of a citizen's vote in return for direct payments or*

continuing access to employment, goods, and services" (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007: 2; emphasis in original). Patronage is a narrow subclass of clientelism, specifically the proffering of public resources (most typically public employment) by office holders in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution is the clientelist one: did you – will you – vote for me? (Stokes 2007: 606). Patronage and clientelism tend to be used interchangeably (e.g. Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007) because the point to critically note is the distributive criterion that distinguishes clientelism and its subclasses from other materially oriented political strategies, such as pork barrel politics. Whereas benefits involved in pork barrel politics have a public good quality, those involved in a clientelistic or patronage exchange are either private goods or club goods (also called 'toll goods'). The nature of goods can be differentiated on the basis of two attributes: exclusion and jointness of use (Ostrom and Ostrom 1978). A purely public good is, firstly, one whose benefit cannot be denied to a potential user. In other words, a potential user cannot be excluded from enjoying the benefits of a resource, irrespective of their contribution in the production of the good. Secondly, it is perfectly nonsubtractible – one person's use of the good does not impair or subtract the use of the good for another person, e.g. national defence. On the other hand, private goods are subtractible and their benefits can be denied to non-participants in the production or exchange of the good. Clientelistic exchanges involve discretionary access to scarce or highly subsidised private goods – such as land, healthcare, jobs and promotions, money, and as Scott (1972) importantly adds – protection and security.

Stokes' (2005, 2007) seminal work on clientelist parties makes two important contributions that are relevant to this discussion. First is the mechanism by which patrons effectively mobilise electoral support by most likely targeting marginal or swing voters for whom their indifference towards the party is outweighed by the value of the reward.

"Core" or "loyal" voters – those voters with a proven receptiveness to targeted rewards in previous elections rather than an ideological predisposition in favour of the party – are less likely to be targeted unless the patron is himself risk-averse or when he faces ideologically diverse groups and wish to minimise their risk of wasting rewards. The effect of gift-giving in previous elections, therefore, becomes an important control variable in order to overcome the endogeneity problem – did he vote because he was rewarded by the patron or did his self-professed friendliness towards the patron cause him to receive rewards. The second point to note is the commitment problem, wherein one might expect that a voter and the patron may renege on their respective promise (of voting and of providing benefits) once each has been 'paid' (Stokes 2005; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007; Stokes 2007). As the problem of collective action goes, actions that are considered wrong among a group of individuals interacting together over time may not even be included in the set of strategies contemplated by an individual (Ostrom 1990). Although it is not feasible for each candidate to verify if every individual voter has voted (Gambetta 1993), Stokes argues that the survival of patron-client electoral mobilisation depends crucially on the ability of the parties to monitor constituents' votes, reward them for their support and punish them for defection – a phenomenon she terms "perverse accountability" (Stokes 2005: 1) wherein *voters* are held accountable for their actions by *parties* (Stokes 2007: 613, emphasis in original). One of the ways by which monitoring of voters becomes possible is through embedded social networks of actors, mostly political, who possess excellent local knowledge of constituents. The extent of their knowledge increases over time with increased interpersonal relations. Patron-client electoral politics is, therefore, played out as a repeated game or a vertical dyadic alliance where the "dyadic" part underscores the face-to-face quality of clientelism; the "alliance" part focuses on the repeated nature of the relationship (Stokes 2007: 305). In fact,

iterations over time between the patron and client eventually tend to reduce the need for monitoring voting behaviour (Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007).

Berenschot's argument is founded on the framework of patron-client relations. He advances that, at the time of an episode of ethnic violence, potential voters favour intermediaries bearing the capacity of facilitating access to state resources. Intermediaries are local actors – politicians, social workers, local criminals or state officials – who can financially and socially benefit from mediating between the state institutions and voters. The violent neighbourhood was dominated by intermediaries who brokered between citizens and politicians bearing the electoral incentive to instigate violence. Their capacity as credible facilitators of patronage-based resources led people of the neighbourhood to mobilise in favour of the violence. On the other hand, in peaceful RRN, patronage-providing networks were distinct from the politicians who were interested in fomenting the violence and potential voters of RRN had no compulsion to engage in violence. Political intermediaries, mediating between bureaucrats, citizens and service providers, are a constitutive part of the state in Gujarat. The state, therefore, is a 'mediated state', embedded in society in such a way that its interaction with citizens is largely monopolised by networks whose political and often financial success depends on their capacity to manipulate the implementation of the state's policies (Berenschot 2010: 885; Chandra 2007b). This is plausible given the information constraints of a patronage system where the function of intermediaries accounts in bridging the constraint.[72] Using Stokes' framework, the intermediaries act as monitoring agents. Their face-to-face interaction with constituents allows them to make informed guesses about whether a voter defected to another party despite being given discretionary goods or supported the party. Monitoring becomes more feasible when the technology of voting, the ballot, is

[72] Experimental evidence finds greater voter participation and less ethnicised voting following information campaigns to educate voters (e.g. Banerjee, Kumar, Pande and Su 2011).

not entirely anonymous. It is also feasible, to a certain extent, when intermediaries or politicians give the impression that the vote is not anonymous. I provide a qualitative example for this in section 4.2.1. However, using a research design, as Berenschot does, wherein the two neighbourhoods of comparison do not appear to share the same political configuration makes it difficult to know the prior reputation of the patron, who his subsequent target voter was, whether core or marginal, and whether the support of a party was on basis of previous rewards or a consequence of current mobilisation. Here mobilisation could be achieved either through gift-giving by the patron or through emotive divides (such as an ethnic riot).[73]

To illustrate from my fieldwork, the municipal ward (Behrampura) and the assembly constituency (Jamalpur) in which RRN and STN were located had Congress incumbents in 2002 (Tables 5.1 and 5.3). It is plausible that electors of STN and RRN had voted the Congress in the previous election based on the capacity of the Congress intermediaries to facilitate an exchange of rewards between the state and elector votes. This does not explain why STN rioted and RRN did not. One explanation could be that RRN received the expected benefits unlike STN. Therefore, STN electors chose to listen to the Sangh Parivar intermediaries in 2002 and rioted. Indeed the BJP's vote in Jamalpur in the subsequent December 2002 election increased by 19.32% , although its candidate did not get elected in the constituency. But the problem with aggregate voting figures is that only a conjecture can be made about neighbourhood-level voting. To give another example, the BJP's vote in PN's Sarkhej constituency had decreased by 2.83% in the December elections despite the re-election of the BJP incumbent (Tables 5.2 and 5.4). The

[73] I use the words 'appear to' because for the anonymised violent neighbourhood in Berenschot's study the nature of incumbents and the political configuration of the municipal ward are not explicit. It may be assumed from the following words that the BJP was in power in the ward or assembly constituency in 2002: "That is what happened in Isanpur, where the BJP could gain a foothold since the 1980s because they could offer better access to state resources at the time when older patronage channels around the rival Congress party were collapsing" (Berenschot 2010: 227).

aggregate figures could mean that voters re-elected the BJP favouring the patronage-based benefits they had received. But they could also mean that the violence adversely affected everyone in the assembly – not just the rioters and the spectators – creating a swing of votes to a rival candidate. A non-recipient of the incumbent's patronage might decide to vote against the politician or party if his property is damaged during violence. Violence, in this case, defeated the purpose of patronage-based voting.

Secondly, it is unclear why mobilisation on the dimension of ascriptive identity, such as Hindutva, be needed if the voter is likely to be attracted by patronage-based benefits. In the information-constrained environment of a patronage democracy, Chandra (2007b) argues that voters are expected to place greater trust in co-ethnic politicians and vote collectively as ethnic groups. Similarly, politicians are faced not only with information lacunae about beneficiaries but also with voter bias towards co-ethnic politicians, subsequently leading them to mobilise voters on ethnic categories and creating a self-reinforcing equilibrium of ethnic favouritism. But in a mediated state, where intermediaries are the conduits of information, ethnic convergence of voting behaviour becomes irrelevant and the need for raising ethnic divisive issues unnecessary. It also makes the logic of ethnic violence and caste violence in India redundant. This clearly contradicts the wide scholarship on the utility of ascriptive-based divisive issues in conflagration of violence and, indeed, contradicts the argument of patronage-based voting and ethnic violence.

Third, and most important, is the aspect of preventing free-riding behaviour. In both types of collective action – voting behaviour and ethnic violence – there is scope for opportunistic defection. As mentioned earlier, a voter and the patron may renege on their respective promise of voting and of providing benefits. Similarly, one individual's attempts to free-ride on the collective efforts of peacekeeping by a community can be

expected if the cost of participation in violence is low. In both cases monitoring of the individual (voter or member of an ethnic group) becomes necessary. What differs is the distinct nature of monitoring mechanism needed in each case. Let us assume that the dynamics in a voter-patron exchange that occurs over time are identical to that of violent mobilisation that is more spontaneous. For the former, suppose that the targeted group of voters do keep their part of the promise and vote after receiving rewards. As long as the number of voters, core or marginal, who do vote tips the balance in favour of the party it does not matter whether total compliance of voters is attained i.e. 100% voting in favour of the party is not necessary. However, for more spontaneous forms of collective action, such as protests and collective violence, positive feedback ensures a wave-like phenomenon wherein an influx of new members increases the motivation of others to join because, as the number of participants increases, the cost of participation for new members decreases and their expected collective benefits increase (Biggs 2003). What is crucial is that even small changes can lead to large, unexpected effects. The challenge for RRN in 2002 was to maintain 100% compliance of Hindu residents in peacekeeping. Iterations over time between patron (politician) and client (voter) reduce the need for monitoring both individual and group voting behaviour, but monitoring behaviour in more urgent forms of collective action would take up a different mechanism. In RRN, the Mandal's authority attained through several years of cultivating interethnic alliances was an important aspect of ensuring compliance of residents and had acquired legitimacy over years as a result of their capacity to facilitate patronage-based resource exchanges for votes between municipal Congress politicians and RRN residents. This by itself was insufficient in ensuring perfect compliance of Hindu residents during the attacks. In the next section I examine the institutionalisation of harmony in RRN in the years preceding

the 2002 violence the norms of 'good behaviour' cultivated through interethnic interaction.

3. Institutionalisation of interethnic harmony before 2002

3.1. Origin of the RRN Mandal and its ethos of harmony

As introduced in chapter 3, RRN was accustomed to violence since 1969 and to media attention since 1992. But when they stood steadfast together for the fourth consecutive time, in 2002, people called them a miracle. By 2006, RRN had developed a taste for the incessant media attention and visits from NGOs. Curious visitors to the slum would be taken on a practised tour: the first landmark was the slum's office – a 10ftx10ft room that testified RRN's unique accomplishment. Newspaper clippings and photos jostled for space on a small tack board in the corner; a glass cupboard doubled up as a showcase displaying the various awards, including a photograph of Congress president Sonia Gandhi handing the award to RRN's representatives in New Delhi; symbols and inscriptions of religious harmony adorned the walls. Residents of the slum would then affirm their solidarity to communal unity. "Ours is a generation that saw leaders of integrity, like Gandhi*ji* (*ji* is a suffix added to names as a mark of respect). We did not need to be taught lessons of humanity through books," Abrar Kapadia, a Khoja Muslim resident of the slum had said to me in 2005.[74] Abrarbhai was educated until class 7. Few Mandal members were as fortunate, for a majority were illiterate.

The other famous place to visit in RRN was a majestic temple of the Hindu deity Hanuman standing next to a serene Muslim *dargah* (Sufi shrine). The caretaker of these two symbols of RRN's harmony was a Hindu *sadhu* (holyman). He was around 60 years

[74] Primarily Ismaili Shias, the Agakhani Khojas are concentrated in South Asia. Derived from the word Khwaja, most Khojas in India live in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. They are sub-divided as Ismaili Khojas, twelver Khojas and Sunni Khojas. Like the Druz of Lebanon and the Dawoodi Bohras, Agakhani Khojas follow priestly hierarchy (Engineer 2007).

old, wearing a long beard and moustache, with unkempt matted hair and chunky strings of *rudraksh* (prayer beads) wound round his neck. When was not in a state of drunken stupor – "It's mostly Muslims who manage illegal liquor dens here for the Hindu customers," two of my gatekeepers had told me – the holyman would share his wisdom of the Partition, the 'Nath Sampradaya' tradition to which he belonged and, subsequently, his love for all beings irrespective of their caste and religion. "The founders of this slum were all worshippers of humanity. Remember the meeting here, brother?" he had asked my Muslim gatekeeper Yusuf. The meeting they referred to was held during the violence of 1969 among the founding residents of RRN and local municipal leaders of the Congress. "They said, 'We are united like the water of the seven rivers'. To which I cut up my forearm and showed them my blood and said 'This is the water of seven rivers'!" the *sadhu* had laughed out loud, adding that a similar meeting was held in 2002 as well although references to self-harm were not made. Yusuf had explained to me that the *sadhu's* words were a symbolic gesture of the oneness of all human beings.

RRN became a refuge for riot evacuees of the 1969 violence. It is plausible that the origin of the solidarity in the 1970s was strengthened as a result of a struggle and subsequent victory of RRN residents against a local extortionist Kanti Maharaj. Kanti's repeated exactions had coerced a few among the residents to organise themselves against him in a legal suit in 1973, which they won on account of scrupulous planning and organisation. This was when they had formed the government-registered welfare 'Mandal', naming it after the Hindu god 'Ram' and the other name of Allah, 'Rahim'. The collective struggle against Maharaj had instilled a confidence in the Mandal's founders, the elders, of their capacity to command authority within their group (Berenschot 2011). The few literate among the elders drafted a Constitution. This was a meticulous eight-page document in Gujarati that listed the membership rules of the

committee, election process and the procedure of generating a self-sustained welfare fund. The know-how of governance reflected in the document came from the experience of Hindu elders like Mangaldas and Madarsinh who worked as supervisors in the neighbouring Calico Mill. In subsequent years, the elders decided that the slum committee's membership would reflect the ethos of the slum's foundation: it would be intermixed. Then on, a team of 21 members have comprised the Mandal: 10 Hindu, 10 Muslim and the 1st being the President who would alternate between Hindu and Muslim every five years (Figure 5.1 shows the Mandal's organisational structure in 2002). The 'election' of the core members was a consensual arrangement among members of the Mandal; the slum dwellers of RRN had little say in whom they would wish to see as their representatives. Indeed, there was no penalty clause in the document for someone who breached rules. Yet, in the period 1973 to 2002, the 21-member formula of the Mandal had never been changed because the founder-elders continued to lead the Mandal. Abrarbhai was its president in 2002 – a man respected for his integrity and "Congress connection" – and Jivabhai its vice-president.[75] Two of the seven core members were BJP party members, the rest were Congress party members. It was always the Congress supporters who had presided over the slum's governance issues since the founding members, Mangaldas and Madarsinh, left behind their Congress legacy. Jivabhai had joined in their footsteps becoming a member of the party since the 1970s. Although the Mandal comprised BJP party affiliates, the BJP had never been allowed to open a campaign office inside RRN. Madhavbhai, one of the two Hindu BJP party members in the Mandal, was formerly associated with the Dalit Panthers – a militant pro-Dalit activist group in the 1970s – and had joined the BJP in 1979. I had asked him whether he considered it unwise to stay with the BJP in RRN, knowing well that residents enjoyed

[75] Abrarbhai died in June 2009, Jivabhai in January 2011. Conversations with the former are from 2005.

the Congress' patronage and the Mandal members were rewarded with the Congress' political favours. He recalled an incident in 1984 when his daughter had contested on a BJP seat from Behrampura. "The people of RRN had broken our BJP office! They even pelted stones at my house. But today the same people have assured me that they will support my daughter if she fights elections under the BJP again… once the BJP comes to power in the ward, of course." It is possible that Madhavbhai and other BJP-supporting elders in RRN could have defected in order to destabilise existing voting blocks in the hope of a long-term shift in power, but did not. Until the BJP formed a government in Behrampura "it is better that I listen to the Muslims of the Mandal".

3.2. The dichotomy of the norms of 'good behaviour' amid interethnic hostility in RRN

For the outsider, RRN was the perfect idyll of humanists in the middle of a turbulent city, despite its generous smattering of illegal liquor and gambling dens and the odd fistfight erupting on any given day. Although the Sangh Parivar had gained acceptance increasingly in Ahmedabad since 1990, in 2002 "Gujarati *asmita*" (pride) had become the rallying call of Hindu nationalism. The Godhra train incident had given voice to latent prejudice; it was legitimate to express hatred towards Muslims and was, indeed, "natural" for "a lesson had to be taught". The Sangh Parivar, including the electorally-motivated BJP's intent to ignite the underlying prejudice, existed across Behrampura, including in RRN. "Peacekeeping attempts were viewed with disdain then. People in our surrounding areas would laugh at our amity and mock us saying, 'Oh here come our Hindu-Muslim 'bhai-bhai' (brother-brother) sloganeers!" said Haribhai, a Hindu Mandal member of RRN, adding: "But we ignored them". Haribhai's words clearly suggest that during the peak of violence self-worth or positive social identity was an incentive for those who

attacked Muslims.[76] Yet, carefully constructed alliances over the years in RRN had created a social norm wherein peacekeeping efforts were sustained because the entire settlement approved it; it was in fact shameful to protest against peacekeeping efforts. The 'good' elders and the 'bad' anti-social elements ensured that the people of RRN saw in these interethnic ties an obligation to cooperate.

This did not take away the objective differences that each community saw in the other and their discreet expressions of antagonism. The *sadhu* was among the first to make a statement about the *dargah* which was both intriguing and surprising: "This was not a Muslim shrine originally. It was a shrine of Jesus Christ! The Christians." Although he had no evidence to back his claim, my gatekeeper Yusuf's increasing discomfort and rising tone of argument plainly gave away his ire. Had I not intervened the argument might have led to an undesirable end. Many such examples in discussions with residents led me to believe that it would be incorrect to assume that RRN residents had imbibed the essence of the 40-year-old Mandal ethos by the letter. Many among both Hindus and Muslims continued to either display condescension or hold antagonistic beliefs about the other community. This was not surprising for the political environment since the Ayodhya campaign during the1990s had become more ethnocentric. Hindu youths from RRN who had been inspired by the elders to respect the Mandal's ethos were unlikely to resist external 'Hindutva' influences when they crossed the boundaries of RRN, say for occupational reasons. Among Muslims, the orthodox Tabligh movement had increasingly gained ground over the past 20 years; new members were often offered subsidies to join the movement, from 2,000 to 10,000 rupees. It was therefore surprising to hear adherence to communal solidarity being made in the same breath as detest for the other community.

[76] The media played an important role in creating a sense of pride and self-worth among residents of RRN but the first news report commending RRN for their peacekeeping skills was published on March 3. This was after the first attack on STN on March 1, when RRN Hindus had ample opportunity and incentive to riot.

I recall Pooriben and her friends – Hindu women of RRN – posing for a photograph, telling me how cameras and photographs no longer amazed them. "Even foreigners come here to understand how we live and take photos! Hindus and Muslims here are one of a kind and respect the ethos of harmony as laid out by our elders. In 2002, Muslims living near the Flower Market in Jamalpur were being attacked by all the *bhangis* (a slur for Dalits). So they came rushing to RRN and we protected them!" Her pride in harmony was inextricably coupled with prejudice against Muslims, as she continued: "But that is because we are Hindus – we believe in both Ram and Rahim. They don't believe in Ram and had we gone to their places for protection, they would have slaughtered us." The dichotomy of simultaneously expressing solidarity and antagonism also existed among the Muslims, many of whom called Hindus "perpetual liars", not without adding: "They are untrustworthy but still very different from the Hindus outside. They visit us on Eid, help us resolve internal matters. Together we ensure no *H-M* ever happens in RRN!"

Apart from religious differences, caste and sectarian differences were also very palpable. Juzar chacha's main grouse with Abrarbhai was the latter not informing him of the National Integration award and "flying off to Delhi by himself, getting photos clicked and trying to show he did it all!" When I asked why Abrar might have done that, Juzar said: "He is a Khoja. They are not *asli* (real) Muslims. He was bound to double-cross us one day." Hindus of RRN called themselves 'Vadhiyaras' and distinct from the "violent untouchables", outside of RRN.[77] Yet, Mandal members of both religious groups would make a concerted effort to sustain interethnic alliances during times of peace: visiting one another on Eid and Diwali or dining together on weddings of RRN residents. Such alliances were largely restricted to within Mandal members – few residents outside the

[77] Vadhiyaras do not fall under the notified Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe lists. They are believed to be a sub-group with origins in the Kadi-Mehsana region in central Gujarat within the larger Chamar caste group. Traditionally, Chamars who worked as shoe-makers are listed under OBC in Gujarat whereas those who worked as skinners of dead animals are listed as SCs.

Mandal knew or cared about the other group. The Mandal's interethnic exchange sent out a strong signal to all residents that harmony had to be taken seriously. It was also a signal of trustworthiness, for citizens could see themselves that the elders practised what they preached.

It is true that in places where violence has occurred, people attempt to portray coexistence when normality has returned. Such attempts are not a form of pretence or ideology but a necessary coping mechanism to maintain stability in a precarious environment (Heitmeyer 2009). In PN and its vicinity, the interethnic ties present during the violence of 1992 had considerably weakened by 2002. Yet in my initial meetings with residents of PN in 2010, both communities portrayed amicable coexistence before 2002.

4. Mechanisms of monitoring and sanctioning during the attacks of 2002

4.1. Closure of boundaries to outsiders through vigil and vigilantism

In times of violence the cultivated alliances would crystallise into a more formal mechanism of vigilantism and vigilance. In 2002, as in previous years, the Mandal activated a select number of Hindus and Muslims as invigilators who would stand guard on RRN's three entrances to prevent outsiders from entering. In the daytime, Mandal members would themselves walk along all 29 lanes of RRN to reassure both communities, especially when a rumour was picked up. In the night a group of Hindus and Muslims would keep vigil on the banks of the parched Sabarmati. Its dried-up land posed an optimal route for the neighbouring Hindu slum residents who had looted and burnt several Muslim shanties in the adjoining STN. "Anyone with a plan to attack would be afraid because everyone in our vicinity knew that our people would never go

against us," said Hindu respondent Nilesh, suggesting the credibility of Hindu-Muslim unity in RRN. But the enormity of the triggering event in 2002 had mobilised attackers on an unprecedented scale and it was "for the first time" that RRN encountered both Muslim and Hindu outsiders who tried to enter the slum. Muslim residents beat up the Muslim troublemakers, Hindu residents beat up the Hindus who happened to be from the VHP (Berenschot 2011). Co-ethnicity was a strong factor in the Mandal's mode of operation with the residents. Haribhai narrated an incident when a rumour was prevented from spreading: "It was a strong rumour… that Muslims had entered RRN with swords to attack us. We called Abrarbhai who went to look after his people while we told our community to stay peaceful." Within the Mandal, the elders ensured cross-ethnic differences were resolved quickly. In 1992, a Hindu resident was accused of damaging the RRN *dargah*. Instead of reporting to the police, the Hindu Mandal elders pacified the Muslim elders and assured them of compensation for the damages. "Matters are resolved among us. We don't let them reach the police station," was a common statement by Hindu and Muslim elders.

4.2. Resolving commitment problems of insiders

With the help of its vigilante, the Mandal had devised a mechanism to punish outsiders during the violence. The other challenge was to avoid attacks among the 9,000 residents of RRN. But was there any evidence to suggest that Hindus of RRN intended to attack Muslims? As section 3.2 demonstrates, antagonism of Hindus towards Muslims coexisted with the pride they took in keeping peace. Although none of the Hindu respondents acknowledged in front of me any intent to attack Muslims, police records provide the arrest details of two RRN Hindus who did engage in arson, stone-pelting and

looting, albeit outside RRN.[78] Positive feedback implied the possibility that one incident of attack within RRN could erupt into a full-scale riot. Defection had to be prevented as full compliance of Hindus in peacekeeping was essential.

In 1971, Mancur Olson's group theory of collective action had first challenged the intuitive notion of individuals working collectively to provide for a common good. He argued that for an intermediate-size group – where group size depends on how noticeable each person's actions are – individuals have little incentive to contribute to a collective good. There is a tendency for the individual who cannot be excluded from the collective benefits to free-ride. "Unless the number of individuals is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, *rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests."* (Olson 1965: p. 2; emphasis in original). In the language of agency theory, this is a problem between principals (residents) and agents (Mandal elders). Both the principals and the agents are assumed to have an intention of maximising their incentives and minimising their cost. Peace in RRN served a different purpose for Hindu and Muslim residents. For a majority of Hindus – let's say 98%, given the few who rioted outside – peace was a public good. Exclusion was not feasible. Given that at least two Hindu residents had certainly been found rioting outside RRN the possibility of rioting within RRN could not be ruled out. Therefore, norms alone were insufficient to resolve commitment issues.

Agency theory proposes that depending on the control capacities of the principals, commitment issues of agents can be resolved through two mechanisms: (i) Principals bear both the cost and benefit of the exchange and ensure compliance using monitoring and sanctioning. This mechanism is more likely where principals have a low capacity to

[78] One was arrested on March 1, 2002 for damaging a shop in the K Nagar slums adjoining STN. The other was arrested on May 11, 2002 for arson and looting in slums of Side & Service and Babunagar in Danilimda ward.

control agents directly. More than the size, as Olson suggests, it's the noticeability of other actors' behaviours that matters (ii) Principals give a share of the benefits to the agents, who are, in turn, made accountable to the overall benefit. Control is necessary even in this case in order to prevent agents from exploiting the benefits (Kiser 1994).

Ostrom (1990) notes the necessity of having recourse to sanctioning mechanisms that compel each individual to pay his share of the burden. But recourse to external sanctions, through governmental organisation, is less preferred. Government officials will not only have difficulties in monitoring the performance of public employees but such external institutions can also become instruments of tyranny when some dominate the allocation of goods to the detriment others (Ostrom and Ostrom 1978). One solution is that self-interested principals organise and govern themselves to obtain continuing benefits and success in ensuring commitment from self-interested agents. Policies that are based on the assumptions that individuals can learn how to devise well-tailored rules and cooperate conditionally when they participate in the design of institutions affecting them are more successful (Ostrom 1990; Ostrom and Vollan 2010).

Here it is useful to compare RRN to a common pool resource or CPR, because strong norms that constituted 'proper' behaviour were often an element of long-enduring CPRs. A CPR, as Ostrom defines it, is comparable to a public good in terms of infeasible exclusion. However, unlike a public good, resource units in a CPR are subtractible e.g. fish taken by one fisherman from a water body cannot be used by another fisherman. Where appropriators or consumers of resource units shared norms against opportunistic behaviour, there was less difficulty in establishing long-term commitments and high levels of mutual trust because each appropriator knew what to expect from the other. But, Ostrom argues, even in settings with shared norms of 'good behaviour', some individuals are always likely to ignore the norms. This could either be out of self-interest or because

of the level of uncertainty, which would make it impossible for individuals to establish prior reputations of co-operators. “Even in repeated settings where reputation is important and where individuals share the norm of keeping arrangements, reputation and shared norms are insufficient by themselves to produce stable cooperative behaviour over the long run.” (Ostrom 1990: 92).

Besides strong norms, RRN’s comparability to successful CPRs can be made on the basis of the key conditions that each of the successful CPRs followed. Ostrom calls these ‘design principles’ – constitutive elements of any robust CPR. The first of these principles deals with the issue of closure of boundaries, a principle that sends across a signal of ownership. The Mandal’s closure of its boundaries to outsiders was a strong signal to the residents that the efforts they have made in securing peace will not be reaped by individuals who have not contributed to those efforts. It conveyed the message that RRN belonged to its residents, thereby removing any uncertainty that the residents would have about the beneficiaries of peace. By going door to door, updating and informing residents about daily news of the violence outside, Mandal members were reducing any sense of uncertainty that might have led residents to, say, go out and enquire about the situation themselves and exposing themselves to external pressure. “People were afraid of being attacked. They needed *santvana* (reassurance) that they were secure,” Jivabhai told me.

Secondly, closure has to be backed by rules that limit appropriation and/or mandate provision**.** The crucial aspect is that the rules are made not by an external authority but by the providers and appropriators themselves and can, therefore, also be modified internally. Non-Mandal members in RRN could not modify the rules of the 21-member committee or that of closing the boundaries to Hindutva politicians, but they could easily

approach Mandal members to resolve internal problems without having to go to the police.

The third issue is that of compliance to the rules – especially ex post, when temptations to defect are high. Principal-agent problems of commitment tend to be minimised in an arrangement where principals can check up on agents easily, where agents and principals share common aims, thereby increasing the dependence of the agent on the principal and decreasing collusion among agents, and where the principal is able to mete out rewards and punishments to maximum effect (Adams 1996). Indeed, compliance in long-enduring CPRs was achieved by active monitoring and graduated sanctions by internal enforcement.

The next section provides a profile of the extralegal operator – a woman Muslim resident of RRN – and her role in 2002.

4.2.1 Extra-legal institution in RRN

The sudden appearance of a vividly coloured building in the middle of a dreary slum takes me by surprise. This is Zulekha's house or "aapa ka makaan" (big sister's mansion), as they call it in RRN. It is a mansion indeed in comparison with other houses in RRN: two-storey high, walls wearing pastel blue and green, a black iron gate that opens out to a smaller iron gate freshly painted in bright orange and yellow, a shiny black motorcycle parked in the courtyard of the house and, I am told, one of her two cars is parked inside and the other outside in a shed opposite Santoshnagar. Most striking are three mosaic-stone benches overlooking her window in the courtyard. Anyone familiar with city municipalities in Gujarat would know what these benches were – donations of municipal corporators and MLAs to their respective wards and constituencies from their welfare budget, with their name engraved on it in Gujarati. It was a gift to their constituency voters in exchange of their votes. What's not familiar is to find them inside

the residential premises of a voter's house. Three benches in Zulekha's courtyard, each bearing names of the ward's three municipal corporators: this was an unabashed signal of who's the boss of the neighbourhood.

--Excerpts from my fieldnotes, 15 November 2011

Aapa looked around 50 and dressed simply –in the ubiquitous loose *shalwar-kameez* and *dupatta* and a nose stud typical of Muslim women I met in RRN. But unlike most Muslim women of the slum, who timidly stayed within the four walls of their homes, she had a demeanour that either startled or frightened people, depending on how much they knew her. I was startled when I first went to meet her – and got snubbed. "You ask too many questions. Salman says you will chew my brains off!" she had shouted from her verandah, even before I could enter the outer iron gate. Nevertheless, even the "appointment" that she had given me a day before was considered to be an achievement by my gatekeeper Yusuf. "*Aapa* must be in a good mood," he had pensively said. Apparently, her mood had changed by the next day.

I had only heard until then that RRN was an extremely closed space where outsiders were unwelcome. If at all new residents arrived, they were given a lesson in the codes of Mandal's operation. Zulekha's key informant Pintoo was known to subtly pass on the message that any attempt to drive a wedge between the Hindu-Muslim ties would invite trouble. It seems I was an intruder. But for many residents of RRN – Hindu and Muslim – *aapa's* name invited a strange mixture of emotions: residents would either proudly tell me their good fortune for "*Aapa* smiles at us whenever she meets us!" or tell me how scared residents were of her and that "It's in their best interest to be quiet and keep peace."

Yet, much before I had been to her house, I had exchanged courteous smiles with *aapa* on several occasions when my gatekeeper Salman would be chaperoning her in his autorickshaw. The autorickshaw was a "friendly loan" from Zulekha's son, Riyaz, for Salman's loyalty to the family. In the 1990s, Salman was an apprentice to Zulekha's then prolific business of illegal cattle slaughter and claimed to have even offered to be jailed for three days instead of *aapa's* son. Then on, he continued to be "always there" when errands of a regular or a suspicious nature had to be run. This included transporting large sums of currency notes to *aapa's* networks in the city. He was also there when one of her three brothers, Ali, was arrested in Petlad town for possession of a large cache of *charas* (cannabis). Salman was as grateful for his relations with *aapa* and her family as he was worried. Each month he had to pay Rs. 4,000 as instalment for the loaned rickshaw, a difficult task for an autorickshaw driver in Ahmedabad who earns on an average about Rs. 6,000 a month. Besides, he also lived as a tenant in one of Zulekha's 60-odd houses that she constructed in RRN to be rented out, paying another Rs. 700 per month. "*Aapa's* deadlines for rent collection come with an expiry date," he once joked. "She also lends money to people but only if they really, really need it. If you cannot pay back the loan or the rent then beware. Next morning you will find a big lock on your door!" I assumed that Zulekha loaned money only to her tenants. That way she could confiscate her house should they be unable to repay the loan. She also extorted money for illegal gambling and liquor dens that residents independently managed within the slum. To help with extortion, she had Shakoor, a Muslim, and Jagubhai, a Hindu; Pintoo – a Hindu converted to Islam – was the intermediary between Zulekha and the residents (Figure 5.2).

Her brothers had a worse reputation in crime than her sons, but they lived in the town of Petlad, 87 kilometres away from Ahmedabad. It was widely believed that her eldest

brother, Sarfaraz, had killed a local gangster in Jamalpur municipal ward and was absconding. This remained unconfirmed, but had sufficiently instilled a sense of fear of *aapa's* family in the minds of RRN's residents and also Hindus and Muslims I met in PN, including a BJP political leader. Her son's marriage with the daughter of another notorious gangster in Ahmedabad added weight to her reputation and to her network. A Muslim resident told me: "She can do anything… anything! Do you know that her brother has been arrested for some big crime?" When I asked for details, she did not know. An anecdote that I heard from two residents about *aapa* confirmed the image she portrayed, that of an offensive and dangerous woman. A policeman once dared to disturb her afternoon siesta. He had come to make inquiries and was armed with a warrant, either for her brother or her son. *Aapa* stormed out of her room and shouted at the startled policeman, 'Bring him to me if you find him and stop bothering me! Do you know you just woke me up from my siesta?!" Apparently new to the police jurisdiction, the policeman left in a hurry surprised at what he saw. From the more seasoned policemen Zulekha *aapa's* political connections provided a barricade.

Zulekha's association with Salman was on account of his father, who was respected throughout the slum as an elder with authority and honesty. The Mandal's reputation as an institution of strong values was like a platform for Zulekha to acquire a legitimate image in the slum. She grew up in the slum, witnessing the authority of the elders even as she married and lost her husband at a young age. She first took the lead in peacekeeping in 1992 and then in 2002. Her methods of coercion which were an intrinsic part of her varied businesses transferred to her peacekeeping mechanism as well. As described in chapter 4, a few Muslims had locked their houses and fled to nearby Muslim slums upon hearing about the Godhra train incident. Zulekha directed Salman and others to apply a second lock on the already locked houses of the Muslims who had fled. Salman said: "If

Muslims fled, we would become vulnerable. So if they would return to their double-locked houses, we would make them promise not to do this again and make them pay for the second lock! This of course did not apply to the Hindus… it did not matter to us if they fled." This was a crucial step in ensuring no decline in the population concentration of RRN Muslims.

Until I began my ethnography in RRN, Zulekha was known to the media – the only source of information on RRN then – as a courageous 'social worker' who had helped the Mandal in keeping peace in 2002. But those who knew her closely always used the term *don*. There was no necessary contradiction in these two titles. In India, a 'social worker' is usually a euphemism for a politician or an intermediary between people and politicians (Michelutti 2007; Zaidi and Borges 2011). They are modern-day Robin Hoods by their own admission. My PN gatekeeper, Munna, called himself a social worker too because he saw himself as such a conduit between the residents of PN and the local Congress leaders. Zulekha's influence over the Congress was even greater. The three benches in her courtyard, of course, signalled her political clout. In addition, she followed the same ritual in every election: Congress leaders – both incumbent and potential – would be invited with fanfare to her residence, garlanded with flowers, treated to a lavish meal and a promise of votes. It happened in the 2010 municipal elections and in the 2012 elections, which I had the opportunity to witness. RRN was indeed a significant electoral pool for municipal elections (Table 5.5). The Congress incumbent corporators, in return, would come to the assistance of residents immediately if ever they were summoned by Mandal members or Zulekha for civic issues. In 2002, Zulekha would herself monitor the Muslim houses in RRN along with Pintoo and the Muslim Mandal elders. Hindu houses were monitored by the Hindu Mandal elders and to a lesser extent by Jagubhai who "managed

the gambling dens in RRN". Salman and other residents believed that Zulekha was a beneficiary of the gambling profits.

In the typology of crime, Zulekha's activities can be categorised as organised crime, for hers are risk-driven illegitimate activities motivated by profit and, more importantly, committed by two or more offenders who intend to remain associated for the purpose of committing crimes (Maltz 2010; Pizzini-Gambetta 2012). The legacy of women in organised crime in India survives since long. 'Brothel queen' Gangubai Kathewali (Hindu), bootlegger Jenabai Daaruwali (Muslim) and 'godmother' Santokben Jadeja (Hindu) are notorious names – all Gujaratis – who have reigned the underworld of Mumbai in Maharashtra and Saurashtra in Gujarat. Significantly, all of these women had a commonality: their political connections. Jenabai's good networks with the Congress and her ability to manipulate the police by making friendly alliances with them was, among other traits, her biggest asset in increasing her business. This bears similarity to Zulekha's adept handling of the Congress politicians and the police. Santokben's political ambitions took her a notch higher, as she contested assembly elections on the Kutiyana constituency seat in 1990. She was known to have close ties with former Gujarat chief minister Chimanbhai Patel of the Congress (Joshi 1999; *Indian Express*, 3 June 2011). The Congress' reliance on extralegal operators as protection-supplying intermediaries is well known. In Ahmedabad, Congress-criminal links date back to the 1980s and their association with the liquor mafia don Abdul Latif – a Muslim. While in prison, Latif, a bootlegger turned underworld ganglord, was elected on five different seats as an independent supported by the Congress in the municipal elections of 1985. Like other Muslim dons, Latif was known to protect his co-religionists physically and also provide them with resources through social work (Jaffrelot and Thomas 2012). Unlike the Congress, the BJP had its own affiliates in the Sangh Parivar to provide the

same protection, albeit to their Hindu voters. Berenschot's structure of patronage holds true in this case for the criminals were indeed intermediaries between residents and the politicians, albeit supplying protection and fear than material benefits alone. In Behrampura, the Congress sustained power on account of the illegal operators such as Zulekha and Munna, who supplied protection in their neighbourhoods and enabled access of resources through political patronage in exchange of people's votes. At the same time they ensured cooperation from the people by punishing non-compliant behaviour. Protection here, as supplied by Zulekha was a desirable commodity for it evoked the positive notion of shelter against danger as well as the ominous racket in which a local strong man forces merchants to pay tribute in order to avoid damage that he himself threatens to deliver (Gambetta 1993). Santokben's area of operation – Porbandar district – which continued to remain one of the least developed in terms of basic amenities and employment even during the political control of her mining mafia in the region. Reportedly, she won the 1990 elections without addressing a single poll rally (Indian Express Nov 24, 2007; 3 June 2011). Although dominated by gang violence, Porbandar did not witness ethnic violence in 1992 or 2002. Peace was a product of fear brought about with the supply of protection. In Mumbai, Jenabai could wield patronage and political leverage to protect the local community during ethnic riots in 1993 (Zaidi and Borges 2011). Similarly to Indian slums conditions of extreme marginality are the background of a woman, Ms Bailey, who provided extra-legal governance in a block of flats in the notorious Chicago housing projects. This woman endowed with high political skills maintained order in a volatile community by brokering and threatening to withdraw mostly ill-gotten material resources to those that had great need and no entitlement (Venkatesh 2009).

Even in times when there was no ethnic violence, Zulekha ensured that outsiders with a potential to create rifts in the commune were driven away. This increased her credibility as someone to be feared. Tasneem told me of one such day: Some years ago, relatives of their next-door neighbour were paying a visit when they entered into an altercation with Tasneem's family over the supply of water. "They were complaining that we do not get enough water. *Aapa* happened to be passing by just then and inquired what was going on. They didn't know that she is a *don* and swore at her! She pelted them with stones and drove them out of RRN and said 'No outsider will ever come to RRN to create a rift between neighbours'. Those relatives have never come back!" On another occasion I recall sitting in lane number 5 of RRN, wondering why Zulekha's deputy Pintoo had not kept his promise of getting the municipal corporation to install sewage lines. Tasneem's mother enlightened me: "*Aapa* had promised she will get it done but when nothing happened for a week we decided to approach the municipal corporation ourselves. Was she angry when she found out! She threatened us, made quite a ruckus here… you can't do anything without her intervention. We have to smile at her even if we don't like her, that's how it is. Now she's gone to Petlad and will return after a week. We will wait…"

Unlike Santokben, Zulekha's trustworthiness was not built on her own capacity of violent retaliation (although she had pelted stones on suspicious outsiders, violence was occasional). The reputation of her brothers and sons had instilled fear in the minds of the residents but Zulekha's principal strategy for punishing non-compliance in RRN was property confiscation and monetary fines. The use of means other than violence to punish non-compliance is typical of small dealers where potential financial loss is not high (Pizzini-Gambetta 2012).

The Mandal's credible authority and Zulekha's credible threat ensured Hindu residents that monitoring was for all, that they were not being suckered. It inspired them to make a contingent self-commitment. Hindu resident, Sadhana, described the cooperation of residents as follows: "People listen to other people either out of fear or out of respect. We feared Sarfaraz and now Zulekha, and respected the elders. In a way, we were compelled to listen to both." Strategic actors are willing to comply with a set of rules when they perceive that the collective objective is achieved and that others also comply (Levi 1989; Ostrom 1990). Zulekha's own benefits were manifold. Her illegitimate operations could continue without police deterrence as she provided material benefits and protection to residents in exchange of their votes to the Congress.

By 2010, Zulekha's authority in RRN gained more credibility than that of the Mandal elders for four of the seven core members in the Mandal had passed away. Juzar *chacha*, a man of 75, could barely manage both the Mandal's affairs and his tiny knick-knacks shop on his own. The other elder, also in his 70s, was the Hindu BJP party member Santoshbhai. More than once I heard each of the two elders voicing their distrust of the other. The first sign of the Mandal's decline was the complete transformation of the Mandal's core committee in 2010 with the youth residents of RRN, again a mix of Congress and BJP workers, compelling Juzar to resign as President of the Mandal. Factionalism was now not only within the former Mandal but also between the 'young' and the 'old' Mandal. The 2010 municipal elections again saw RRN representation – only this time the youth contested as independents, with tacit support from both the Congress and the BJP. What did not change that year was Zulekha *aapa's* annual ritual of Congress patronage – the garlanding, feasting and promise of votes – and the closure of RRN's boundaries to the BJP's campaign office. I witnessed Zulekha's influence and authority as a political intermediary on the day of polling during the 2012 state elections.

I sat with her on the Congress campaign desk in RRN along with the Congress president (leader of opposition) of the municipal corporation; father of the Congress candidate contesting the elections in the constituency; and a former police inspector of Danilimda police station. Voting had begun at 8 am and ended at 5pm. Around 4pm, I accompanied Zulekha as we walked the lanes with RRN's Muslims homes with her 'team' of 8-10 women and one man, Salman. Salman and Zulekha would furiously knock on doors and ask if the residents had voted. If they said yes, she would order them to show as proof their index finger for the electoral ink stain and ask them curtly to tell her the number of the button they pressed on the voting machine (3 was for Congress). "Three *aapa*! We have been voting for the Congress forever you know that," one of the residents said. Shazia, a former Communist Party member discretely told me that many residents believed that Zulekha had the ability to violate the secrecy of the ballot. This is a prime example of how individual voters can be monitored at low cost by violating the secrecy of the ballot or by giving voters the impression that one has violated the secrecy of the ballot (Chandra 2007b).

5. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a deeper understanding of interethnic relations in the peaceful neighbourhood, RRN. The puzzle was the cooperation of Hindu with Muslim residents at a time when opportunistic defection and engagement in attacks against Muslims was materially beneficial and socially acceptable. The puzzle is best answered by examining the choices that Hindu and Muslim residents faced at the time, primarily: why did Muslims not flee RRN and why did Hindus not attack Muslims. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks of clientelistic exchanges between voters and politicians and mechanisms of resolving principal-agent issues of commitment, I argue that monitoring

in a spontaneous form of collective action, such as violence, needs to be differentiated from monitoring voting behaviour which is a phenomenon that occurs over time. Following many months of fieldwork and repeated visits to RRN I discovered the hidden force of enforcement underpinning what seemed to be communal cooperation. An unexpected combination of legitimate and illegitimate institutions in RRN doubled up as an enforcement mechanism that overcame commitment issues between Hindus and Muslims: the legitimate institution being an intermixed slum committee of residents (Mandal) and the illegitimate being an extralegal operator, a Muslim woman called Zulekha. Both collaborated to enforce cooperation through coercive measures. The Mandal proscribed outsiders from entering RRN through methods best described as physical vigilantism, thus clearly defining its boundaries; Zulekha sanctioned insiders – Muslim residents who attempted to flee RRN were punished to prevent a drop in their population which would have made the rest of their group vulnerable to attacks. My findings emphasise that "intermediaries" (to use Berenschot's term) have power because they provide residents with material resources. In case of RRN, residents were more concerned with physical protection. Poverty accentuates physical vulnerability because private security is out of bounds for the poor. Zulekha provided such security to the Mandal members as well as the residents who ensured her businesses within RRN did not face legal impediments. In exchange of RRN votes, local Congress leaders protected her from the police. It was this collaboration of legitimate (Mandal) and illegitimate (Zulekha) institutions that strengthened the operation of self-governance and ensured peace in RRN. Hindus of RRN felt safe, their lives and trades (both legal and illegal) protected with the association of the Mandal and Zulekha.

Over 10 years the institutions that governed and monitored RRN had changed form. By 2010, the Mandal's authority had waned but it had been replaced by Zulekha's

decisive power and people's confidence in her capacity to physically protect them which continued to keep ethnocentric political elements outside RRN's boundaries. Thus, RRN was a case illuminating that the same outcome was the product of two different mechanisms which underwent a gradual and imperceptible shift over time**.**

Appendix for Chapter 5

Table 5.1: Results of Jamalpur assembly constituency, for RRN, STN and part PN

Election year	Congress%	BJP%	Independent %	Winner in constituency	Govt in power in state
1998	31.92	19.57	46.35	Muslim; independent	BJP
2002	56.23	38.89	1.70	Muslim; Congress	BJP

Table 5.2: Results of Sarkhej assembly constituency, for part PN

Election year	Congress%	BJP%	Independent %	Winner	Govt in power in state
1998	21.98	69.81	6.94	Hindu; BJP	BJP
2002	30.27	66.98	1.39	Hindu; BJP	BJP

Table 5.3: Results of Behrampura municipal ward, for RRN, STN and part PN

Election year	Congress%	BJP%	Others%	Total seats won			Govt in municipal corporation
				Congress	BJP	Others	
2000	38.29	22.77	38.93	3	0	0	Congress
2005	31.34	29.53	39.13	1	1	1	BJP

Table 5.4: Results of Danilimda municipal ward, for part PN

Election year	Congress%	BJP%	Others%	Total seats won			Govt in municipal corporation
				Congress	BJP	Others	
2000	41.18	27.16	31.65	3	0	0	Congress
2005	32.22	35.99	31.79	0	3	0	BJP

Table 5.5: Voter percentages of RRN, STN and PN in previous election

	Assembly - 1998		Municipal ward - 2000	
Electors	**Jamalpur**	**Sarkhej**	**Behrampura**	**Danilimda**
Total	**139759**	**609349**	**53399**	**64777**
RRN %	6.43	NA	16.85	NA
STN %	2.72	NA	7.12	NA
PN %	1.37	0.35	2.05	3.51

NB:

Distribution of voters in wards and assembly based on electoral rolls data for 2009

RRN estimated population 9,000 of which 60% Muslim, 40% Hindu

STN estimated population 3,800 of which 30% Muslim, 70% Hindu

PN estimated population 3,500 of which 60% Muslim, 40% Hindu

Figure 5.1: Organisational chart of RRN Mandal in 2002

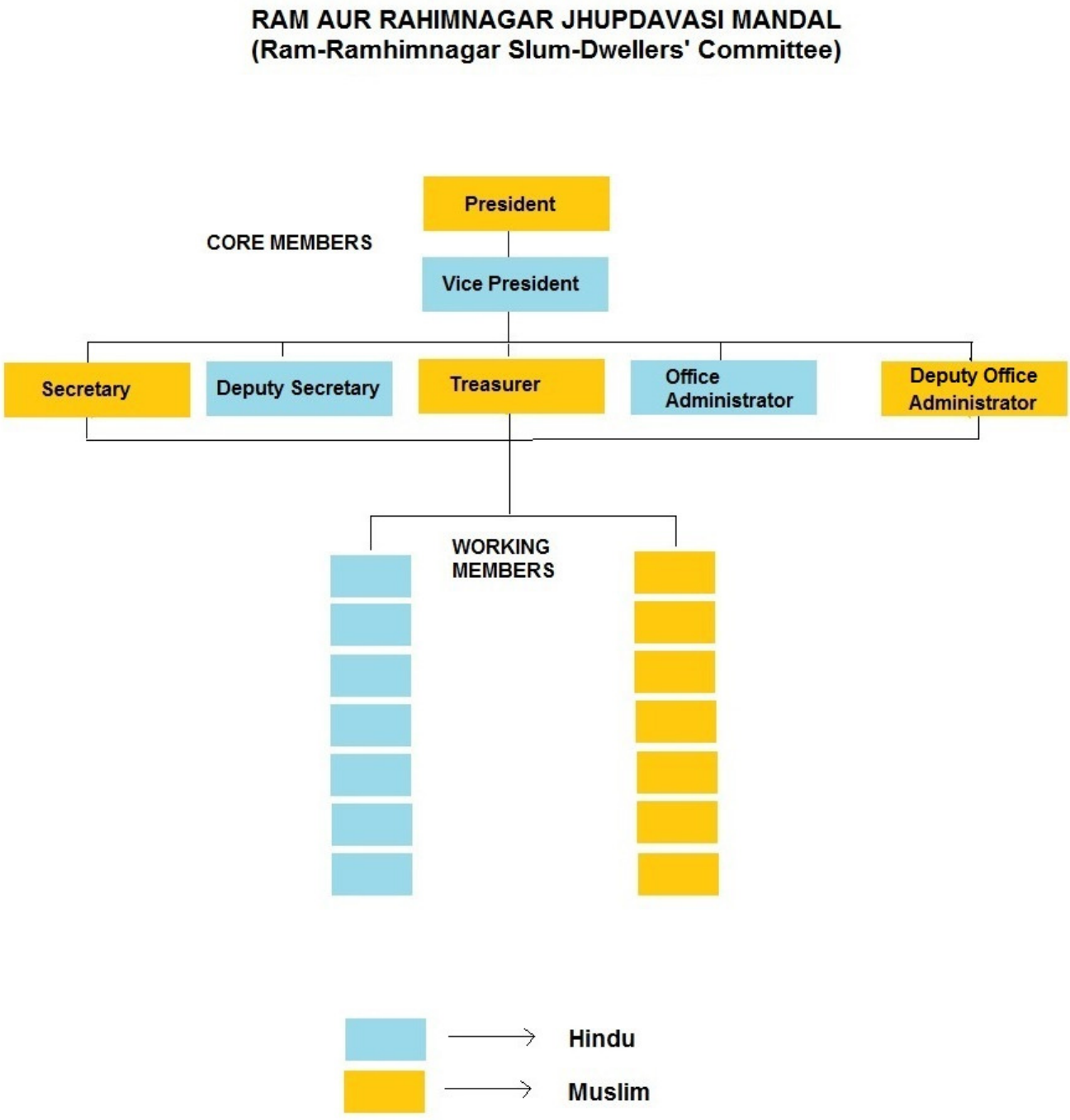
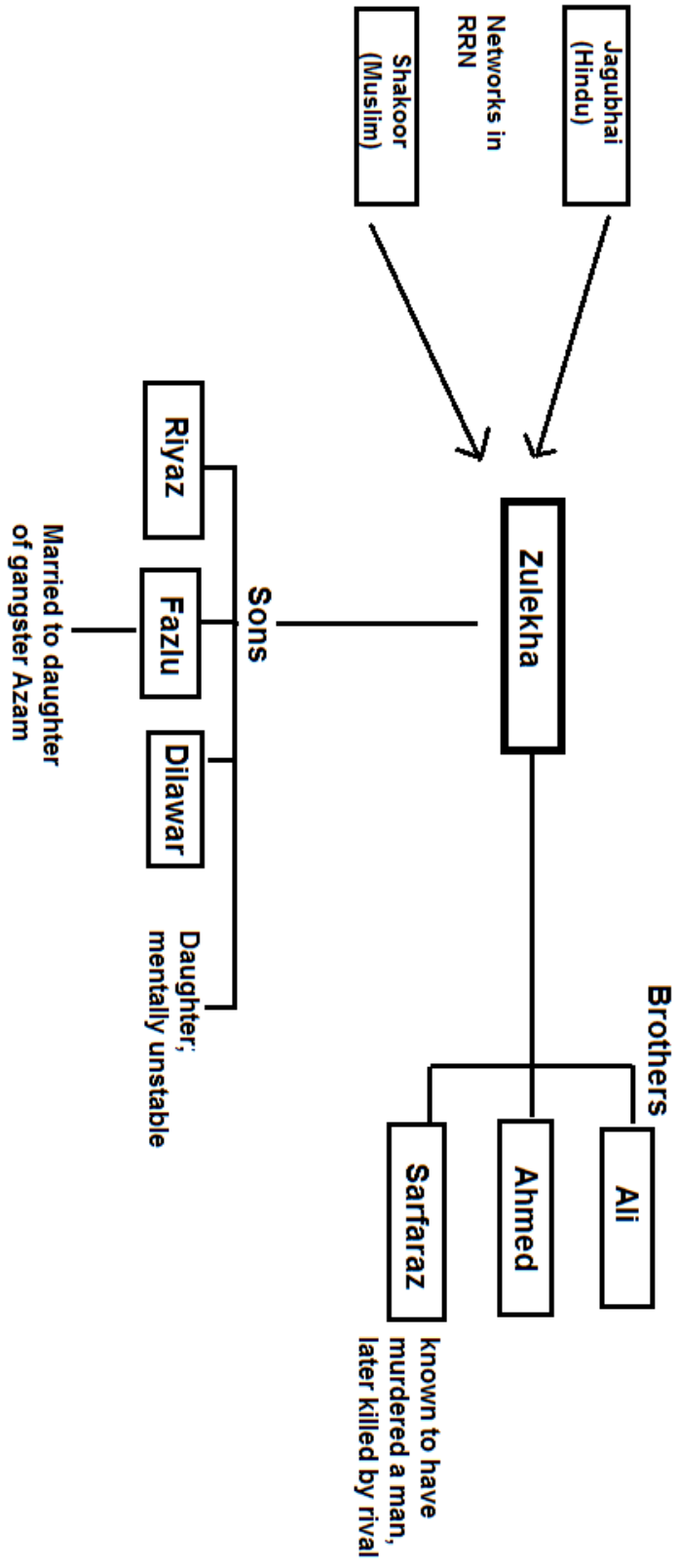


Figure 5.2: Zulekha *aapa's* family and network in RRN



CHAPTER 6

The Puzzle of the BJP Muslim Supporter in Gujarat

1. Introduction

The municipal corporation elections for Ahmedabad city in December 2010 had instilled enthusiasm into the life of Jamal Mohammed, a muezzin in Santoshnagar's (STN) local mosque. He was busier than usual, his wife told me, when he missed his meeting with me by half an hour. Having met Jamal a day earlier at the local BJP office I assumed he would be engaged in campaign work for the party apart from his usual occupation of calling out the *azaan* (call to prayer) in the neighbourhood mosque. Jamal was a Sunni Muslim, a sect that forms the majority of the 9.1% (Census 2001) Muslims in Gujarat.[79] Until 2009, Sunni Muslims had shunned the BJP electorally as many among them held the party responsible for orchestrating the anti-Muslim pogrom in 2002. It was, therefore, unexpected to see Jamal fervently supporting the BJP. "No I don't see them responsible for 2002. Everyone falsely blamed them. It was just a period of misfortune. I am tired of the Congress and its fake promises to give us sewage facilities," he said upon his return. Jamal was not affected in the violence when STN was attacked twice in 2002. He also denied having witnessed any of the two attacks in STN.

While my previous chapters engaged in discussing the factors and mechanisms behind the different levels of violence in towns, rural areas and neighbourhoods in Gujarat in 2002, this chapter attempts to gain an understanding of extant political and social conditions in Gujarat, more specifically in Ahmedabad, a decade after the brutal

[79] In the 2001 Census for Gujarat, Muslims not categorised as "Muslims/Islam" comprise 0.24% of the total population (0.11% in Ahmedabad district). Sub-categories include Shia sects such as "Agakhani" and "Bohra". A separate sub-category "Shia" also exists. Although a small proportion of Bohras are Sunnis the census does not distinguish between the two.

violence. The example indicated above illustrates the main puzzle: Why do Muslims of Gujarat in western India support the Hindu nationalist BJP, a political party widely acknowledged to have orchestrated a brutal anti-Muslim pogrom in 2002? 'Support' implies either through active campaigning or contesting, voting or publicly demonstrating a liking for the BJP and/or the incumbent chief minister Narendra Modi. Of 66 Muslims I interviewed in my fieldsites and three other neighbourhoods (section 6.3), 43 voiced their support for the BJP. The interviews and conversations were conducted during non-election periods as well as during the 2010 municipal and 2012 state elections.

2. Context

The Gujarat phenomenon finds rare precedence in conflict-ridden democracies. Sri Lankan Tamils persecuted by the Sinhalese in years of ethnic conflict continued to support self-rule in elections in September 2012. Even within India, following the 1992-93 Mumbai riots which claimed 557 lives, mostly of Muslims, the Muslim electorate in Mumbai has displayed antagonism towards the local Hindu nationalist Shiv Sena, voting intermittently either for the Congress or the socialist Samajwadi Party (SP).

But there are two cases in India comparable to Gujarat and yet, for specific reasons, the Gujarat phenomenon stands out in comparison to both these cases. The first is of Muslims of Bhagalpur in Bihar, the second of Sikhs of Punjab and Delhi. I briefly discuss both cases. In 1989 in Bhagalpur district, 396 persons were killed (Varshney-Wilkinson 2006). The Congress was defeated and the socialist Janata Dal came to power under the leadership of Lalu Yadav, who later split from the Janata Dal to form the Rashtriya Janata Dal in 1997. The party was not known for its economic reforms yet the 16.5% Muslim electorate of Bihar supported it for its secular stand against the Ayodhya

temple campaign in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh. However, from 2010, Muslim support moved towards a coalition that another faction of the Janata Dal – the Janata Dal (United) under the leadership of Nitish Kumar – had formed with the BJP. Among the reasons that influenced the Muslim voters in favour of the BJP coalition, were measures taken by chief minister Kumar to rehabilitate Muslim victims of the violence: 29 Bhagalpur riot cases were reopened; speedy prosecution leading to conviction of the accused was ensured; compensation was provided to riot affected families and life-long pension to 900 Muslim families (*Times of India*, 31 October 2010; Farasat 2013). Most of all, the government continued to publicly display antipathy towards Modi and his role in the 2002 violence.

In the other comparable case, Sikhs of Delhi and Punjab who blamed the Congress for the 1984 anti-Sikh pogrom began to vote for the party from the1990s. Like the Bihar BJP-JDU coalition, the Congress had taken remedial measures of reaching out to Sikh electors. In March 1985, the central government under Rajiv Gandhi announced plans to rejuvenate the Punjab state's economy and also released eight leaders of the Akali Dal – an ethnic Sikh political party – detained in the context of rapidly increasing Sikh militancy (Major 1985). The Rajiv-Longowal Accord of July 1985 furthered a democratic solution to the Punjab militancy problem (Singh 1991). In Delhi, Sonia Gandhi – wife and successor of Rajiv Gandhi – went around Sikh gurudwaras in Delhi in 1998 apologising for the riots. In a symbolic measure the Congress appointed a Sikh prime minister in the 2004 general elections who also apologised to co-religionists on behalf of his party.

In Gujarat, a similar demand of an apology from chief minister Modi has never been realised. There have also been few state-supported reconciliatory measures for Muslim victims of the violence – prosecutions and convictions in the 2002 massacres, including

the life term awarded to BJP MLA Kodnani for conspiring with attackers in the murder of 97 Muslims in Ahmedabad, were an outcome of the Indian Supreme Court's intervention and not the state government's. Compensation amounts paid to victims of the violence became a matter of dispute; witnesses turned hostile as a result of the state's subversive methods to adjudicate legal proceedings and witness testimonies in the aftermath of the violence (*Times of India*, 27 June 2003). In 2003, 300 Muslims were detained, of which half were later arrested, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (POTA) for "conspiracies against the state" (*The Hindu,* 7 November 2003).[80] The Gujarat government's poor record of convictions in the post-Godhra violence compelled the Supreme Court to order the reopening and reviewing of 2,000 cases that had been closed citing lack of evidence (*BBC News,* 8 February 2006). As of September 2010, 19,000 refugees of the 2002 violence remained displaced in relief colonies with inadequate infrastructure (US Freedom of Religion Report 2011). Outside the context of the violence, the state continued to take measures deemed unconstitutional by civil rights groups. In 2003, the state authorised extra-judicial killings of Muslim petty criminals and civilians, adjudging them as "Islamic terrorists". Legal investigations led to the incarceration of at least 10 senior police officers and BJP state minister Amit Shah for the killings. Shah, however, was released on bail, and successfully contested the 2012 state elections. Cities like Ahmedabad and Vadodara continue to remain highly segregated with housing loans denied to most Muslims, for their ghettos are 'red-lined' as poor investment prospects (Rajagopal 2010: 107). To illustrate, the first municipal school to be built in Juhapura (estimated population 200,000) was in February 2013 (*Hindustan Times,* 21 February 2013).

[80] POTA was repealed in 2004 in the Parliament by the Congress coalition government in the centre.

Given that Modi was consecutively voted to power in three state elections after the violence, it can be construed that his credibility within the Hindu majority of the state had increased. However, there is no tangible reason why Muslims would support the BJP. Unlike the Sikhs who had intermittently voted for the Congress before 1984 (Major 1985), a majority of Muslims of Gujarat had always perceived the BJP as an ideologically non-pluralist party, particularly antagonistic towards Muslims. The exception was a section of Shia Muslim sects in the state. Although survey data on state-level voting behaviour is scarce, political commentators suggest that traditionally 6-8% Muslims in Gujarat had always voted for the BJP before and in immediate years after 2002. These voters largely came from Shia Muslim sects engaged in mercantile occupations, such as Dawoodi Bohras who "try to buy their peace by generally supporting (the) ruling party" (Engineer 2007). In view of their interest in seeking favourable state patronage in economic policies the Dawoodi Bohra high priest donated to the BJP's campaign fund in 2007 despite extensive damage to life and property of Bohras in the violence.[81] The BJP had partially reciprocated by offering superior government positions to Dawoodi Bohras, e.g. the appointment of a Dawoodi Bohra police chief in 2009 ahead of general elections. On the other hand, Sunni Muslims had always rejected the party. Prominent Sunni cleric Mufti Shabbir Sidiqqui called the police appointment a foil to display a secular ideology, "like appointing Muslims as Presidents of India in the past to keep the community happy" (*Times of India*, 22 February 2009). Sunni Muslims had viewed a Muslim BJP supporter in their community as a defector. To illustrate, in 2006, a Sunni Muslim college student and her circle of friends in Ahmedabad city had decided to begin wearing a *burqa* covering her face. Their decision was a "mark of protest" against the ruling BJP whom they viewed as the

[81] Like the Druz of Lebanon and the Agakhani Khojas, the Dawoodi Bohras follow priestly hierarchy (Engineer 2007; *Times of India Crest*, 2 January 2010).

"architect" of the 2002 violence. "All of us friends felt cowed down by a constant anti-Muslim rhetoric since 2002. Then we thought whether it made any sense to be scared. We said, okay so you want to hate us? Here are our *burqas* so we know that you know we are Muslims. Now come, get us."[82] Support of Sunni Muslims for the BJP, if at all, was tacit. This changed tangibly in 2010. Salim, a follower of Tabligh[83], told me a few weeks before the elections in 2010: "There is no shame today in supporting Modi. BJP is Allah. *Allah ke sivay aur kaun hai?* (Who else do we have other than Allah?)" During elections there were many more like Salim. Dressed in Islamic attire and also wearing saffron bandanas and carrying saffron flags – signifying the official colour of the Sangh Parivar – they professed their hope in the BJP, especially in Modi "the *badshaah"* (emperor). Photo 6.1 shows residents of a Muslim-dominated neighbourhood in Ahmedabad campaigning for the BJP.

The sudden and visible upsurge in Muslim support for the BJP coincided with the party's own political strategy to bridge divides with the state's Sunni Muslim electorate through Sadbhavana (Compassion) campaigns– a series of fasts and public addresses to signify interethnic harmony – nine years after the violence. The question arose: why would the BJP tone down Hindutva that had provided them with overwhelming power and credibility in the state? Muslim vote at 9.1% continued to remain inconsequential for the Gujarat BJP. Therefore, the most cogent explanation was Modi's aspiration of an elevated position in the 2014 general elections which could not be achieved without the support of Muslim electors in states outside Gujarat.[84] This became much more evident

[82] This interview was conducted when I worked as a journalist in 2006.

[83] The Tabligh or Tablighi Jamaat is a sectarian religious movement, derived from the Deobandi revivalist movement that originated in Uttar Pradesh state in the 1920s. In Gujarat it began its missionary activities during the 1940s (Chakrabarti 2010).

[84] Modi's official nomination as India's next prime ministerial candidate following general elections in 2014 is expected in September 2013 (NDTV, 1 August 2013).

with each subsequent election. Since the BJP first gained power in Gujarat in 1995, it was only in 2009 that the state BJP sought to offer candidature to Muslims (Table 6.1). In 2010, 12 Muslim candidates contested from the BJP when a Sunni Muslim candidate from the BJP won against a Hindu rival from the Congress in Rajkot. Chief Minister Modi claimed that "over 30% Muslims have voted for us" in Gujarat (*Times of India*, 12 October 2010). In local body elections in the same year, the BJP declared 117 out of 256 Muslim candidates from the BJP as victorious. The BJP announced its readiness to welcome "nationalist Muslims" calling themselves a "pro-Hindu but not anti-Muslim party" (*Tehelka*, 16 October 2010). Departing from this trend, in 2012, none of the 182 seats were offered to Muslim candidates prompting Muslim respondent Shaukat to call it "*dhokha*" (betrayal) of their new-found hope in the party. Yet, political commentators noted that in 11 of 18 Muslim-majority constituencies in the 2012 elections BJP Hindu candidates were victorious; the BJP itself claimed to have won in 24 constituencies where Muslim electorate was 15% or higher (*Times of India,* 26 December 2012). These figures provided by the BJP can be considered uncertain because there is no publicly available constituency-level information about religious distribution of electors. This is most relevant given that delimitation of constituency boundaries changed the demographic structure of constituencies in the 2012 elections. However, the fact remained that the impression of the BJP's acceptance among Muslims was successfully projected by the party and in the national media. For example, in 2009, Maulana Vastanvi, the rector of India's leading seminary in Deoband (north India) was ousted by colleagues for his public support of Modi's economic policies. In 2013, Maulana Mahmood Madani, a prominent cleric of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, known to have been instrumental in ousting Vastanvi, publicly praised the Modi government and endorsed Muslims having voted for Modi in the 2012 elections.

The BJP's strategy to provide nominations to Muslims is likely to have brought a hope of power-sharing for the Muslim electorate. But this does not entirely explain why a Muslim voter would support a co-ethnic favouring a Hindu nationalist party that has refused to apologise for the 2002 massacres. More puzzling is the support of Muslims for Hindu candidates of the BJP in the 2012 assembly election when none of the 182 candidates was a Muslim. Shaukat's discomfiture at BJP's exclusion of Muslims lasted two minutes for he quickly regained composure and said he would still support the BJP because "it is the only alternative despite the reality that the party could organise anti-Muslim riots again".

3. Additional fieldsites

This chapter is based on fieldwork conducted between August 2010 and February 2012 and intermittently for two months during assembly elections in December 2012. Most respondents belonged to my existing fieldsites of RRN, STN and PN. I included three additional fieldsites for this chapter: two exclusively Muslim neighbourhoods comprising riot evacuees, namely Juhapura and Bombay Hotel and a third Muslim-majority neighbourhood, Shah Alam.[85] Respondents from these neighbourhoods were fewer (n=18) than those from the intermixed areas (n=81) but their testimonies opened up a separate analytical window to differentiate preferences of Muslims living in intermixed areas from areas dominated by their own ethnic group. Previous studies such as by Massey, Hodson and Sekulic (1999) demonstrate the ways in which the level of ethnic intolerance between a majority and minority group varies with the variation in proportion of each group in an enclave. For example, minorities in neighbourhoods when numerically dominant will be more intolerant than when living outside such enclaves

[85] The estimated population of Juhapura, Shah Alam and Bombay Hotel in 2010 respectively was 200,000, 3,000 and 100,000.

because localised majorities experience contesting intolerance, a distrust of the external majority, which encourages them to emphasise ethnic solidarity as a way to subvert the political and cultural influence of the external majority. It could subsequently be implied that Muslims living in exclusive ghetto neighbourhoods would be more conscious of their ethnicity and perceive the BJP with antagonism. The additional neighbourhoods further offered a class-based variation – respondents from Juhapura were affluent Muslims, those from Shah Alam were from the middle class whereas the rest of the neighbourhoods comprised slum populations.

4. Findings

A majority of Muslims – BJP and Congress supporters – acknowledged their "inability" to bring about a change in the incumbent government through their vote. As discussed earlier, the Muslim electorate could not significantly alter the final result of an election "even if all of us vote for the same party". More importantly, many Muslims believed that both upper and lower caste Hindus voted collectively for the BJP. This assumption was an important factor that contributed to their decision to support either of the parties. For example, Muslims in Hindu-majority constituencies publicly supported the BJP assuming that Hindus would not vote for the Congress. For them, being viewed as a supporter of the incumbent government meant greater opportunity for access to state resources. I discuss this further shortly through the testimony of respondents Maqsood and his mother.

It is noteworthy that there was no perceptible difference between testimonies of Muslim BJP supporters from poorer neighbourhoods and those from middle and upper-class neighbourhoods (e.g. Juhapura). What differed was the motivation of a BJP Muslim candidate/party member from that of a BJP Muslim voter/campaigner, irrespective of

class. All Muslim BJP party members and candidates I spoke with were motivated by individual reward, e.g. career advancement through patronage with incumbent political leaders and future political front-runners whereas Muslim BJP voters/campaigners were guided by both material benefits and value-rational approaches.

4.1. The BJP Muslim candidate/party member

In 2002, Suraiyya had opted to live in the dismal Bombay Hotel slum following more than one attack in her old neighbourhood of Bapunagar. In 2012 her reasons to fear for her life were no longer riots but the civic conditions of her infamous neighbourhood, situated contiguous to the city's official municipal sewage farm in eastern Ahmedabad. A mountain of garbage visible from the slum had become an ironic landmark of the neighbourhood – this was the first feature of the slum I was taken to view from atop the terrace of a shanty (Photo 6.2). Along with her ordeals her political preference had also changed. She had recently joined the BJP as a party member. "Do we have a choice? We have knocked on the Congress corporators' doors so many times but they shoo us away. How long do we keep drinking yellow water and die of dengue?" Why did she opt to become a member when she could have voted for the BJP? "I wish to be the women's representative… like Aslambhai is for the men." Aslam was a former Communist Party (Marxist) representative from Behrampura, a "people's worker" as many had referred to him when he contested municipal elections in 2010 representing the CPM. Aslam's allegiance to the CPM was not entirely motivated by individual reward for the CPM had no political presence in Gujarat's bipolar polity. Aslam had decided to work for the party for he had considered it to be the next best option to the Congress which, he believed, had an equally poor record of security of Muslims as the BJP. When he lost the 2010 elections, Aslam decided to shift allegiance to the BJP. "BJP is in power and will

continue to remain in power for the next 15 years … I cannot work with a dead party like the Congress or the CPM. Both Congress and BJP have killed Muslims but the Congress has given nothing in return. At least the BJP intends to do something now for Muslims too. I can only be able to work with a party that can do something." A Congress party member, Rasool Azam, in a middle-class locality in Juhapura provided more evidence of individual career advancement when he lamented: "I have given all my life's work to the Congress. But now I am depressed. For 15 years, I worked with potential Members of Parliament (MP) but none would get elected. Where does that leave my future? What about my *career*?"

The patron-client form of resource access can dictate political preferences, especially for the extremely poor whose daily survival is a never-ending ordeal and for whom direct access to state resources is nearly impossible. As I also discuss in chapter 5, the role of the intermediary, brokering between citizens and the state, assumes crucial importance. Prior to becoming a BJP member, Suraiyya was an activist with a local NGO rehabilitating victims of the 2002 violence and had witnessed the difficulties of acquiring official sanction for compensation and rehabilitation from the ruling government. When she paid the fee of five rupees and signed the BJP membership form, her aspiration was to become one such intermediary and gain financial and political success, "like Aslambhai". As she asked me one day: "Can you tell me how I can earn money by being a BJP member and helping the women here?" A successful intermediary also gains an elevated social status and positive social identity on account of their capacity to manipulate the implementation of state policies (Michelutti 2007; Berenschot 2011). Aslam had inched closer towards gaining that status unlike Suraiyya, who told me "he even gets to speaks directly to the BJP corporator and people think he can do a lot". Both were aware their aspirations to becoming a successful intermediary were possible only

within the ambit of an incumbent party with the potential to remain in power for a long period of time. But this also raises the question whether voting for the BJP was at all essential if supporters, especially party members, were already being rewarded beforehand – monetarily or by elevation of social status. Shazia, a Congress campaigner from RRN, illustrated the difficulty of distinguishing between public support and electoral voting. Until 2010 Shazia was a CPM member but campaigned for the Congress in 2012 "because my husband is close to the Congress intermediary Zulekha *aapa"* (see chapter 5). On voting day, she told me discreetly: "I am representing the Congress but voted for the CPM… how would anyone know?" I discuss the implications of distinguishing between public support and electoral voting shortly.

4.2. The BJP Muslim voter/campaigner

Political patronage was important also for access to security, not physical security during future violence alone but also security from assertions of anti-national activity. Within the context of the state's poor record of minority rights, this reason was very frequent in testimonies of the BJP Muslim voter or campaigner. Mohammed Umar, a fruit vendor outside of RRN attributed the following value-rational reason to his support for the BJP: "We Muslims first believe in nation, that's what Islam also says… to get rid of our anti-national image we have to be with the BJP. What has the Congress done except breed goons and use Muslims to sell illicit liquor?" Mohammed Umar's words could be interpreted as disenchantment with the Congress for not supplying state resources to Muslim voters. It could also reflect the increasing fearfulness of subordination under the BJP. Hindi patriotic songs as mobile phone caller tunes of at least three BJP Muslim supporters was an explicit demonstration of their nationalism. Whereas the rich can be expected to have greater access to physical security during

violence, both the rich and the poor are equally likely to be vulnerable to social disrepute brought through anti-national assertion. It was reasonable to be seen as part of the majority in order to moderate suspicion.

As with the candidates/members, patronage-based material benefits motivated the voter/campaigner also, through contextual factors such as demographic changes (e.g. segregated neighbourhoods and delimitation of electoral boundaries). For Shaukat, who was a builder from Shah Alam, segregation was a "choice" and had no discriminatory implications. Segregation had provided an avenue for him and other builders to meet the increasing demand for Muslim housing in the overcrowded Muslim ghettos and neighbourhoods. In October 2012, Ahmedabad became the first city in India to host a 'real estate fair' exclusively for Muslims of the city. Hindu builders had collaborated with Muslim builders in an economic opportunity to exploit the housing needs in Muslim ghettos. For Muslim builders the collaboration meant easy access to government permissions through patronage of Hindu builders. Their influence in the incumbent BJP government could help circumvent regulations in redlined Muslim ghettos. As Shaukat said, "What we need today is to support the Hindus in building schools in Muslim areas and support the BJP to give us water and drainage."

Respondents Maqsood and his mother, residents of PN, had decided to support the BJP following official delimitation of constituency boundaries that changed the electoral salience of their vote. Mother and son were certain of the BJP's role in the looting of his house in LBS Nagar, near PN, where they lived in 2002. In 2010 his mother told me: "*Allah jhooth na bulvaye* (I would dare not lie in the eyes of Allah), I always voted for the Congress but this time in the civic elections I voted for the BJP! No one listens to the Congress so what's the point of casting them our vote?" Indicating the importance of voting for the most likely contender to win the election, Maqsood said: "We are no

longer in a Muslim ward. This is Kankaria… *Hindu ward*. Muslims are merely 5,000. Nobody among Hindus votes for the Congress so why should we?" Aijaz Sufi, a rich businessman in Juhapura, expressed identical views: "I always voted for the Congress knowing that BJP will continue to be anti-Muslim. But as long as they are in power and offer us the opportunity to represent our community politically I don't mind supporting the party. At least we have someone of our own to be held responsible if benefits are not given." Juhapura's pariah status had been given official recognition following delimitation of boundaries wherein it was included in the Hindu-majority Vejalpur municipal ward. It is noteworthy that none of the respondents claimed to have benefited from state resources although they praised the BJP for its economic policies. Shaukat conceded that "benefits have only reached the Hindus but one day they will also reach the Muslims I am sure of that". Aslam spoke of "indirect" benefits – housing developed to rehabilitate all slum dwellers displaced by a city development project had also benefited Muslims. Zahir Shaikh, a BJP candidate from Juhapura, also indicated that Muslims of Juhapura became indirect beneficiaries of civic facilities following delimitation and inclusion in Vejalpur ward; "the government was compelled to provide for the Hindus". In a related example, an under-construction water pumping station near Danilimda had become an interesting point of contention. Muslim BJP supporters believed it to be a BJP-sponsored project unlike the Congress Muslim supporters. It was not possible to know whether their electoral preference had been shaped by the event (construction of the pump) or whether the event was information that affirmed their choice of political party. These testimonies further enhance the ambiguity of what BJP support actually means.

4.3. Effect of charisma

A section of respondents neither attributed economic benefits nor a value-rational reason for their support of the BJP. They supported the BJP solely on account of its leader, chief minister Modi. RRN respondent Salman had witnessed his friend dying in his arms by a police bullet. He also claimed to have secretly viewed a CD containing images of the Naroda Patiya massacre of nearly 100 Muslims in 2002.[86] "What a horrible way to kill… wombs being slit open… yes, everyone says Modi had a hand in those killings. So what! The man is powerful. *Uski dahshat hai!* (He incites fear!) Who else is capable of that?" Salman campaigned for the BJP outside RRN though claimed to vote for the Congress "because my family does". He vowed to vote for the BJP "only after I get to see Modi *kaka* (term of respect for the elderly)!" I heard the "fascination" of Salman for Modi repeated by respondent Noorbanu, "He is the future Prime Minister!" she said, proudly showing off a laminated photograph of herself with Modi taken during a BJP campaign tour in Delhi, as we met at her house in RRN. Neither Salman nor Noorbanu said they were direct beneficiaries of rewards, whether monetary or state resources, from the BJP.

Modi displayed a charismatic authority that evoked deference. Weber defines charisma as a manifestation of the extraordinary, outside the realm of everyday routine, which rejects external order and breaks traditional and rational norms (Weber 1968). A charismatic authority is one who is acknowledged to have the ability to exercise intense influence over the beliefs, values, preferences and aspirations of others by proving his powers in practice (Weber 1968; House, Spangler and Woycke 1991). Persons perceived to have a great power over creation, maintenance or even destruction of order (including

[86] There is no such existing documentary available. A documentary in Gujarati comprising interviews with victims and accused in Behrampura and other areas of Ahmedabad titled *Chet'ta Rejo* ('Be Warned') is privately available but does not document the massacres.

a great capacity for violence) generate awe and deference (Shils 1965). Modi's propensity to evoke deference among Hindus of Gujarat is explicable. He had displayed the capacity to command order, having presided over the anti-Muslim violence. He had also transformed the status quo, by becoming the longest-serving chief minister from the backward caste in the state. After the violence he reinforced his followers' belief in his authority with extra-judicial killings of Muslims. But why would a Muslim be drawn towards the charismatic authority of Modi? Sample surveys in the US show that among the top five people who receive the most deference are State governors, Federal legislators and Cabinet members (House, Spangler and Woycke 1991) plausibly because charisma is directly linked to their power to command over the collective, their decision deeply affecting the order of everyday life. Although respondent Salman had not been a beneficiary of individual or collective benefits through the BJP or Modi he spoke of him as a "great man" because "*Woh apna sab kaam kar sakta hai*" (He can get anything done). It is possible that Muslims were influenced by the charismatic authority of Modi in view of his unprecedented control over the people and their own dependence on state resources for daily survival.

4.4. Effect of religiosity

It is reasonable to believe that a large number of Muslims began to publicly support the BJP exactly nine years after the violence on account of the BJP's own admission to provide political representation to Muslims and the subsequent patronage of material resources and physical protection that Muslims would derive from the incumbent party by having a co-ethnic intermediary. It is less obvious why pious Muslims would display unexpected flexibility by compromising with sacred values. In supporting the BJP they were almost rejecting the party's anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies and, most

importantly, Modi's refusal to apologise for the violence. Compromising a sacred value in exchange for some material outcome is a taboo trade off that finds little acceptance (Ginges and Atran 2009). Orthodox Sunni Muslims attributed their support to Modi's skilled governance and the rapid economic progress in Gujarat. As discussed earlier respondents denied having received any benefits when explicitly questioned. Nonetheless, even if a section of them had been beneficiaries, adding material incentives to compromise over sacred values would increase the saliency of the taboo. It would result in mingling the sacred with the profane and lead to greater opposition to compromise (Ginges and Atran 2009). Would this imply the presence of a national identity overlapping a gradually subsiding religious identity among Muslims? Respondents distinguished between the two very clearly. BJP party member in Juhapura, Junaid, said: "*Vatan imaan hai, Islam to hai hi"* (My country is my honour; Islam of course exists indisputably). Respondents like Aslam, Mohammed Umar and Jamal Mohammed had not altered their traditional Islamic attire or subdued their religiosity although they supported the BJP. The 'compromise' of religious Muslims can possibly be explained from a characteristic found in many of their testimonies: self-blame. Shaukat believed that "Hindus hate us because we behave uncouthly and are illiterate"; Zahir similarly attributed "our own illiteracy and *jahalat* (darkness or ignorance)" to anti-Muslim sentiment. Janoff-Bulman's (1979) distinction between behavioural and characterological self-blame is useful in context of past trauma. Self-blame associated with a modifiable source (one's behaviour) – apparent in the Muslim testimonies – as opposed to a relatively non-modifiable source (one's character) indicates the respondent's desire to maintain a belief in control and in their ability to avoid a negative outcome in the future. It is possible that BJP Muslim supporters believed their action as a

step towards amending what they perceived to be unworthy behaviour, not a compromise of sacred values.

The above discussion demonstrates the possible reasons for the support of Muslims for the BJP. These include patronage-based incentives, which were a common motivation for Muslim candidates and voters. For religious Muslims in particular the support for the BJP was not a compromise with their religiosity. It suggested reconciliation to the possibility of the BJP retaining power in the near future, the subsequent need to forsake the anti-national image by gaining social approval of the majority and their dependence on incumbent state resources. But why would a Muslim likely to benefit from state patronage or from social acceptability *not* support the BJP? A crucial factor that differentiated the BJP Muslim supporter from the Congress Muslim supporter was the respondent's extent of personal experience of the violence in 2002.

4.5. Personal experience of violence

Here I would classify personal experience of the violence as 'high' if respondent faced an attack on his own or his immediate family members' life; 'medium' for attack on friend or loss of own property; 'low' for no experience. It is possible that the passage of time would assuage the memory of the violence and, therefore, this classification is based upon the rationale that a traumatic experience which is more personal is likely to be remembered for a longer period of time. An individual who has lost a family member to the violence is unlikely to find an equivalent replacement in the present and can be expected to be more resentful of the perpetrator. Of my respondents, none of the BJP Muslim supporters were classified under high personal experience. Congress supporters, however, did report high personal experience. For them the support of the BJP was taboo. Idris, a doctor in Juhapura, was left for dead in 2002 alongside his brother who was

killed. “Those who support the BJP are traitors. That Zahir is also a traitor!” he said referring to the BJP Muslim candidate from Juhapura. In lethal KM2, I was more likely to come across Congress supporters than in non-lethal KM3. KM2 shop-keeper Amjad said he will “never vote for the BJP which is responsible for our losses” unlike Mahmud of KM3 who blamed the Congress for not preventing the 1993 violence. “Did Narsimha Rao (former prime minister) do anything to prevent the demolition of the Babri mosque or the riots thereafter? No he did not! Then why blame only the BJP?”

Under the ‘medium’ category, BJP supporters were motivated by either material benefits or value-rational reasons such as nationalism. Congress supporters were not necessarily enthusiastic about supporting the Congress and attributed “lack of trust” for the BJP. “Do we change our parents just because we have stopped liking them?” an STN resident whose house was looted asked indignantly. His words implied his disenchantment with the Congress yet he emphasised his “mistrust” of the BJP. This, of course, cannot be generalised because the effect of the memory of past trauma depends on how the actor positions it in the current time. It can be positive if the actor positions it to enhance the value of the present: “the contrast effect”. Or it could be negative for the memory itself recreates a bad experience in the present: “the endowment effect” (Elster 2007). This, of course, showcases a pattern and no definite predictions can be made. Abdullah, an elderly businessman of Juhapura, did not witness violence or losses unlike Zahir who had a narrow escape in his car when a crowd recognised his name tag on his government uniform. Whereas Zahir would be expected to support the Congress, it was Abdullah who supported it. “The BJP can never be trusted. Today Modi aspires to be the prime minister and is trying to appease us, what about tomorrow?” Alternatively, it is also reasonable to expect the extremely poor to outweigh past trauma with daily survival, irrespective of personal experience of violence. A discrepancy like Zahir – an affluent

Muslim who had a close shave with death and yet supports the BJP – could mean that the absence of politicised tensions reduce the mistrust between antagonistic groups (Frøystad 2009), shifting the focus from demonisation of the other to co-operation with the other for daily survival. However, this seems unlikely given the political atmosphere in Gujarat that continued to vilify Muslims through state-supported legislation. It is more plausible that the existence of a repressive political environment creates a social pressure to conform to the majority. Public concealment of misgivings would be a better option than social disapproval. This is discussed shortly.

Data also indicated that a traumatic or discriminatory experience occurring at the present time, even if not of a violent nature, did alter preferences. Shaukat staunchly supported the BJP when I met him a month before the state elections in December 2012: "I admit people like me have no right to vote for the BJP as we had *selected* the Congress … But we gave the Congress 35 years to provide us *development*, they did nothing. BJP, in 15 years, has given so much. Yes, I agree that the benefits have only reached the Hindus but one day they will also reach the Muslims I am sure of that. Riots happen… and they will happen again in future. When we are in minority the majority will certainly dominate us. We have to tolerate that." In April 2013 I met him again. He did not sound as certain about the BJP as he did earlier. "I find it difficult to trust the BJP," he said, revealing to me two experiences of a discriminatory nature that he faced during this period. One, he was refused a bank loan possibly because he lived in a red-lined area, although he was financially solvent and had not defaulted. Second, the BJP-governed municipal corporation razed a newly constructed office complex he had built in Danilimda "because it was in the way of their road widening project". The first experience had angered him. "They refused me a loan though I was not a defaulter. Is there any reason why except that I am Muslim?!"

5. Polling booth analysis

Findings suggest several possible explanations to BJP Muslim support. But in absence of polling booth or survey analysis it cannot be inferred with certainty that Muslims publicly declaring support for the BJP were also voting for it. To disentangle public support from electoral support I conducted preliminary analysis for 11 polling booths, limited to my fieldsites, for the 2012 assembly elections. First I matched each polling booth within a constituency to the corresponding block in the electoral rolls of 2012, then estimated the religious population for each booth by meticulously counting Hindu and Muslim surnames for each block on the electoral roll. In absence of booth-level religion data that the government does not publicly release, this was the best method of estimation. Table 6.2 shows the distribution by religion of registered voters in all booths for RRN, STN and PN corresponding to the votes cast for the BJP, Congress and others (independent candidates and smaller parties). Findings for the 11 booths could only be tentative because of the ecological fallacy: making incorrect inferences about individual effects from aggregate data. This is especially true for heterogeneous booths where the bounds on patterns of voting for a certain party can be very wide. For example, for a booth with 40% Muslims and a BJP voting percentage of 50%, it is hypothetically possible that all Muslims voted for the BJP. But it is also possible that none voted for it. One solution offered by the Duncan-David method (King et al. 2004) is to obtain tighter upper and lower bounds on voting patterns from booths that are either almost entirely Muslim or Hindu (homogeneous). Inferences about Muslim voting pattern for the BJP could therefore be made in only 2 of the 11 booths which had a homogeneous Muslim electorate (96% and 99%). For the booth with 96% Muslim electorate, between 2% and 6% Muslims had voted for the BJP; for the booth with 99% Muslim electorate, the

Muslim voting for the BJP was between 8% and 9%. Table 6.3 shows the bounds on Muslim voting patterns for the BJP. This, of course, is a tentative inference but emphasises the possibility of higher Muslim support for the BJP in public and lower in terms of actual voting. One theoretical reason to expect contradictory behaviour would be the absence of a 'hidden transcript' (Scott 1990) among the Muslims leading to a type of expressive dissonance that limits the articulation of true feelings (Kuran 1998).

Cognitive dissonance suggests that individuals tend to experience dissonance or inconsistencies between the cognition of action taken and opinions of their beliefs or values which tend to point to a different direction. The dissonance is often unavoidable and, indeed, discomforting. The discomfort prompts its alleviation through some kind of mental adjustment which will usually choose a path of least resistance (Festinger 1962; Kuran 1998; Elster 2007). For a Muslim who believed that the BJP is an anti-Muslim party, the new knowledge of the BJP's inclusive measure to represent Muslims in the party could be dissonant with the cognition that the BJP is anti-Muslim. If this Muslim individual chooses to support the BJP for potential economic gains expressing his original private belief might now invite social disapproval from the majority Hindus for opposing an inclusive government and from his own community for opposing a government that seeks to make amends and provide benefits. This expressive dissonance – the inability to express oneself truthfully – leads to preference falsification in order to reduce the dissonance i.e. alteration of private preferences to avoid a negative reaction or tarnishing of social standing and, thus, concealment of misgivings (Kuran 1998). Thus a Muslim would overtly express his nationalism or mute any contrary views (e.g. denial of segregation). This is more likely for religious Muslims – especially those with visible religious signs which increase their vulnerability to being identified as orthodox Muslims.

The Muslim who personally believes that the BJP is anti-Muslim might even experience moral dissonance – value-based judgement of preferences –after having decided to support the party for economic benefits i.e. guilt for supporting a party that was responsible for anti-Muslim violence earlier and might organise future violence. He would want to reduce the dissonance through rationalisation: "We live in segregated areas by choice." This is contrary to interviews I conducted as a journalist in 2005 in Juhapura and other neighbourhoods when Muslims resented segregation for economic reasons (e.g. higher rents of housing) as well as the subjugation it signified. Many Muslims would also express a perception of futility in expecting basic civic facilities, such as educational aid, from the ruling government. This disenchantment had propelled a campaign among Muslim citizens for private Muslim schools at the time (*Times of India,* 8 September 2005). However, in 2010, a resident of Juhapura I met at the Muslim real estate fair said, "We know there is no other option but to live here, so why not make our lives better within our ghettos." This was endorsed by KM3's Amjad, who also rationalised the BJP's involvement in the 2002 violence by citing the Congress' inability to protect Muslims in the past. Salman believed that the anti-Muslim violence was "expected" because Muslims had killed Modi's father earlier. This was a rumour that he had taken to be true, yet it justified the BJP's perpetration of the violence in his mind.

The increase in number of individuals resorting to preference falsification would lead to a rise in social pressures on others to choose what preferences to communicate, thereby creating equilibrium where private opinion is at odds with public opinion. Thus a rise in Muslims publicly supporting the BJP would increase the overall pressure among other Muslims to find social approval, thereby leading them to support the BJP. Therefore, it is possible that expressive dissonance is greater among BJP Muslim supporters residing in non-homogeneous neighbourhoods where the pressure to conform

to the public discourse would be very high, e.g. Juhapura. We could subsequently suspect more heterogeneous populations to have higher percentage of Muslims voting BJP (compared to almost entirely Muslim). So the upper bound of Muslims supporting BJP in all-Muslim areas cannot necessarily be extrapolated to more mixed areas. Conversely, it is also possible that Muslims publicly professing their support for the Congress are also experiencing expressive dissonance at the fear of being called a defector within their own community if they display their genuine feelings (that is, BJP support). For example, Salman of RRN campaigned for the BJP but claimed to vote for the Congress. "I'm the only one to support the BJP. My family will reprimand me if they find out… RRN people don't know that I like BJP." This is possibly more likely in an intermixed neighbourhood, e.g. RRN.

Expressive dissonance could arise also from the respondent's interaction with me, the interviewer. Few could identify my religion from my name, dress and language – three signs that would give away my religious identity. As described in chapter 3, it was difficult to 'tell' my religion from my diction, dress, name and address. Thus a Muslim who assumes me to be Hindu and, therefore, sympathetic towards the BJP would be concerned about maximising reputational utility (Kuran 1998) – one of two components comprising expressive utility, the satisfaction that is derived from expressing our wishes truthfully – and not open up their genuine feelings to me. Expressive dissonance can be completely eliminated i.e. expressive utility can be maximised either over generations of internalisation of these feigned sentiments or through social revolt. That could occur only if the number of people voicing their private opinion (misgivings) in public would increase. This would alleviate the overall threat of social disapproval, leading to a further increase in honest expression and overall decline in aggregate dissonance.

In his work on the language of power relationships, Scott (1990) distinguishes the 'hidden' transcript as the language of the dominant and the subjugated which occurs in private. For the subjugated it is the "discourse that takes place 'offstage', beyond direct observation by powerholders, a cover of deference to avoid punishment including social disapproval. Contrary to the idea of hegemony the hidden transcript suggests a parallel nonconformist subculture, albeit outside the gaze of political power, that allows the subjugated to fulfil their own personal goals. While hidden transcripts are a precondition to rebellion of the dominated, the apparent absence of rebellion does not negate the presence of a hidden transcript. This creates a methodological problem for an ethnographer, because the presence of the hidden transcript can only be conjectural until rebellion actually occurs. In case of Muslims, it is possible that a hidden transcript does exist unknown to me. The polling booth analysis is evidence to show contradictory behaviour – the vocal support for the BJP is the public transcript whereas anonymous secret ballot is where the hidden transcript exists. Further research should distinguish between public and electoral support by analysing data from homogeneous polling booths with variation on class, personal experience of the violence and proportion of Muslims. The Conclusion to this thesis elaborates on areas of future research.

6. Conclusion

This chapter investigates why Muslims would support the BJP, a party acknowledged to have perpetrated the anti-Muslim pogrom nine years before. Ethnographic evidence suggests several possible explanations including patronage-based material benefits from the incumbent government, charismatic authority of Modi in Gujarat and that direct personal experience of the violence, such as loss of life of family member, discourages voting for the BJP. Preliminary polling booth analysis suggests there being a distinct

possibility of Muslims supporting the BJP in public but not voting for it. One theoretical reason to expect contradictory behaviour would be the absence of a 'hidden transcript' (Scott 1990) among the Muslims leading to a type of expressive dissonance that limits the articulation of true feelings (Kuran 1998). As the booth analysis indicates, the vocal support for the BJP is the public transcript whereas anonymous secret ballot is where the hidden transcript exists. Given that expressive utility can be maximised when subordinates assemble together autonomously and display power through their numbers, it is plausible that expressive dissonance is less likely (and a hidden transcript more likely) among respondents in Muslim-majority neighbourhoods or ghettos.

Appendix for Chapter 6

Table 6.1: Muslim nominations in the BJP in Gujarat elections

Year	Constituency	Election type	Total seats	Muslim BJP candidates	
				Total	Victorious
2009	Junagadh	Municipal corporation	51	5	0
2010	Ahmedabad	Municipal corporation	192	2	0
2010	Surat	Municipal corporation	114	2	0
2010	Rajkot	Municipal corporation	69	1	1
2010	Jamnagar	Municipal corporation	57	7	0
2010	State-wide	Local body elections	6742[b]	256	117
2012	State-wide	State assembly	182	0	0
2013	Salaya	Municipality	27	24	24

[b]This is the total number of seats for elections contested in 24 District Panchayats, 208 Taluka Panchayats and 53 municipalities.

Table 6.2: Distribution by religion of voters and votes cast for BJP and Congress per electoral booth

Assembly Constituency	Fieldsite	Booth no.	Registered voters[c]				BJP votes in booth	Cong votes in booth	Other votes in booth
			Hindu in fieldsite	Muslim in fieldsite	Other Hindu	Other Muslim			
Jamalpur	RRN	170	74	135	218	830	136	506	102
Jamalpur	RRN	174	115	1252	0	0	64	481	256
Jamalpur	RRN	175	739	362	0	0	352	221	172
Jamalpur	RRN	176	191	850	7	184	106	488	192
Jamalpur	RRN	179	4	942	214	0	166	506	159
Jamalpur	STN	51	3	10	27	1011	42	498	156
Jamalpur	STN	180	1029	377	42	52	684	238	150
Jamalpur	PN	158	1157	11	0	0	402	300	61
Jamalpur	PN	164	57	9	560	2	340	72	15
Danilimda	PN	96	12	419	0	437	51	503	14
Danilimda	PN	98	262	721	0	0	146	486	25

[c]The total number of Christian voters in all fieldsites is 6; in other areas 31.

Table 6.3: Muslim voting pattern for the BJP by polling booth

Assembly Constituency	Fieldsite	Booth no.	Registered voters					Muslim vote to BJP	
			Hindu in fieldsite %	Muslim in fieldsite %	Other Hindu %	Other Muslim %	Total Muslim %	Min %	Max %
Jamalpur	RRN	170	6	11	17	66	76	0	24
Jamalpur	RRN	174	8	92	0	0	92	0	9
Jamalpur	RRN	175	67	33	0	0	33	0	100
Jamalpur	RRN	176	15	69	1	15	84	0	16
Jamalpur	RRN	179	0	81	18	0	81	1	25
Jamalpur	STN	51	0	1	3	95	96	2	6
Jamalpur	STN	180	69	25	3	3	29	0	100
Jamalpur	PN	158	99	1	0	0	1	0	100
Jamalpur	PN	164	9	1	89	0	2	0	100
Danilimda	PN	96	1	48	0	50	99	8	9
Danilimda	PN	98	27	73	0	0	73	0	30

Photo 6.1: BJP campaigners in a Muslim-majority neighbourhood



Photo courtesy: Yogesh Chawda, *Times of India*

Photo 6.2: Bombay Hotel neighbourhood in Ahmedabad atop the municipal garbage landfill



Photo courtesy: Dhaval Bharwad, *Times of India*

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions

1. Introduction

The 2002 violence has been extensively studied in the culturalist literature and documented in human rights reports, but no existing study systematically explains the uneven distribution of violence. This could partly be because of the absence of unbiased data – official as well as sourced from advocacy groups. I had two main goals in my thesis. The first was to systematically analyse the spatial variation in the violence. For this purpose I compiled an original dataset of killings in 2002 by town, village and neighbourhood from the *Times of India* newspaper. The second goal follows from the dichotomy within existing literature on spatial variation in Hindu-Muslim violence in India. Studies either take a top-down (macro-level) perspective, explicating political machinations (e.g. Lijphart 1969, 1996; Wilkinson 2004) or economic conditions (e.g. Field et al 2008; Mitra and Ray 2012; Bohlken and Sergenti 2010). Or they are bottom-up (micro-level), where individual grievances, intergroup threat, and the attributes of participants in violence are reviewed (e.g. Varshney 2002; Brass 2005; Berenschot 2011). Neither approach, in isolation, is a successful explanatory methodology even as neither approach is mutually exclusive of the other. My second goal, therefore, was to link the macro with the micro using quantitative and ethnographic methods.

I focus on the terrible Hindu-Muslim violence that occurred in Gujarat in 2002. It demands explanation as one of the worst episodes of ethnic violence to have occurred under a democratic government. Despite its severity, scale and duration violence varied widely across the state and within cities. Four-fifths of towns and rural areas of Gujarat

did not experience any violence whereas 22 of 43 municipal wards were completely peaceful in Ahmedabad city, where 37% (279) of the total killings in the state occurred.

2. A Review of Methods

For the quantitative analysis, I compiled the original dataset of killings from the *Times of India* (*ToI*), following the procedures used by Varshney and Wilkinson for their dataset on Hindu-Muslim violence in India from 1950 to 1995. The dependent variable is the number of killings rather than the number of riots mainly because countless riots occurred in this period, many of which did not lead to killing. Many non-lethal riots were likely to have remained unreported in the first few days of intense violence. Additionally, killings have greater theoretical significance—and worse social ramifications—than damage to property.

The 'town' was the smallest unit of analysis for which Census data on independent variables was available. This became the principal unit of analysis to test several social and economic hypotheses (N=191). The same data was unavailable at the village level; therefore, variation for rural areas corresponding to 25 districts of Gujarat was explained. Although the units of analyses are very large, the quantitative analysis has the advantage of systematically comparing places where killings did not occur as well as where they did. Indeed, this is the only study as of today that investigated the spatial variation in the violence of 2002. In order to test the political hypotheses, data was taken from the prior Gujarat Assembly Elections of 1998. The 182 constituencies of the State Assembly do not correspond with towns and therefore, in a pioneering exercise, official delimitation data was used to meticulously match towns to constituencies as described in chapter 2.

The lack of religion data at the municipal ward level made findings of statistical analysis at the neighbourhood level tentative. I discuss this in chapter 3. Ethnographic

methods were more appropriate also because the ambiguity surrounding events and data collection in conflict areas can best be disentangled by in-depth fieldwork methods. Most notably, my research design for fieldwork took account of the political findings at the macro level and focussed on three intermixed slum neighbourhoods. All the three – Ram Rahimnagar (RRN), Santoshnagar (STN) and Parikshitlalnagar (PN) – were located in the same electoral constituency, within a distance of two kilometres from one another.[87] RRN was completely peaceful in 2002; STN experienced non-lethal attacks, namely arson and looting; and PN experienced lethal attacks. By holding the political configuration constant at the micro level, it became possible to identify the factors explaining spatial variation at the level of the neighbourhood.

Fieldwork comprised spontaneous conversations with 81 respondents in the three neighbourhoods, many of whom were repeatedly contacted for follow-ups. There were around 30 others with whom I met and chatted with during conversations with the principal 81 respondents. For chapter 6, three additional neighbourhoods were investigated where 18 Muslim respondents were interviewed.

3. Findings

Here I list out the findings, limitations and implications for each chapter.

3.1. Variation across cities and towns

Macroanalysis reveals the violence to be orchestrated by the BJP for electoral gains in the forthcoming state elections. Most notably, they reveal that the BJP did not foment violence in places where it had sufficient support to win the forthcoming election.

[87] RRN and STN were contiguous; PN was located at a distance of two kilometres. I also examined two scrap markets located less than half a kilometre from PN, namely Kabadi Market no. 2 (KM2) and Kabadi Market no. 3 (KM3).

Violence was actually lowest in constituencies or districts where the BJP had won a majority of voters in 1998. Muslims were most likely to be killed where the BJP faced the greatest electoral competition – these were places where the BJP had previously won around 33-36 percent of the vote, indicating that the party had to attract more voters to secure victory at the next election. Analysis of the effect of violence on the BJP's performance in subsequent elections in December 2002 shows that the violence did indeed boost the BJP's vote: regression analysis demonstrated that moving from the median death rate (.023) to the 90th percentile (.600) would increase BJP vote by more than 12 percentage points. By implication, the party had the power to prevent as well as inflame violence. These findings reiterate previous arguments made by scholars like Brass and Wilkinson about the distinct character of Hindu-Muslim violence in India that violence is not an insurgency against the state but supported by the state for electoral gains. My findings, indeed, demonstrate the implicit logic behind the BJP's political strategy. It also confirms allegations that the state rewarded police officials who had permitted violence while punishing those who repressed it. Findings show that in a police district with no killings, the predicted probability of demotion was .43 and of promotion .04.

Findings also provide an important corrective to studies that emphasise Scheduled Castes and Tribes as perpetrators of violence, because places with a higher proportion of these groups tended to have fewer killings. This suggests that the Sangh Parivar's attempts at Hindutvaisation— branding Muslims as oppressors of Castes and Tribes— were most likely to succeed when these subordinated groups were too small a minority to forge their own class or clan interests.

Affirming to previous cross-national studies on ethnic rioting economic deprivation was an important factor in Gujarat's violence. The greater the proportion of people who

worked for less than six months, and the higher the unemployment rate among young adults, the worse was the violence. Intensity of the violence was also affected by the emotional impact of the triggering incident at Godhra. Killings increased with the number of *karsevaks* from the district who died at Godhra. At maximum (5.7 per million Hindus), this would multiply the number of killings sixfold, compared to the majority of districts where no *karsevaks* had died.

Limitations: The data are ecological and the units of analysis are huge. The Census lacks socioeconomic data for individual villages and also does not release the distribution of Hindus and Muslims for urban units lower than the 'town' (i.e. municipal ward). For this reason segregation could not be measured in the 191 towns. There is also no data or a measure of civic networks to test Varshney's theory of interethnic associations.

Implications and Future Research: The chapter demonstrates that the emotional impact of the triggering event varied over space. Killings increased with the number of *karsevaks* from the district who died at Godhra. Future research could examine a similar effect using a different measure: newspaper circulation. Tracing the diffusion of sit-ins in the American South in the 1960s, Andrews and Biggs (2006) demonstrate that potential protestors were inspired by news of sit-ins in neighbouring cities reported in their local newspaper. It could be seen in Gujarat whether violence followed the circulation route of newspapers. More importantly, this could be tested using vernacular newspapers as a measure because Gujarati dailies – bearing a higher circulation than any English newspaper – often passed off rumours of attacks against Hindus as true events (Patel, Padgaonkar and Verghese 2002).

Future research should also examine the violence of Gujarat in 2002 in a temporal perspective. This follows from studies observing changes over time in Hindu-Muslim violence across Indian states and districts in the period after independence (Wilkinson 2004; Urdal 2008; Bohlken and Sergenti 2010; Bhalotra, Clots-Figueras and Iyer 2012; Mitra and Ray 2012). For example, controlling for political and socioeconomic variables, Bohlken and Sergenti's (2010) findings associate a 1% increase in growth rate of a state over time with an over 5% decrease in Hindu-Muslim riots. Gujarat, they argue, experienced more rioting in 1986 and 1987 when growth rates were relatively low and not in 1988 when it was relatively high. Future research would benefit from examining the relationship between ethnic violence, economic development and political configuration for Gujarat in the period after 1995. A related avenue of research would be testing the applicability of Lijphart's theory of consociationalism for Gujarat. Given that the Congress party dominated political space in the period before 1995 in Gujarat it might be worth investigating whether the presence of Muslim MLAs in the ministry and Muslim police officers impacted the occurrence of violence, controlling for political configuration and socioeconomic factors.

Future research should also analyse more subtle social indicators. One obvious task is to measure the strength of associational ties between Hindus and Muslims. Another is to incorporate some of the intricacies of caste identities, beyond the simple classification of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The peninsular region of Gujarat—Saurashtra—did not witness large-scale violence in 2002. Before 1948, this region was a mosaic of princely states dominated by Rajput families. They constructed political alliances that excluded upper-caste Hindus (Vaniyas and Brahmins) but often extended to powerful Muslim families, formerly Mughal nobles (Tambs-Lyche 2010). It can be conjectured that this historical legacy helped protect Muslims from violence in areas with a substantial

presence of Rajputs. Future research could test this conjecture by mapping the detailed caste classifications provided by the 1931 Census (or the 2011 Census, when it becomes available).

3.2. Ecology of Attacks and Communal Cooperation and Protection in RRN

I discuss these two ethnographic chapters together for their common objective of explaining microspatial variation in the 2002 violence. The uniqueness of the research design permitted me to compare different levels of violence in contiguous neighbourhoods by holding the political configuration of the neighbourhoods constant. This was important in view of the macro analysis that highlighted the role of political elites in 2002.

Findings: The findings of chapter 4 uncover the instrumental logic of violence along with the importance of the built environment. Rather than explicating motivations of individuals this chapter draws upon Collins' (2008) central claim that any process of organising violence involves the overpowering of confrontational tension. Despite the heightened emotions triggered by the Godhra incident, perpetrators did not ignore their own level of risk associated with attacks which they assessed by the target's situational context. Situational context is conceptualised here as 'spatial configuration', a collective of two factors: (1) Built environment and (2) Population concentration. Founded on this framework the article's central argument expounds on the strategic ecology-based decision-making practices that attackers, mobilised through various processes including ethnic hatred, engaged in before and during the course of attack that eventually

contributed in explaining the different outcomes of attack. Ecological strategies that potential targets equipped themselves with to escape from attacks are also demonstrated. In a larger sense, my research from this chapter contributes to studies that confirm the influence of the built environment in effecting social action (e.g. Festinger 1950; Zhao 1998), albeit I further demonstrate how actors employ situational resources during a highly dynamic process of collective action like violence. An important revelation was that political leaders in the electoral constituency of the three neighbourhoods had the incentive to inflame violence – indeed, the IRS (Brass 2005) was fully functional across the municipal ward – yet this factor was insufficient to explain the outcomes of attacks without considering the spatial configuration of the neighbourhoods. If the built environment hindered mobilisation and/or if the target group was judged as strong enough to repel the attack with a counterattack – in other words, the spatial configuration impeded the attack – even an existing riot system was unable to succeed. If either or both factors facilitated attackers, the target group was most vulnerable to a lethal attack. Interethnic civic ties (Varshney 2002) – a factor argued to be a deterrent to such operational riot systems – could partly explain the peace in RRN but despite their presence, there was high level of violence in the lethal neighbourhood of PN and the KM2 market. I discuss the implication of this finding shortly.

Chapter 5 gains a deeper understanding of interethnic relations in the peaceful neighbourhood, RRN. The puzzle was the cooperation of Hindu with Muslim residents at a time when opportunistic defection and engagement in attacks against Muslims was materially beneficial and socially acceptable. The puzzle is addressed by examining the choices that Hindu and Muslim residents faced at the time, primarily: why did Muslims not flee RRN and why did Hindus not attack Muslims. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks of clientelistic exchanges between voters and politicians and mechanisms of

resolving principal-agent issues of commitment, I argue that monitoring in a spontaneous form of collective action, such as violence, needs to be differentiated from monitoring voting behaviour which is a phenomenon that occurs over time. It took me several months of fieldwork and repeated visits to RRN before I discovered the hidden force of enforcement underpinning what seemed to be communal cooperation. A paradoxical combination of legitimate and illegitimate institutions in RRN doubled up as an enforcement mechanism that overcame commitment issues between Hindus and Muslims: the legitimate institution being an intermixed slum committee of residents (Mandal) and the illegitimate being an extralegal operator, a Muslim woman whom I anonymise as Zulekha. Both collaborated to enforce cooperation through coercive measures. The Mandal proscribed outsiders from entering RRN through methods best described as physical vigilantism, thus clearly defining its boundaries; Zulekha punished fellow Muslims, who attempted to flee RRN, in order to prevent a drop in their population which would have made the rest of their group vulnerable to attacks.

In line with literature on patron-client linkages in electoral mobilisation, findings indicate that intermediaries in RRN yielded credibility among residents for their ability to physically protect them rather than supplying material benefits alone. It is in the nature of resources exchanged where my findings depart from literature (e.g. Berenschot 2010). Zulekha provided such security to the Mandal members as well as the residents who ensured her businesses within RRN did not face legal impediments. In exchange of RRN votes, local Congress leaders protected her from the police. It was this collaboration of legitimate (Mandal) and illegitimate (Zulekha) institutions that strengthened the operation of self-governance and ensured peace in RRN. Hindus of RRN felt safe, their lives and trades (both legal and illegal) protected with the association of the Mandal and Zulekha.

Limitations: The ethnographic analysis is a small-N study with three detailed comparable cases. The selection of the primary cases was dictated by methodological reasons. The two municipal wards where killings were highest, namely Naroda Road and Asarwa, offered limited variation in the distribution of Hindu and Muslim populations. Here Muslims were restricted to isolated pockets unlike the arbitrary intermixing in the three neighbourhoods selected as the principal fieldsites. To enhance the generalisability of the findings I made a preliminary study of a fourth neighbourhood, Naroda Patiya, located in Naroda ward. Ninety-seven Muslims were killed in Naroda Patiya on February 28, 2002; victims disproportionately comprised women (35) and children (36). Preliminary discussions with witnesses of the attack did in fact point towards the importance of ecological factors. Both the built environment and the population concentration of the target group favoured the attackers, providing them with an optimal route of attack and retreat. A Muslim respondent Altaf who escaped the attack said, "Those who could escape were mostly men because women were not accustomed to physical exertion and a few of them were carrying infants and escorting children." The research design is robust and findings open up observable implications to test in future research for a larger number of cases.

A secondary limitation is that of incomplete police records, which posed the methodological problem of inaccessibility to participants of lethal attacks. This made it difficult to know the local origin of the attackers, whether the same crowd overlapped at the target or were they characteristically different at two different places. It was possible that the same individual had engaged in a lethal attack more than once and at more than one place. Of course, tracking down riot participants is "most difficult" in civilian riots and "even more difficult (is to) engage with them in dialogue to describe and "explain"

their intentions and actions" (Tambiah 1997: 1178). This is particularly a challenge when interviews depend on past recollection of the event. Given these practical and theoretical concerns the triangulation of police records, respondent testimonies and a meticulous mapping of the chronological sequence of the events were the best estimate of the occurrences.

Implications and future research: The most obvious implication of the findings in Chapters 4 and 5 is that ecology matters even when individuals engaged in collective action are motivated by visceral and/or material factors. For example, the population concentration of the target group influenced the decisions of individual actors, be it the decision to attack (chapter 4) or that of engaging sanctioning mechanisms (chapter 5). The arguments could be examined for a larger number of cases for a better understanding of how actors employ situational resources during violence. Indeed, it would be interesting to note the ecological strategies employed by attackers in societies where violence is legitimised by the state as against where it is non-normative. An example of the latter is a study by Baudains, Braithwaite and Johnson (2012) who investigate the London riots of 2011, a non-normative form of violence where the cost of participation in violence would be greater than that in Gujarat. Their findings resonate with mine. They suggest that although the riots were spontaneous they subsequently formed quite distinct spatial patterns which emerged as a result of the interactions between different actors – in their case the rioters and the police. A topic of future research that they raise, and so do my findings, would be to explore patterns in offenders' journeys to crime by locating the destination they travelled. Given this evidence the findings of chapter 4 provide a microlevel view of the actual decision-making processes that actors undergo that eventually lead to target selection and spatial concentration of violence.

One perplexing issue that the findings raise is with regard to interethnic contact and its subsequent link with violence. While I do not debate the effect of contact in the reduction of prejudice, which finds substantive evidence in a variety of contexts, the pertinent question is the effect of spatial proximity on optimal contact. For example, residents of RRN shared interethnic ties that were neither strictly friendly nor economy-dependent. They were not a gradual outcome of cultural and social contact, but emerged from meticulously cultivated interaction. Pettigrew (1998:76) argues that for contact to be effective "'friendship potential' is an essential, not merely facilitating, condition for positive intergroup contact effects that generalize". Mere distribution of groups in close proximity geographically does not automatically guarantee optimal contact. Grannis' study of racial relations and street networks in American cities using urban street maps is a suitable example of racial relations developing not as an outcome of spatial proximity but as a consequence of the pattern of the residential or tertiary street networks which rarely crossed racial lines. Indeed, the *pol* architecture of Ahmedabad is densely packed and proximate yet followed distinct caste and religion based segregation (chapter 3). Following from this, one possibility would be to examine the relationship between spatial structures of street networks, contact, prejudice and violence for intermixed neighbourhoods. This might be a methodological challenge in developing societies like India, even using existing urban maps, because urban street networks as planned on paper eventually reflect a different reality. Ethnographic fieldwork became essential for my study of the three neighbourhoods whose street networks, as documented in the municipal corporation maps, were encroached by ad hoc slum settlements and it was impossible to distinguish where RRN ended and STN began until respondents were specifically asked. "Cutting", referring to the demolishment of illegal shanties from planned street networks, was a common concern of the respondents many of whom had

built make-shift or illegal houses on the municipal street network. What this implies for the sociology of ethnic violence in general is further discussed in section 7.4.

Related to chapter 5, one area of future research would be to examine a larger number of neighbourhoods like RRN that remained peaceful in 2002. Whereas RRN comprised a population of deprived Dalits and Muslims, it might be useful to study affluent neighbourhoods and those with literate populations. I draw this idea from Kanter's (1968) utopian communities which were literate and geographically isolated from external influences. It could be expected that literate and/or affluent neighbourhood might keep peace for incentives other than physical security and that sanctions for non-compliant behaviour would take very different forms.

3.3. The BJP Muslim supporter in Gujarat

The contradiction between India's high levels of political violence and the sustenance of its fully-functional democratic system has consistently (and justly) perplexed academic and non-academic intelligentsia – Myron Weiner (1989) memorably termed it the "Indian paradox". Within this larger frame of discussion, I investigated a puzzling political phenomenon dominating public debate in India a decade after the violence: the support of Muslims of Gujarat for the BJP, the party acknowledged to have perpetrated the anti-Muslim pogrom in 2002. Such a phenomenon finds rare precedence in conflict-ridden democracies. There are a few instances, in India, where victims of ethnic pogroms have voted for a political party that perpetrated the violence – Muslims of Bhagalpur in Bihar and Sikhs of Punjab and Delhi – but only after sustained public apology by the party and several interim measures to placate the electors. This is unlike Gujarat, where the state has denied an apology for the violence. Although 6-8% Muslim electors of

Gujarat had traditionally voted for the party in power, including the BJP, these voters largely comprised Muslims from the Shia sect. Unlike the Shias, until 2009, Sunni Muslims had shunned the BJP electorally. It was revealing, therefore, to come across many Sunnis in 2010 actively campaigning or contesting, voting or publicly endorsing the BJP and/or incumbent chief minister Narendra Modi. The BJP's own political strategy to nominate Muslim candidates in municipal and state elections since 2009 does not explain why a Muslim voter would support a co-ethnic favouring a Hindu nationalist party that has refused to apologise for the 2002 violence.

Findings: Findings I discuss here are derived from fieldwork data conducted during non-election periods as well as during two elections, the municipal elections for Ahmedabad city in 2010 and the Gujarat state assembly elections of 2012. For a larger representation of Muslims, I also conducted fieldwork in three additional sites: two exclusively Muslim neighbourhoods comprising riot evacuees and a third Muslim-majority neighbourhood. Of 66 Muslims I interviewed in my principal and secondary fieldsites, 43 voiced their support for the BJP.

It is notable that there was no perceptible difference between testimonies of Muslim BJP supporters from poorer neighbourhoods and those from middle and upper-class neighbourhoods. What differed was the motivation of a BJP Muslim candidate/party member from that of a BJP Muslim voter/campaigner, irrespective of class. All Muslim BJP party members and contestants I spoke with were motivated by individual reward, e.g. career advancement through patronage with incumbent political leaders and future political front-runners whereas Muslim BJP voters/campaigners were guided by both material benefits and value-rational approaches. Therefore, what became important to explain was the motivations of those Muslims who were beneficiaries of material

benefits and social status through the BJP's patronage of their constituencies yet chose to support the Congress. A crucial factor was the respondent's personal experience of violence. Respondents with deeper personal experiences (e.g. death of a family member) found difficulty trusting the BJP; indeed, all BJP Muslim respondents in my fieldwork reported experiences of a less personal nature (e.g. property losses). This, of course, showcases a pattern and no definite predictions can be made because the effect of the memory of past trauma depends on whether the individual actor positions it as positive (enhancing the value of the present) or negative (memory of past trauma recreates a bad experience in the present).

Ethnography yielded several explanations yet in the absence of polling booth or survey analysis it could not be inferred with certainty that Muslims publicly declaring support for the BJP were also voting for it. The chapter presented preliminary polling booth analysis for 11 booths in the three primary fieldsites. These findings are tentative because inferences could be made about Muslim voting pattern for the BJP in only two of the 11 booths, which had a homogeneous Muslim electorate (96% and 99% respectively). For the booth with 96% Muslim electorate, between 2% and 6% Muslims had voted for the BJP; for the booth with 99% Muslim electorate, the Muslim voting for the BJP was between 8% and 9%. By implication, this flagged the possibility of higher Muslim support for the BJP in public and lower in terms of actual voting. One theoretical reason to expect contradictory behaviour would be the absence of a 'hidden transcript' (Scott 1990) among the Muslims leading to a type of expressive dissonance that limits the articulation of true feelings (Festinger 1950; Kuran 1998). I discuss implications below.

Limitations: Booth analysis was preliminary because, firstly, the government does not publicly release the booth-level (or ward-level) distribution of electors by religion. Each

polling booth within a constituency had to be manually matched to the corresponding block in the electoral rolls of 2012. The religious population for each booth was then estimated by meticulously coding Hindu and Muslim surnames for each block on the electoral roll. Secondly, the ecological fallacy allowed inferences limited to only homogeneous booths. For heterogeneous booths, the bounds on patterns of voting for a certain party can be very wide. So for a booth with 40% Muslims and a BJP voting percentage of 50%, it is possible that all Muslims voted for the BJP. But it is equally possible that none voted for it. However, employing a preliminary booth analysis raised the possibility of contradictory behaviour – the presence of a 'hidden' transcript, a cover of deference to avoid punishment including social disapproval. While hidden transcripts are a precondition to rebellion of the dominated, the apparent absence of rebellion does not negate the presence of a hidden transcript. This creates a methodological problem for an ethnographer, because the presence of the hidden transcript can only be conjectural until rebellion actually occurs. Or, as the polling booth analysis indicates, the vocal support for the BJP is the public transcript whereas anonymous secret ballot is where the hidden transcript exists.

Implications and future research: One inference I could make in the middle of my fieldwork was the possibility of a national identity overlapping a gradually subsiding religious identity among Muslims. However, respondents subsequently distinguished between the two very clearly. It became more plausible that the support of religious Sunni Muslims for the BJP suggested reconciliation to the possibility of being governed by the BJP in the near future, the subsequent need to gain social approval of the majority in order to forsake the perception of the "anti-national Muslim", and their own dependence on incumbent state resources through a patron-client form of resource

distribution. But the findings from the polling booth analysis, although tentative, have much wider implications. If public support is not translated into vote one inference would be that voices of resistance essential to deepening a multi-ethnic democracy are waning. There is likely to be excessive social pressure among Muslims to seek approval in public from the majority as well as their own community leading to expressive dissonance (and preference falsification). This is more likely for religious Muslims – especially those with visible religious signs which increase their vulnerability to being identified as orthodox Muslims. But it is also possible that anonymous referendum provided them the space to modify their public behaviour. In Scott's language, the secret ballot would be the space for a 'hidden transcript' to take form – an 'offstage' discourse for the subjugated, a cover of deference to avoid punishment including social disapproval. Therefore, we might be more likely to find higher presence of expressive dissonance among those BJP Muslim supporters residing in non-homogeneous neighbourhoods where the pressure to conform to the public discourse would be very high.

Future research could possibly identify homogeneous booths with specific characteristics (e.g. located in an affluent neighbourhood) that could be used to examine several possible explanations, such as the effect of economic status on voting for the BJP. A rich Muslim would be more likely to vote BJP than a poor Muslim bearing limited resources to insulate future anti-Muslim violence. Conversely, a poor Muslim would be more likely to vote BJP because of their higher dependence on state resources acquired through local political intermediaries (patronage). Co-ethnic voting can also be examined wherein one might expect a Muslim to be more likely to vote for a Muslim candidate in the BJP than for a Hindu candidate. Giving the strong evidence suggesting that Muslims having a more personal experience of violence were less likely to support the BJP, analysis should compare polling booths where casualties in violence were high with

those where casualties were low. One would expect to find Muslims who faced fewer losses in 2002 to be more likely to show electoral support for the BJP. The contact hypothesis can also be examined by identifying booths in mixed neighbourhoods, which are found to have a moderating effect on intolerance (Massey, Hodson and Sekulic 1999). One would expect then that Muslims in an intermixed neighbourhood would be more likely to vote BJP because of the alleviation of threat perception from Hindus due to contact or, by contrast, to seek higher social approval from the overall dominant Hindu majority. Finally, booth analysis should investigate the hidden versus public transcript argument. Hidden transcripts can exist in isolation or when many subordinates come together to occupy a dominant position. Thus Muslims would be least likely to vote for the BJP in a Muslim-majority neighbourhood or ghetto.

4. Overall implications for the sociology of ethnic violence:

The main contribution of this thesis has been the attempt to bridge the quantitative and ethnographic traditions. In doing so, it became possible to examine whether factors associated with violence at the macro level could be inferred to have the same effect – or any effect at all – at the micro level. One methodological implication is that macro analysis should consider the magnitude of violence rather than the occurrence of a riot mainly because non-lethal riots often go unreported. However, at the micro level a judicious inquiry into the outcome of an attack needs to be conducted. Ethnography provides wider scope to check and cross-check occurrences of riots in a neighbourhood which makes it methodologically feasible to count the number of riots with more precision. The role of political elites was a crucial determinant of killings in rural and urban centres of Gujarat. Killings were highest in those towns and rural areas where the BJP faced the greatest electoral competition. Ethnographic research revealed the presence

of politically motivated 'riot systems' in the violent neighbourhoods, but this was not the only factor behind the different levels of the violence (or its absence).

Findings from the ethnographic chapters urge more attention towards examining how the contact hypothesis takes effect in places where violence finds social legitimacy. Contact theory finds less resonance in the study of whites and black Americans in the US given the legimitisation of hatred against blacks, both before and after the Civil War (McLaren 2003). This would be very relevant to India where, historically, ethnic minorities like Christians and Muslims, particularly the latter, have been viewed with deep suspicion and resentment over their purported disloyalty towards the country (Gupta 2002; Yagnik and Sheth 2011; Bauman and Leech 2012). This is of particular relevance to Gujarat where the state champions the right of the majority community to violence against the minority (Rajagopal 2010), an action justified as "self-defence" against foreign aggression. Tausch, Hewstone and Roy (2009) do find evidence for the effect of intergroup contact on reduction of prejudice between Hindus and Muslims, albeit only with regard to symbolic threat. The authors find no effect of contact quantity or quality on reduction of realistic threat – an important predictor of prejudice among Muslims – because realistic threat depends on relative status and not on perceptions of differences in morals and norms. As they suggest, interventions to reduce prejudice should not just entail interethnic contact but also aim at bringing about macrolevel changes such as reducing social hierarchies via laws and regulations (p. 93).

On a methodological level, the Tausch, Hewstone and Roy (2009) study surveys student respondents in Orissa state of India. While they admit to the inferential issues arising out of the atypical sample, future research should also conduct similar surveys for

riot-tormented states.[88] This would be important in view of findings demonstrating Hindus to be more likely than Muslims to underline cultural differences and historical incidents as causative factors for Hindu-Muslim violence in India (Ruback and Singh 2008) and Tausch, Hewstone and Roy's (2009) study attributing prejudice among Muslims to be based more on subjective realistic threat than on historical incidents.[89] Findings of this thesis pertain to a particular context that included an unusually troubled history of Hindu-Muslim relations, a governing party that could gain from accentuating ethnic identity, and a horrific triggering incident. These particularities must be taken into account when applying the findings to other Indian states and to other democratic polities.

5. Overall implications for the sociology of India

Wilkinson (2004) prefers to take an optimistic stance in discussing the implications of electorally-motivated ethnic violence for India's democratic system. He argues that higher political competition in multiethnic states can actually reduce violence because politicians in states with high fractionalised systems are forced to protect minorities to retain electoral support. This, he argues, is true of anti-minority politicians too who would be compelled to surrender to the force of electorally profitable minorities.

Undeniably, anti-minority politicians do mellow their ideology and can prevent ethnic violence. This is most clear in contemporary Gujarat where the BJP under chief minister Modi initiated the nomination of Muslim candidates in the party in view of the high party competition at the national level and his own aspiration of elevated office in the 2014

[88] Calculating from the Varshney-Wilkinson dataset, the death rate in Orissa (per 100,000 population) in the period 1950-1995 was 0.22. Death rates for Gujarat and Maharashtra in the same period were 3.16 and 1.49 respectively.

[89] Tausch, Hewstone and Roy (2009) measure realistic threat by eight items assessing perceived competition for political and economic power (p. 87).

general elections, thus complementing the mechanism proposed by Wilkinson. On a less positive note, electorally motivated violence questions the legitimacy of entrusting political institutions with excessive power especially within a patronage democracy. Electors in a democracy should bear confidence in political leaders, not fear them. The basis of the fear is the political leadership's control over law and order. State control over electorally-motivated violence becomes easier if the livelihood and professional careers of the police are able to be manipulated by the political leadership.[90] As chapter 2 demonstrates, the BJP demoted police officers who attempted to prevent violence. In 2006, the Indian Supreme Court enlisted directives for functional autonomy of the police (Singh and Others 2006). An important directive was to constitute a State Security Commission, comprising both political and non-political members, to shield the police from political interference. As of August 2013, Gujarat was among 15 states that were yet to implement the most vital of the measures which would provide functional autonomy to the police, namely constituting the SSC and ensuring separation between law and order and crime investigation. The laidback response to the directives is one indication that the usual explanation given by ruling governments of their inability to control violence because of inadequate police strength ('state weakness') is a pretext to maintain control over law and order.

Given the importance of the role of the state in Hindu-Muslim violence, a concrete measure was proposed in 2005 to hold the state accountable for future episodes of violence. This was the Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparations) Bill, 2011. It was first drafted in 2005 by the National Advisory Council, an interface of civil society intellectuals and the central government. The Bill recognises the vulnerability of minorities (including Hindu Scheduled Castes and

[90] Personal interview with RB Sreekumar, former Director General of Police (Gujarat state), 11 November 2011.

Scheduled Tribes) in ethnic riots, an aspect that has met with sustained contestation from the Hindu right for its purported 'victimhood' of non-Hindu minorities; it remains to be passed in Parliament. What is more relevant in terms of scholarly debate is its emphasis on making civil servants in charge of law and order in a state legally liable and guilty of "dereliction of duty" if riots are not controlled. In what could be called a step towards consociationalism, the Bill vests the authority of punishing civil servants in the hands of a National Authority comprising incumbent and opposition political leaders besides membership from civil society. Its future success in maintaining peace during politically-motivated violence would be conjectural at this point, given that consociationalism has not guaranteed peace in deeply divided societies, as discussed in the Introduction to this thesis. Or, as Varshney points out elsewhere, the Bill would be futile in controlling violence because violence is not necessarily an outcome of poor policing at the ground level (Indian Express, 16 July 2011). Despite real concerns and also the fact that micro-level factors for violence are multiple, it cannot be denied that law and order is a state-level responsibility in India and requires deterrents at the macro level. I would therefore argue in favour of measures such as the Communal Violence Bill. Rule of the law is an intrinsic feature of a vibrant democratic polity and instrumental in its elevation to a 'liberal' than merely an 'electoral democracy' as Diamond (2002) classifies it. For example, even though the Right to Information Act (RTI) of 2005 is often circumvented by politicians and bureaucrats in India and RTI activists continue to face lethal attacks, its main success lies in the recognition that a transparent interface needs to exist between leaders and electors. In absence of legal provisions, ethnic minorities who are not electorally rewarding will continue to face the dilemma of the Muslim voter of Gujarat today (chapter 5) caught between the need for state resources and their own moral

dissonance.[91] Despite the Gujarat Muslim elector's historic moral repugnance for the BJP (and the BJP's for the Muslim elector) the BJP is potentially the party most likely to rule the state in the future. In 2014, it is also likely to form a coalition government in the country with Modi as the prospective prime minister. For the world's largest democracy aspiring to compete as a dynamic superpower in the near future these are realities that need immediate attention.

[91] Even as I write this in September 2013, the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh continues to struggle with ongoing Hindu-Muslim violence purportedly instigated by political parties in anticipation of the 2014 general elections (*BBC News,* 9 September 2013).

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