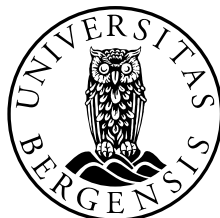


Identity, Votes and Violence

Degree of Hindu-Muslim Conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan

Katrine Moland Hansen

Master Thesis



Department of Comparative Politics
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June 2008

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It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow beings

Mahatma Gandhi*

Abstract

The thesis explores variation in the degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict in the Indian states Gujarat and Rajasthan. Gujarat is characterised by Hindu-Muslim political conflict as well as endemic religious violence. In 2002 more than 2000 people, predominantly Muslims were killed in religious violence. The State Government, the Police and the Judiciary have displayed pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim sympathies. The government of Rajasthan is generally not perceived as biased, nor has the state experienced widespread religious violence. The religious conflict is manifest through party politics and the degree of conflict is moderate. The analysis of Hindu-Muslim conflict is two-fold. First, the states are compared in terms of degree of Hindu-Muslim polarisation in conventional politics. Cleavage theory is utilised to explore the relationship between crosscutting and overlapping cleavages and Hindu-Muslim polarisation. The role of actors in constructing religious identities and thereby influencing the degree of religious polarisation will be explored through a constructivist approach to identity. Second, states are compared in terms of violence, judicial and government bias. The role of elites in preparing, enacting and explaining violence is explored through an instrumentalist approach to violence, and the relationship between electoral incentives and Hindu-Muslim violence will also be discussed. Furthermore, the thesis also explores incentives and motivation behind violence and other forms of violation of Muslims. The study is a Most Similar Systems Design and it is explorative and case-oriented. The sources includes secondary data and 23 elite interviews. Empirical findings suggest that the Hindu community is more homogenous in Gujarat than Rajasthan due to socio-economic developments as well as the role of actors. The absence of cleavages that crosscut religious identities increases the religious divide in Gujarat. Violence is a deliberate strategy and large-scale violence involves civil as well as state actors. In Gujarat the government's support for violence is partly related to electoral incentives, but electoral incentives do not explain the variation between states as this strategy has not been utilised under similar conditions in Rajasthan. Variation in the degree of conflict between the two states is related to ideological incentives and the adoption of a hard-line Hindu nationalist ideology. By combining cleavage theory and a constructivist approach this study argues that degree of polarisation influence the potential for mobilising on a Hindu nationalist agenda and the adoption of a hard-line ideology. Religious polarisation and nationalist ideology give incentives for utilising violence as a strategy. Political conflict and violent conflict are not unrelated. Exploring violent conflict in the context of political polarisation reveals conditions that favour the development of violent conflict.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Lise Rakner, who has been a source of inspiration. She has given me indispensable support and constructive feedbacks. I am also thankful to Trude Holme who supervised the first part of the writing process and provided helpful advice in the initial phase of the writing and helped me prepare for my fieldwork. Thank you both!

I also want to thank the Christian Michelsen Institute (CMI) for giving me the opportunity to write my thesis in an inspiring environment. I am thankful to Kari Telle, Are Knudsen, Liv Tønnesen and Hilde Granås Kjøstvedt at the CMI who have given helpful comments on my writing. My thanks also go to co-student Frode Løvlie who has been helpful throughout the writing process and Torunn Olsnes who has read and commented on various sections of my thesis.

I am indebted to Himanshu Ardawatia and his family and friends in India who made my stay in Rajasthan very memorable. My thanks also go to Sanjeev Prakash who provided me with contacts and shared his extensive knowledge. I am grateful to all my informants who took time from their busy schedules to meet with me and answer my questions. You have all been as source of inspiration and admire the work that you do.

I am thankful to Gunhild, Frode, Torgunn, Carmeliza, Chandra, Kjersti, Inga, Kari, Liv, Hilde, Bård, Trine, Stina, Alessandra and Ida for support and amusing coffee breaks and lunches during my stay at CMI.

Finally, thank you Erik for your support and patience.

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Glossary and Abbreviations

Adivasis are indigenous peoples in India, also known as Vanvasis and Tribals. These people are recognised by the Constitution as **Scheduled Tribes** and are entitled to affirmative action.

Bajrang Dal ‘Strong group’ is the militant youth wing of the **VHP** and was founded in 1984. The group has often been complicit in violence against Muslims and Christians.

BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) “Indian People’s Party” is the political wing of the **Sangh Parivar**. The party was created in 1980, but it is related to the former **BJS** party. The party is economically right of centre and represent a nationalist ideology. Currently it is the second largest party in India.

BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh) is the predecessor of **BJP**.

Dargah a Dargah is a Sufi shrine built over the grave of an important religious figure, often a Sufi saint.

EPW (Economic and Political Weekly)

FIR (First Information Report)

Hindutva ‘Hinduness’ is a term first utilised by the Hindu ideologist V.D. Savarkar. Hindutva refer to an ideology of ethnic homogeneity and purity. In its hard-line form non-Hindus are seen as subordinate and foreign elements in India.

HRW (Human Rights Watch)

IAS (Indian Administrative Service)

INC (Indian National Congress), later known as the ‘Congress Party,’ was founded in 1885 and was the core of the independence movement. Its leadership included among others Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. It established itself as a “catch-all” political party and ruled India continuously from 1947 to 1977 and is currently the largest party in India.

ISI (Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan)

Kar sevak ‘Hand-server-for cause’ is a volunteer working for the restoration of a Rama temple at Ayodhya.

MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly)

NHRC (National Human Rights Commission of India) is an independent body established in 1993

NRI (Non-Resident Indian)

Panchayats Elected rural village councils whose role was envisaged by Gandhi, but not established until 1992; one-third of the seats are reserved for women.

OBCs (Other Backwards Classes or Other Backwards Castes) is the official classification of communities that are socially, educationally and economically ‘backwards.’ The majority is defined within this category, however it is dynamic and communities can be included or excluded from the category due to socio-economic developments.

PUCL (People’s Union for Civil Liberties)

PUHR (People’s Union for Human Rights)

Yatra ‘Chariot journey’ a yatra is a campaign-related pilgrimage, most often undertaken by BJP politicians. The most famous of these is the **Rath Yatra** organised by Lal Krishna Advani related to the Ram-temple movement.

RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) ‘National Corps of Volunteers’ was founded in 1923 and is a militant social organization and the core and the “mother-organisation” of the Hindu right.

Sangh Parivar ‘Family of Groups,’ the set of organizations comprising the Hindu right, including the **RSS, VHP, BJP** and **Bajrang Dal**

SCs (Scheduled Castes) these groups, also known as Dalits and Harijans, has historically been discriminated against and are therefore entitled to affirmative action

STs (Scheduled Tribes) see, **Adivasis** above

U.P. (Uttar Pradesh) the most populous Indian state (where Ayodhya is located)

Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad is the wing of the **Sangh Parivar** which works specifically towards Tribals, **STs** or **Adivasis**.

VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) ‘All-Hindu Council or ‘World Hindu Council,’ a social organization closely allied to the RSS and BJP, founded in 1964. It has several overseas wings and is strong within the **NRI** community and therefore economically strong.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Aim of the Thesis

This thesis explores the degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Both states have been affected by this cleavage, but in Rajasthan conflict is generally expressed through conventional channels of political mobilisation, parties and elections, while Gujarat has experienced the worst case of communal violence in contemporary history.¹ Violence and other forms of unconventional forms of ethnic political mobilisation is the part of the political reality of the state.² Despite the variation of the degree of conflict the two North Indian states, they are similar in many other regards, geographically, culturally, historically and politically. This can facilitate the isolation of explanatory factors that contribute to the understanding variation of degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict.

India is probably the most heterogeneous and plural society in the world (Manor 1996, 459). It is politically, religiously, philosophically and ideologically diverse (Nandi 2004, 39). There are cultural cleavages related to ethnic categories such as jati,³ varna,⁴ tribe, religion, language and region. All of these have caused conflicts in India (Chhibber and Petrocik 1989, 192). However, since the establishment of democracy these conflicts have mainly influenced regions, while national democratic institutions have proved remarkably stable (Varshney 1998, 36).⁵ A reason why national institutions have not been affected by numerous ethnic, often violent, conflicts is that conflicts are regional and local specific. The Hindu-Muslim cleavage is the only conflict with the potential to split India (Varshney 1998). The religious cleavage is important as it has divided India once, and has the potential to do so again (Wilkinson 2004, 13).

India has the third largest Muslim population in world, after Indonesia and Pakistan, with 154 million Muslims in a total population of 1,1 billion people (CIA World Factbook 2008).

¹ The term *communal* refers to thinking of people in terms of communities and has become synonymous with defining people by their religious beliefs. The concept is discussed in Chapter 2. Throughout the thesis communal and religious will be utilised interchangeably when referring to political mobilisation.

² These include boycotts, demonstrations, judicial and police bias, discriminating policies and so forth. See, Chapter 2 for more details.

³ Jati is the Hindi word for caste.

⁴ Varna are the hierarchic four classes; priests, warriors, traders and servants, in which caste is divided according to some Hindu texts. There are also castes that are considered as unclean and fall outside the Varna system, the so-called "untouchables" now referred to as Dalits or Scheduled Castes. These two categories often intermix as a person's jati automatically implicate their position in society.

⁵ With the exception of 18 months of National Emergency from 1975 to 1977.

Hindu-Muslim polarisation, the increase in anti-Muslim attitudes, and the regular occurrence of anti-Muslim riots threaten the livelihood of vast amounts of people. “Inter-communal violence undermines India’s stability and capacity to function as a democracy, and must be put down firmly.” (Parekh 2002, 8) Although the number of people affected by riots, (approximately 10,000 people have been killed and 30,000 injured since 1950), is not a large number relative to the population (Wilkinson 2004, 12-13),⁶ the presence of a Hindu nationalist ideology maintains a threat of increased polarisation, and in some parts of India, as the analysis will show, the ideology has been enforced in a manner that jeopardise the equal status and security of millions of Muslims. Furthermore Hindu-Muslim riots constitute a threat to the stability of the largest democracy in the world, its economic development “ and the country’s delicate international relations with its Muslim neighbours, especially its nuclear-armed rival Pakistan.” (Wilkinson 2004, 12)

Understanding of the Conflict

The conflict must be seen in its historical context, the origins of Hindu nationalism and the actors involved in its creation and growth. In the context of colonialism, various Indian ideologies were created. There were attempts at homogenising cultures on the Indian subcontinent to create a pan-Indian identity. But, there were also actors who viewed the country’s cultural plurality, and especially its religious plurality, as incompatible with *one* nation-state, and this gave rise to Hindu nationalism and the Islamic secessionist movement, the Muslim League.⁷ Hindu nationalism developed partly as a response to the Islamic separatist movement, and held the territory to be holy land and therefore opposed a division of India. The Hindu Mahasabha was formed during the 1920s and promoted a clear Hindu nationalist agenda in which Muslims were perceived as a major threat. At first the Hindu Mahasabha was a lobby within the Indian National Congress (INC),⁸ but due to the secularism adopted by leading figures in this movement, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, the Mahasabha parted with Congress and became a radical political party in the late 1930s.

⁶ Comparatively 60,000 people die in traffic accidents each year in India.

⁷ Two Muslim organisations were influential during Colonial Rule. The first of these was the Darul Uloom Deoband, who supported Congress. The second organisation was the Muslim League who favoured an Islamic state and succeeded with the formation of Pakistan.

⁸ Mahatma Gandhi represented a tolerant and inclusive, but religious nationalism, and Jawaharlal Nehru adopted a more European secular nationalism (Kaviraj 1997, 295). The latter two were both part of the Congress movement.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar was the leader of the Mahasabha and the author of *Hindutva; who is a Hindu?*(Savarkar 1989 (Orig. 1923.)), the most influential Hindu nationalist text. He was the first to articulate Hindu nationalism in his pursuit of a Hindu Rashtra (Jaffrelot 2007, 14-15).⁹ According to him, Islam and Christianity were foreign elements in India and their religious practices should be restrained to the private sphere.¹⁰ He promoted the slogan “Hinduise all Politics and Militarise Hindudom” (Savarkar in Pandey 1991, 3005).

Inspired by Savarkar, Keshav Baliram Hedgewar established the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in 1925, a militant Hindu nationalist organisation which is often described as fascist (Basu 1993).¹¹ The stated goal of Hedgewar was to unify and revitalise the Hindu community and to achieve a ‘great’ and ‘glorious’ Hindu nation (Kanungo 2002, 14), and “to penetrate the entire social structure to forge a Hindu nation that would be physically, morally and socially sound” (Jaffrelot 2005b, 81). This is a civil organisation consisting of local branches where volunteers take part in physical training, discussions of history, religion and motherland. The RSS expanded their scope by the creation of various organisations directed towards different segments of the population; women, youth, students, scheduled castes and tribes, together known as the Sangh Parivar, the family of the Sangh (Jaffrelot 2005b, 5).¹² This family included among others things a political wing, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (1951), the forerunner for what later was to be the Bharatiya Janata Party in 1980. The family also includes the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and its youth wing the Bajrang Dal. The latter two are the more conservative organisations within the Sangh Parivar and has offices overseas as well as in India. They have been particular important in the Ram temple movement and members of these groups, as well as the RSS, have often actively participated in Hindu-Muslim riots.¹³

Hindu nationalists opposed INC partly due to the compromise made with the Muslim League to divide India. The Partition triggered horrible communal riots throughout Indian, and the revulsion against these actions and the murder of Gandhi by a RSS member led to “the adoption of a secular constitution, extremely careful about the protection of the rights of

⁹ The term Rashtra is best defined as nation. It refers to a people as well as a social order.

¹⁰ Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism was considered as Hindu denominations.(Jaffrelot 2007, 15).

¹¹ However, the term fascist must be utilised with caution because the RSS does not favour authoritarianism and their main object is socio-cultural, not racial (Kanungo 2002, 19-20).

¹² See Appendix 3

¹³ The Ram temple movement concerns the destruction of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya, allegedly at the birthplace of Ram, in favour of a Hindu temple. The issue polarised society in India from the late 1980s and a mob of Hindu nationalists destroyed the mosque in December 2006.

religious minorities (Kaviraj 1997, 295). However, since the mid-1980s secularism and minority rights has been increasingly under attack as Hindu nationalism has risen to become a major political force in India (Hellman 1996, 237). The ideology raises the faith of the Hindus of India into a coherent whole and gives it a political meaning, transforming Hindus from a heterogeneous population of believers into a nation united by a few common beliefs (Brass 1997, 262). According to some, the objectives of this political movement are inimical to democracy and equality as the ideology of Hindutva which favours Hindu dominations and oppose the minority rights and secularism (Basu 1997, 395). Their rhetoric of democracy is related to the majoritarian principles. They claim that being in majority entitles them to be favoured over minorities, and that due to India's appeasement of minorities it has in fact been 'pseudo-secular' (Anand 2005, 204).

The Creation of Communal Climate

From the late 1970s the Hindu nationalism increased salience as a political force. As a political opportunist Indira Gandhi frequently played the 'religious card' in order to secure electoral victory which created an environment that nurtured the rapid rise of an anti-secular alternative, namely the Jana Sangh (Ganguly 2003, 15). Also, her declaring Emergency Rule gave increased legitimacy to the RSS as they worked actively to restore democracy.¹⁴ Indira Gandhi also chose to open the gates of Babri mosque, Ayodhya, in 1985. This played straight into the hands of the Sangh Parivar, giving them what they needed to fill that vacuum left by Congress's decrease in popularity. The BJP, and especially Lal Krishna Advani, mobilised Hindus for the destruction of the mosque and the rebuilding of a temple on the site. Advani launched a Rath Yatra, a journey through all states in India, starting from the Somnath temple (Gujarat) and ending in Ayodhya. Advani played on Hindu sentiments and communal riots erupted throughout his journey (Copley 1993, 59; Ganguly 2003). The BJP and its Sangh Parivar allies, especially VHP, Bajrang Dal and RSS, managed to successfully destroy the mosque in December 1992. A large mob managed to pass the police blockade.¹⁵ Throughout the following weeks violence was spreading across India, resulting in more than 2000 deaths (Ganguly 2003, 20).

The symbolic use of Ayodhya contributed to the emergence of the BJP as a national political force. Although communal ideology was articulated during the early twentieth century, the

¹⁴ 1975-1977. Responding to massive civil mobilisation, Indira Gandhi declared 'Emergency Rule' in June 1975. Strong restrictions were enforced on media and civil society.

¹⁵ Most observers claim that the Uttar Pradesh government, as well as the local police made to small effort to stop the rioters (Ganguly 2003, 20). There are even reports of police assisting the rioters (Nandy et. al. 1998).

events that took place during the 1980s were decisive for establishing Hindutva as an ideological alternative to secularism. Through the Ayodhya riots Hindu-Muslim conflict went from being confined to specific localities to most of North-India. Hindutva and communal politics came to enjoy the political centre-stage in both Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The Puzzle – Dependent and Independent Variables

During the Ayodhya-mobilisation both Gujarat and Rajasthan experienced violent Hindu-Muslim mobilisation.¹⁶ But in the aftermath of this period Rajasthan has generally been communally peaceful, while violence has been escalating in Gujarat, reaching its peak in 2002 when more than 2000 Muslims were killed (HRW 2002). The state judiciary, government and police in Gujarat have been criticised for systematic pro-Hindu biases. However, both in Gujarat and Rajasthan Hindu-Muslim conflicts have polarised the politics post-Ayodhya, and have had governments led by BJP or Congress since the early 1990s.

The puzzle this thesis seeks to explore is why conflict has been maintained politically in Rajasthan, while Gujarat is experiencing higher levels of conflict as the Hindu-Muslim cleavage is manifest through conventional and unconventional forms of political mobilisation. The states have varying degrees of conflict intensity, despite sharing important cultural, geographical, institutional, and political characteristics. However, there are some variations between the two states. Rajasthan has a larger number of cleavages that cross-cut and overlap the Hindu-Muslim cleavage, while many of such cleavages have lost their salience in Gujarat. The impact of rural-urban, caste, class and regional cleavages on the degree of Hindu-Muslim polarisation will be explored through the cleavage theory. According to cleavage theory cross-cutting cleavages decrease conflict intensity while overlapping cleavages reinforces each other (Lijphart 1977; Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Identities, and therefore cleavages, are analysed from a constructivist perspective that hold that historical and structural events and changes, as well as deliberate and unintended role of actors contribute to identity formation (Fearon and Laitin 2000).

While the cleavage theory offers explanation to variation in the degree to which a cleavage polarise a society, it does not explain different modes of mobilisation or when and where these are utilised. In Gujarat, violence is utilised more frequently, and the government has failed to prevent riots from taking place, while cases of violent mobilisation does not take

¹⁶ Gujarat was affected on a much higher scale than Rajasthan.

place as often in Rajasthan. When it does occur the government has used force to prevent large-scale riots. This variation will be analysed through the perspective of rational choice. Form of political mobilisation and the degree to which government sanctions this behaviour is seen as rational and strategic behaviour related to electoral, instrumental or normative-ideological incentives (Brass 1997; Opp 1999; Wilkinson 2004). Therefore the thesis seeks to explain this variation by exploring who participates in violent mobilisation and possible explanations of why they choose to do so.

The Argument

I argue that the high degree of Hindu-Muslim polarisation in Gujarat is partly due to structural changes that have led Hindus in Gujarat to become a more homogenous group. There is very little within-Hindu conflict, and in this environment hard-line Hindutva ideology promoted by Sangh Parivar activists is more likely to gain popular support. Such actors have also been present in Rajasthan, but not to the same extent. However, since Hindus in Rajasthan are divided by caste, class, urban-rural and regional cleavages these actors have not been as successful in constructing a homogenous Hindu identity. BJP has become successful in Rajasthan by adapting to cleavages, other than the religious.

In Gujarat, on the other hand, the BJP is led by hard-line Hindu nationalists. The combined effect of actors who seek to construct Hindus as a homogenous group, at the same time seeking to erase caste and tribe boundaries, and violence has led to further reinforcement of the Hindu-Muslim divide. Ethnic violence serves as a tool for elites who benefit from strengthening religious cleavages, materially or ideology. Not preventing violence can serve as an electoral strategy for BJP. However, a reason why they choose to use this strategy, as well as a reason why it is effective, is that there are people who support the marginalisation and injuring of Muslims ideologically and normatively. This view is evident by the pro-Hindu bias expressed by the government, police and judiciary in contemporary Gujarat. Anti-Muslim violence and violation of Muslim rights is seen as legitimate forms of political mobilisation by large sections of the Gujarati society. While there has been a slight increase in violence in rural areas in Rajasthan the state has generally been peaceful. Some actors have sought to mobilise violently, but these attempts has been efficiently prevented, regardless of which party that were in power. There is no systematic communal bias in the police force or

the judiciary in Rajasthan.¹⁷ The leadership of the BJP in Rajasthan does not support a hard-line Hindutva ideology, nor is that the reason for their support. Violence is not seen as a legitimate form of political mobilisation by political leaders or by the mainstream Hindu community who most often have a good relationship with the Muslim minority. I argue that electoral incentives, material or other gains combined, can have value in explaining the duration of riots as well as when and how they occur. But, unconventional political mobilisation is also related to the internalisation of a Hindu chauvinist ideology by the actors who perform violence, passively condones it or fail to reinstate justice in its aftermath.

Methodology and Data Sources

The analysis explores degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict. While conventional ethnic political conflict and ethnic violence has been widely discussed in the literature, the relationship between those forms of mobilisation is little explored. In the case of Hindu-Muslim conflict, research has primarily been concerned with violence, and have not related incidents of violence to conventional politics, and in particular why conflict is sometimes and some places expressed through democratic channels has received limited attentions. For the most, the tendency of comparative studies have been to compare cases, often towns, where violence has occurred and, according to Steven Wilkinson, concluding wrongly that all shared characteristics must be causes of violence (2004, 37). Contrary to these approaches the object is not to explain Hindu-Muslim conflict per se, but variation of degree of conflict. Because of the explorative nature of this study I utilise a case-oriented approach. Furthermore, in order to narrow the number of possible explanations I utilise the Most Similar Systems Design. The motivation for conducting a state-level comparison is that state governments is the authority in charge of police forces and thereby responsible for the containing and prevention of violent mobilisation. The 2002 riots in Gujarat affected rural areas in the state as well as cities, and extended to 37 cities towns and villages, some of which had no previous records of such violence (Parekh 2002, 2). Rural violence in the state is not a new phenomenon, but 2002 was the first time that large-scale violence simultaneously affected the entire state. Also, in Rajasthan violence is mainly confined to rural areas.¹⁸

¹⁷ There have been some reports of bias shown by individual officers or in specific locations, but such bias has generally been confined to the lower sections of the police.

¹⁸ Ashutosh Varshney has argued that Hindu-Muslim riots is a big city phenomenon (Varshney 2002). But this approach has limited value for explaining state-wide violence in Gujarat and predominantly rural violence in Rajasthan.

The cases, Gujarat and Rajasthan, are chosen because they share many characteristics, but have different values on the dependent variable. By excluding the shared characteristic, I narrow the scope of the study and the number of possible explanations for variation of conflict intensity between the two states. However, because moderate levels of conflict have been little explored data available on conflict in Rajasthan is limited. Therefore the comparison involves a risk of overestimating the variation between the two states. The politically and ideologically sensitive nature of the research question also implies a risk of potential bias in the literature. Sources have been examined critically to overcome such limitations. In order to collect sufficient data and to improve my contextual understanding of the subject I conducted a fieldwork in India. During this fieldwork I gathered secondary literature, reports, and I conducted 23 elite interviews.¹⁹

Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 2 discusses the conceptual and theoretical framework of the study. I present cleavage theory and the relationship between of degree of polarisation on an issue, and crosscutting and overlapping cleavage structures. I argue that the role of actor in the construction of identity can be incorporated in this framework. The chapter also discusses theories of communal violence as elite strategies. Finally I argue that political mobilisation, including violent mobilisation is rational within a wide interpretation of rational choice theory. Chapter 3 concerns the methodological framework of the study. I discuss benefits and limitations of the case-oriented approach and more specifically the Most Similar Systems Design. The chapter discusses case selection, similarities and dissimilarities between the cases. The final section discusses the data with regards to potential bias, and strategies to overcome them.

Due to theoretical considerations the analysis is twofold. Chapter 4 focuses on Hindu-Muslim polarisation in the context of other political cleavages. The chapter also discusses the role of actors in shaping the cleavage structure and degree of religious polarisation. Chapter 5 focuses more specifically of violence. I discuss whether violent mobilisation is an intentional strategy. First, I analyse who is complicit in violent political mobilisation and how such mobilisation takes place, exemplified by the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat. In the final section I discuss motivations for utilising this strategy. In the Conclusions, Chapter 6, I discuss the relationship between degree of polarisation, political cleavages, and identity construction and violence as a form of political mobilisation. I also examine the motivation of violence with

¹⁹ List of Interview are included in Appendix 1.

regard to cleavages structure. I conclude that there is a relationship between polarisation and degrees of conflict. High degrees of Hindu-Muslim polarisation and few other political conflicts facilitate the adoption of hard-line Hindu-nationalist ideologies. Polarisation and ideology give incentives for utilising violence as a strategy. Violence can be instrumental for elites for electoral purposes or it can be way of realising ideological preferences.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework – Conflict, Polarisation, Violence and Discrimination

The thesis seeks to explore variation in religious conflict intensity in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Variation in conflict intensity as form of political mobilisation on the religious cleavages is little explored. Also the relationship between various forms of mobilisation is rarely discussed in the literature. Theories related to cleavages and polarisation as well as theories of ethnic violence will be utilised in the analysis of religious conflict. The theoretical framework can contribute to the exploration of why there is a higher degree of religious polarisation in Gujarat than Rajasthan and why violence and other forms of unconventional political mobilisation are more frequent and large-scale in the former than the latter state. First, I introduce the conceptual framework of the thesis. Second, I present cleavage theory and how this theory can be utilised in the Indian context. Third, I will present the constructivist approach to identity and the implication of this approach on polarisation and conflict. Fourth, I discuss theories related to unconventional, violent, political mobilisation. This section will introduce an instrumental approach to violence. This section also emphasises rational incentives for elites who condone violence. Finally, I discuss rational incentives for larger sectors of society engaging in unconventional mobilisation.

Conceptual Framework – Operationalising Hindu-Muslim Conflict

There is no straightforward way to define the concept Hindu-Muslim conflict. First, the term conflict itself is used in different manners in the literature, and in many cases the academic understanding of this concept differs from how it is used by non-scholars. Conflict and violence is often utilised interchangeable (for instance Varshney 2002). However, I will define conflict as “a struggle in which the aim is to gain objectives and simultaneously to neutralise, injure, or eliminate rivals” (Horowitz 2000, 95). In that sense, conflict is manifest through various modes of political mobilisation.

The second concern is the use of the term Hindu-Muslim conflict on violence and politics in the two states. Conflict entails a struggle between at least two parts. Furthermore, it can be

interpreted as active participation on both parts. That is not necessarily the case for Rajasthan and Gujarat where Hindus represent an overwhelming majority. Muslims rarely mobilise on the background of religious ideology.²⁰ Politically the conflict is between Congress's accommodative secularism on one side, and Hindu nationalism and communal ideology on the other. Communal violence must be seen in the context of the debate over secularism (Anand 2005, 204). Also, in violent conflicts Muslims and Hindus are not equal participants. Victims are predominantly Muslims, both in Gujarat and Rajasthan (HRW 2002; Mayaram 1993; Rajeshwari 2004). Despite the asymmetric impact and participation by the two communities, the term Hindu-Muslim conflict will be utilised because it is used in the literature and the popular discourse. It is not a 'struggle,' per se, because one part in this conflict, the Hindu nationalists, has sought to gain objectives while neutralising, injuring and in many cases eliminating Muslims, while Muslims have generally supported secularism.²¹

Hindu-Muslim conflict is frequently referred to as communalism. The term implies an expression of religious sentiments, especially when they are contrapuntally positioned against a hated or feared 'others' (Gupta 2005, 79). Dipankar Gupta separates between ethnic movements that regard the perceived 'others' as enemies of the nation-state and communal movements where 'others' are perceived as "legitimate members of the nation-state, but are seen as too greedy, demanding and grasping" (Gupta 2005, 80). However, both these perceptions are present concurrently within the movement that mobilise with reference to religious cleavages. Therefore communal and religious/ethnic conflict is used interchangeably. What Gupta defines as ethnic is seen as the hard-line expression of this cleavage, while his term communal is seen as the moderate expression of the same cleavage. Although I do recognise the distinction between these two categories, both are referred to as communalism in the literature and the popular discourse and are frequently referred to as more or less communal (Pandey 1991; 1997).²² A dichotomous separation between these would imply measuring difficulties with regard to the data in this study.

²⁰ Most Muslims in India prefer secularism and accept plural religious expressions.

²¹ There have been instances of anti-Hindu violent mobilisation and terrorist attacks. But these are conducted by small groups and are not supported by larger segments of the Muslim population.

²² Many Informants with whom I conducted personal interviews frequently referred to political leaders and society in the two states as more or less communal with regards their view on Muslims and other minorities. These informants include Raheel Dhattiwala (Ahmedabad, 17.04.2007), Sumitra Chopra (Jaipur 12.04.2008), Shabnam Hashmi (Ahmedabad 18.04.2007), Sabir Khan (Jaipur, 10.04 and 13.04.2007) Fr. Packium Samuel (Delhi, 03.04.2007) and Kavita Srivastava (Jaipur, 12.04.2007).

Communal violence is rarely examined within the larger framework of communal politics. Violent conflicts, defined as Hindu-Muslim riots, are often portrayed as spontaneous, unplanned and unrelated incidents, but in most cases the term 'pogrom' or massacre gives a more accurate description of these events than official terms such as communal incidents or Hindu-Muslim riots (Brass 1997). Often they involve preparation and organisation, of violence against the Muslim minority, and police and ministers are frequently involved in these processes (Brass 2005, 387). Where 'riot' is utilised to describe religious violence throughout the thesis the term does not indicate proportional participation on the part of Hindus and Muslims. 'Pogrom' will be utilised to describe long-term violence characterised by substantial involvement on the part of the state authorities.

Violent and political conflict will not be seen as separate phenomena, but as variation of a scale of conflict intensity. By not viewing these modes of mobilisation the relationship between this behaviour can be examined. The manner in which people mobilise indicates the intensity of the conflict and while violence is an expression of intensified conflict, it is not unrelated to political conflicts. Both modes of political mobilisation are based in the religious cleavages and often involved the same set of actors. Conventional political mobilisation indicates moderate levels of conflict while unconventional modes of mobilisations are classified as high levels of conflict.

This separation of conflict intensity is rooted in Alan March's classification of political participation (Dalton 2002, 61). Conventional political behaviour is defined as voting, lobbying and formal interest groups, while unconventional political behaviour is defined as demonstrations (lawful and unofficial) slogans, boycotts and strikes, occupation, damage and violence (Dalton 2002, 61). Furthermore, these are ranked according to the degree of unconventional behaviour, where direct action are seen as more extreme forms of political mobilisation and violence the most extreme form of direct action (Dalton 2002, 61-62).

While unconventional modes of political mobilisation is seen as protest politics in western democracies this does not translate to the Hindu nationalist mobilisation in Indian, where unconventional political mobilisation is not restricted to civil society, but often involves participation in the neutralization, injuring or elimination of Muslims, direct or indirect, on the part of government, police and judiciary. Therefore the failure of government, police and judiciary to protect the rights of minorities is also seen as unconventional and intensified

conflict. The state plays a role as a distributor of privileges and the promoter of justice and equality among groups, or by failing to do so (Brass 1991, 248). Where the constitutional obligation to ensure freedom of religion, equality and justice for Muslims is not fulfilled, it is a clear violation by the state. The state is then seen as employing unconventional modes of action to neutralise, injure or eliminate Muslims and the perceived threat they represent.

The inability to separate protest politics from conventional politics in India is illustrative of the challenges of applying concepts and theories developed with reference to a different context. Concepts do not necessarily travel well. Conceptual travelling involves the risk of *conceptual stretching* (Sartori 1970, 1034). Increasing the extension of a concept often decreases its intensity, as the concept may get vague and fluid (Sartori 1970). By extending the classification of modes of protest mobilisation to be modes of political mobilisation in general the intensity of the classificatory framework decreases. However, it involves civil society as well as an additional criterion, government participation. In this perspective it is *radial category* that involves all elements in the original concepts as well as some additional criteria (Collier and Mahon 1993, 848-853).

By employing a qualitative method some of the risks associated with conceptual stretching are minimised, as closeness to the cases allows careful definition of the observed phenomena. The cases are selected for their similarities and therefore the concept will be utilised similarly in the two states.²³ Therefore the utilisation of theoretical concept is not likely to lead to measurement errors between the cases. But, the caution of conceptual stretching applies to the theoretical framework and the utilisation of theories developed in different context. Cleavage theories, for instance, are developed with reference to the western political systems. Still, I will argue that this perspective gives insight in the degree of religious conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Keeping in mind the risk of conceptual stretching I will discuss why and how such theories can be transferred meaningfully to the Indian context, by pointing to similarities and dissimilarities between the theoretical model and its application.

Identity and Politics – Structural Approaches

Cleavage theory provides a framework for discussing the relationship between various cleavages and political mobilisation (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). The theory provides an

²³ Case selection and the Most Similar Systems Design will be discussed in Chapter 3

analytical framework for understanding the degree to which one particular conflict or cleavages polarises the society. Cleavages are:

the criteria which divide the members of a community or subcommunity into groups, and the relevant cleavages are those which divide members into groups with important political differences at specific times and places. (Rae and Taylor 1970)

The degree to which cleavages crosscut or overlap influence political polarisation in a society and cleavage theory can therefore contribute to the analysis of the degree of polarisation related to the communal cleavage in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The theory developed by Stein Rokkan and Seymour Martin Lipset provides a framework for understanding the development of cleavage structures and political mobilisation related to these structures. Political conflicts are constellations of cleavages and the hierarchy of cleavage bases vary among political units and over time (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 6,14). Furthermore Rokkan and Lipset model concern these “conflicts and their translation into party systems” (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 5). By examining these variations between and within Gujarat and Rajasthan one can gain insight in the degree to which one cleavage, religion, polarises a given society. Political cleavages have not been frozen (Lipset and Rokkan 1967),²⁴ but are still dynamic and the hierarchy of political cleavages and the intensity of religious conflict has changed dramatically since the mid-1980s.

According to Rokkan and Lipset, parties represent alliances in a two-dimensional space of functional, i.e. economic and cultural, and territorial cleavages, centre and periphery, cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 10).²⁵ The model is reproduced in Appendix 4.

Cleavages emerge due to historical events and developments.²⁶ The religious cleavage in India emerged during the independence movement and is rooted in competing nationalist ideologies that surfaced in colonial India. While the cleavage has been constant, represented

²⁴ According to Stein Rokkan alliances of cleavages became frozen with the introduction of mass politics in Europe (Rokkan and Hagtvet 1987)

²⁵ The framework draws on the dichotomies developed by Talcott Parsons, transformed by Rokkan and Lipset to coordinates.

²⁶ Cultural cleavages are not easily translated to the Indian context. With the development of the nation-state, cleavages along the territorial axis between a centralising and standardising dominant group and local cultural minority groups emerged. Rokkan identifies two conflicts under this category. The first of these conflicts is between the centralising cultures and ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities (Rokkan and Hagtvet 1987). The second conflict is between the centralising and mobilising nation-state and the established rights of the church (Rokkan and Hagtvet 1987, 299).

by the Congress party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP),²⁷ the alliances of cleavages represented by these parties and the degree of polarisation on this cleavage have changed from time to time, and varies between states. Conflict intensity in Rajasthan and Gujarat will be analysed in terms of this variation of constellations and hierarchy of cleavages. On that note the different positions on the two-dimensional space differs from the two contexts. Political conflicts must be seen in relation to the structures in that society. Table 1 gives an overview of potential cleavages in the original model and its Gujarati and Rajasthani counterparts. These positions represent various group interests that all are potential sources of conflict in these states.

Table 1: Actors in Rokkan's model and Indian Counterparts

Rokkan's model	Gujarat and Rajasthan
Nation builders, controls important parts of the state.	In Indian the Congress Party has been seen as responsible for independence, also played an important role in the linguistic movement for the formation of the state Gujarat.
The presence of a church, or religious group that controls significant parts of education.	Traditionally no hegemonic church among the dominant religious group. The Sangh Parivar, and particularly the VHP have sought this position. This also entails supra national influence through NRI membership and funding.
Influence from an supra national church	
A non-conformist religious dissenter group in opposition to C and R.	Various religious minority groups. The Muslims are the only minority that have a significant political size in Gujarat and Rajasthan
A cooperating group of land owners who controls a significant share of the national territory.	Not similar levels of organisation in India. Agricultural beneficiaries are placed within this group.
A cooperating group of urban, trade and industry founders. In the secondary sector.	Also characterised by low levels of organisation, but urban, business, industry and trade interest are present.
Resistance towards central control in an oppressed periphery	Present in regional movements and parties. In the case of Gujarat present through the successful secession from the Greater Bombay state.
	Caste hierarchy, refers to the conflict between 'upper' and 'lower' castes
	Caste rivalry between competing ethnic groups.
	Indigenous tribes.

Source: (Rokkan and Hagtvet 1987, 312)

Conflict related to industrialisation translates more easily to the Indian contexts. Two potential conflicts emerged due to this development. Firstly, there was a conflict between landowners and the growing bourgeoisie. Secondly, the class conflict between labourers and the industrial owner class (Rokkan and Hagtvet 1987, 299). However, the industrialisation in

²⁷ The Congress party was called the Indian National Congress prior to Independence. In this period what was to become the BJP was known as the Hindu Mahasabha, later renamed Bharatiya Jana Sang until 1980 when it adopted its contemporary name.

India was rapid, and there are variations in the degree of industrialisation and the degree of urbanisation related to this process.

In both Gujarat and Rajasthan there are various potential conflicts centred near the cultural pole of the functional axis. There are clearly distinct groups in relation to religious, caste and tribe identities. In the case of religious groups there is no overarching Hindu church. The Hindu religion is a pluralistic mix of various religious expressions (Jacobsen 2003). The Sangh Parivar has in increasing degrees sought to define Hinduism, and mobilise Hindus as a homogenous group (Pandey 1991). Therefore the conflict between Hindu nationalist organisations and the secular Indian state shares some features with conflicts between for instance the Catholic Church and the state in France.

One of the most notable conflicts in Indian politics is related to caste. The category challenges the dualistic separation of economy and culture on the functional dimension. Caste is still a strong indicator of class, occupation and geographic boundaries in India. A conflict related to the hierarchic structure of the caste conflict implies that distinct ethnic groups, castes, make alliances across caste lines on the basis of socio-economic interests. Still such an alliance would be cultural as well as economic because it would be an opposition to religiously and culturally defined notions of the hierarchic differentiation of castes. In that regard caste conflicts may be just as cultural as they are economic. Rivalry between two or more distinct castes on the other hand is more closely attached to the cultural dimension. Often caste rivalry overlaps with either territorial or economic conflicts.

Religious conflict intensity will be examined in terms of the place the Hindu cleavage enjoys in the hierarchy of cleavages in each state and the degree to which Hindu nationalism polarise society. Whether cleavages crosscut or overlap have impact on the degree of conflict. The main argument proposed with regards to crosscutting cleavages is conducive to stability, while overlapping cleavages can boost conflict. “[C]ross-cutting cleavages assure that those who are divided by one cleavage (say, race) will be brought together by another (say, religion) and vice versa” (Rae and Taylor 1970, 13). Cleavages reinforce each other when two or more cleavages divide the same groups of people. Therefore the degree to which Hindutva polarise politics in Gujarat and Rajasthan is contingent on whether other cleavages divide the Hindu majority. Political mobilisation that crosscuts religious identity is likely to reduce religious conflict intensity while overlapping cleavages reinforce conflict.

According to Arend Lijphart regime stability in plural democracy is dependent on whether institutions provide representation and autonomy for minorities (1977, 223). Minorities should be represented in governments and enjoy cultural autonomy (Lijphart 1996, 258).²⁸ There is no quota for religious minorities in India, but for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. However cultural autonomy in India is protected by the constitution. The constitution adopted a form of secularism where religion is not seen as private and where political institutions are intended to accommodate the expression of religions (Copley 1993, 52). Religious and linguistic groups are allowed to run their own schools, but at the same time members of other communities have the right to attend those schools without being required to follow religious classes. In Indian states civil codes are not uniform for the state, but differ from one religious community to the other.²⁹ While legislation was introduced to transform Hindu personal law related to marriage, divorce and inheritance, Muslims were allowed to keep their personal laws because of their “still-fresh trauma of partition” (Ganguly 2003, 14). However, accommodation of cultural minorities is under attack from the Hindu right. The failure to introduce a uniform civil code has added fuel to the Hindu nationalist claim that Congress has given special concessions for Muslims (Copley 1993, 52-53; Gupta 1996, 16).

Securing protection of minorities is regarded to be important in plural societies as democratic systems should not produce constant minorities that are excluded from decision making processes. Where there is “a dual balance of power or a hegemony by one of the segments, because if one segment has a clear majority its leaders may attempt to dominate rather than cooperate with the rival minority” (Lijphart 1977, 54). Crosscutting or overlapping cleavages is important for stability in this perspective:

In the first place, the way in which cleavages cut across each other affects the chances for consociational democracy because it affects the numbers and relative sizes of the segments and thus the balance of power among them. Second, crosscutting can have important consequences for the intensity of feelings generated by the cleavages. (Lijphart 1977, 75)

Minority exclusion and discontent is, however, not the cause of religious mobilisation in India. Rather, the Hindu majority constantly perceive themselves as threatened by the

²⁸ A feature in this is the federal structure which in itself gives a great deal of autonomy to linguistic and cultural homogenous groups as state boundaries tend to coincide with these divisions (Lijphart 1996, 260).

²⁹ Except the state Goa

marginalised Muslim minority and frequently refer to humiliated pride (Anand 2005; Kakar 1996). Minority accommodation is seen as at the expense of the Hindu majority.

While typical consensus institutions are not present in Gujarat or Rajasthan,³⁰ cleavage structures differ between the two states and may have impact on the degree to which politics are characterised by consensus of polarisation. Political stability is related to the number of cleavages, the degree of fragmentation these cleavages cause, whether the cleavages coincide/overlap or crosscut each other, type and intensity of these cleavages, the effect of overarching loyalties and the relationship between the societal cleavages and the party system (Lijphart 1977, 71). For instance caste conflicts subvert Hindu solidarity, regional conflicts undermine interregional alliances on religious lines (Manor 1996). Whenever religious cleavages overlap conflict gets reinforced. Riots are often seen as an outcome of economic competition, and ethnic groups competing for material benefits (Chandra 1997). The communal card might also be played by slumlords and real-estate developers in order to free valuable land, as the case has been in various areas in India (Wilkinson 2004, 27). Similarly, communal conflict can be related to growing competition in ethnically divided labour markets (Engineer 1984, 3).

Cleavage theory can provide a framework for analysing why and how communal conflict polarise politics in the two states. By utilising a constructivist approach one can widen the focus by including the role of actors in the construction, reconstruction and deconstruction of political identities, and how these activities shape the political landscape and the degree of polarisation related to the religious cleavage. Construction can also contribute to increasing or minimising the divide between two communities. In the following section I will present the constructivist approach to identity.

Construction of Ethnic Identities – Cleavage Construction

Despite a widespread acceptance that identities are dynamic and continuously constructed and reconstructed this perspective has often been excluded from the study of ethnic conflict, “while everyone now pays lip service to constructivism, constructivist assumptions remain comprehensively unincorporated into our theories linking ethnic groups to outcomes” (Chandra 2001, 8). A constructivist approach to ethnic identity means that identity is perceived as dynamic and constantly changing. Individuals have multiple ethnic identities,

³⁰ Typical consensus institutions are multiparty systems and proportional representation (Lijphart 1977).

and the identity with which they identify varies from time to time (Chandra 2001, 7). This understanding of identity implies that cleavages can be formed by agency and that polarisation and forms of political mobilisation are influenced by the role of actors. Cultural or ethnic identities emerge from social, economical and historical events and developments, but can also be constructed and transformed by the behaviour, deliberate and unintended, of actors.

Lipset and Rokkan illustrate how the political salience of cleavages are historical and not natural phenomena (Laitin and Posner 2001, 14). Therefore the perspective is not incompatible with constructivist approach to identity. However, they do not examine the role of actors in constructing and reconstructing actors. Also they do not account for why and how fearful propaganda get internalised (Brubaker and Laitin 1998, 443), but cleavage theory might still be able to account for the conditions in which this happens. Still, consociationalism is often seen as less compatible with constructivism because by assuming ethnic identities to be stable and unchangeable the theory borders on primordialism (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 849). Ethnic identities are seen as rigid and essential characteristics of individuals belonging to that particular ethnic group and rivalries and antipathies are seen as “enduring properties” of groups (Chandra 2001, 8; Fearon and Laitin 2000, 849). The solution ethnic conflict offered by Lijphart is based on providing institutions that provide consensus between competing group interests. This perspective has limited value for recognising successes or failures in resolving conflicts that do not fit these assumptions (Brass 1991, 334). However, according to Lijphart the primary concern is not institutions, but rather with power-sharing in terms of grand coalitions, segmental autonomy, proportional results in elections and minority veto (Lijphart 2001, 11). This is not incompatible with constructivism as long as identities and cleavages are held to be dynamic rather the constant and power-sharing, representation and veto is analysed with reference to whichever perceptions of identity dominate the society.

Construction of identity can mean either changing the content of a social category or changing the boundary rules between ethnic groups (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 850). An example of changing the content of a social category is constructing the idea that ‘Hindu’ refers to a nation as well as a religion. This construction contains an implicit, and often explicit, perception that Muslims (and Christians) are foreign. Furthermore, this also involves

changing boundary rules by the inclusion of among others Tribals within the mainstream Hindu community and the acceptance of their value (Pandey 1991, 3003-3005).

Individuals may oppose common assumptions related to certain category and propagate, quietly or loudly, a different interpretation of this category and so forth contribute to changing cultural boundaries (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 856). Constructivist activities are not restricted to the actions of elites, but includes the activities of ordinary members of civil society, individuals or organisations (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 855-857). “Government policies and institutional mechanisms may be critical factors in influencing a group’s capacity or desire to survive as a separate entity, its self-definition, and its ultimate goals.” (Brass 1991, 50) Changing boundaries or contents of ethnic categories are not necessarily deliberate, but the main focus of this thesis is the role of actors in constructing a more homogenous Hindu majority and a sharper Hindu-Muslim divide.

The Sangh Parivar has sought to homogenise the Hindu community and forge a sense of Hindu national identity. The degrees to which these efforts are successful have implications on conflict intensity because other conflicts are minimised. Hence the degree to which cleavages crosscut Hindu identity can be subject to change, and is attached to the degree to which homogenising actors has been successful in creating a pan-Hindu identity across cleavages such as caste, class and region. The acceptance of such an ideology and political mobilisation, conventional or unconventional, may also be a strategy in order for marginal members of a community to gain greater acceptance (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 857). They may resort to attack members of the ‘other’ community to prove that they do in fact belong to a certain category (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 857), in the case of Tribals and Dalits this would prove that they do in fact belong to the Hindu majority.

According to Radha Kumar “the greatest conundrum of all might well be the role that religious organizations play in sparking or dampening Hindu-Muslim tensions” (Kumar 2002). James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin hold that there is a relationship between identity construction and violent ethnic conflict, and that in these cases identity is constructed by strategically motivated elites or regular people (Fearon and Laitin 2000). In India violence is related to the discourse of security, shaped by the Hindu Right (Anand 2005, 203). These actors promote the view that Hinduism is the most important source of identity and nationality while at the same time the other is dehumanised and reduced to being dangerous,

and Muslims are portrayed as immoral, barbaric, violent, 'backwards,' dirty and Islam fanatic (Anand 2005, 206-207). A precondition of the possibility to exercise violating policies is the internalisation of these perceptions. However, the degree to which people are susceptible to ideologies is closely related to the cleavage structure and the degree to which other cleavages crosscut the Hindu cleavage, and the hierarchy of crosscutting cleavages compared to the Hindu cleavage. In order for Hindu nationalist ideologies to gain foothold Hindus have to view themselves as *one* community and religion must be a major source of identity.

According to David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild the cause of ethnic violence is collective fears of the future. Ethnic activists and entrepreneurs play on these fears and polarise society (Lake and Rothchild 1996, 41). In cases of political conflict within an ethnic group, between moderates and extremist, violence can be used to increase support for extremism (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 864-865). "[E]xtremists who provoke violence or push more moderate leaders to do so often wish to 'purify' their culture, to sharply delineate identity boundaries that everyday interaction and moderates' political agendas threaten to blur." (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 865) Hard-line Sangh Parivar affiliated actors portray the Muslims as threats despite their limited number. The 'Muslim terrorist' is perceived to constitute a grave threat to national security and there is a greater fear that Muslims in the long term will outnumber Hindus (Anand 2005, 208). "[V]iolence against minority Muslims is facilitated and justified in the name of achieving security for the Hindu Self at individual, community, national as well as international levels." (Anand 2005, 204)

The degree to which the efforts to mobilise the mainstream of Hindus under this perceptions is related to both conventional political mobilisation, the behaviour of authorities and mass violence. Because "[i]ndividuals think of themselves in terms of a particular set of social categories, which lead them to act in ways that collectively confirm, reinforce and propagate these identities" (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 855-856). Therefore the constructivist approach can better examine why individuals enact and feel strong antipathies towards other ethnic groups which is largely unexplained.

Holding a constructivist position Dibyesh Anand argues that 'communal riots' are exercised through the mobilisation of the perceived 'self', the purification of the 'self' and the definition through the enactment of violence of what constitute the 'self' and what constitute the 'other' (2005, 205). The 'others' become dehumanised that facilitates the justification of

violent attacks. Constructed and reconstructed identities increase support for strategic elites who provoke violence. Furthermore it favours the continuation of violence, because violence itself strengthens and fortifies group identities (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 846).

Instrumental Violence

Paul Brass belongs to the constructivist approach to identity, but according to him elites construct and maintain ethnic animosities and violence serves instrumental purposes for these elites (1997). The construction of ethnic communities is related to modernization and the environment of competition for material benefits, status and political power which often lead to one ethnic group benefiting more than others in multi-ethnic societies (Brass 1991, 25). However, Brass focus is “not so much on the impact of identity construction on ethnic violence as on the political construction of ‘ethnic violence’” (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 868). The view presented by Brass is that “[e]lites foment ethnic violence to build political support; this process has the effect of constructing more antagonistic identities, which favours more violence” (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 849).

The persistence of communal conflict and violence is related to the three ideologies that developed in pre-independence India, namely Hindu nationalism, Muslim separatism and secularism (Brass 1997, 279). Hindu-Muslim riots and anti-Muslim pogroms have been endemic in India since independence, but Brass seeks to explain ‘waves’ or ‘chains’ of intensified conflict (Brass 2005, 6, 8). In these periods violent communal conflicts occur more frequently and are spread throughout larger parts of India. The Hindu-Muslim conflict, is according to Brass instrumental to specific political actors; “the maintenance of communal tensions, accompanied from time to time by lethal rioting at specific sites, is essential for the maintenance of militant Hindu nationalism, but it also has uses for other political parties, organizations and even state and central governments” (Brass 2005, 9).

Brass utilises a specific interpretation of constructivism where elites are regarded as responsible for heightened ethnic conflict. While the term riot seems to portray that violent outburst that is unplanned and spontaneous, Brass challenges these perceptions. According to him, localities characterised by endemic violence has institutionalised this form of political mobilisation in an *institutional riot system*.

By an institutional riot system, I mean a network of actors, groups, and connections involving persons from different social categories whose effect, leaving aside intentions for the moment, is to keep a town or city in a permanent state of awareness of Hindu-Muslim relationships. (Brass 1997, 284)

Within such a system there are networks that maintain communal, and other ethnic relations tense, so that there is a condition of readiness for riots (Brass 1997, 16). Riots and pogroms are intentional and consist of three phases and clear responsibilities related to these phases (Brass 2005, 15). The first of these phases is the preparation and rehearsal phase. This phase involves the actions of conversion specialists who know how to transform tensions into a larger riot (Brass 1997, 16). In this phase people are mobilised for the enactment of the riot or pogrom. In institutional riot systems there are armies of activists ready to engage in violence and these are brought in deliberately in this phase. These actors include trained activists such as the Bajrang Dal, students, hooligans, lower castes and criminals, and it is usually these actors who engage in the enactment phase of Hindu-Muslim violence (Brass 1997, 286). The final phase is related to how to explain or interpret the riot. This takes place after the riots are over and in this stage elites compete to control the explanation of the causes of the riot (Brass 2005, 15). Violence involves deliberate construction of ethnic identities both during the preparation and the explanatory phase. Identities are maintained and reinforced through the institutional riot system. Violence reinforces ethnic antagonisms and the explanatory phase further reinforces ethnic hostilities.

This approach indicates that the variation of conflict intensity is related to the presence of an institutional riot system and elites who mobilise masses in communal violence. Gujarat's high levels of conflict intensity within this perspective would be related to the presence of actors who prepare/rehearse, enact and explain violence and thereby reinforce communal antagonism, while Rajasthan lacks the institutionalisation of a riot system.

The presence of political elites and communally based organisations that project the view that the 'other' community is a threat, an enemy or an oppressor of their own community is stronger in violence-prone areas (Brass 1997, 16). Violence is a strategic action that serves a specific purpose of upholding communal tensions, securing electoral victory or material gains. In some cases ethnic violence is seen as a cover for other aspirations related to acquiring recourses (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 874). However, the benefits for elites do not explain why people not belonging to the elites take an active part in the actual violence

The puzzle of such theoretical arguments is to explain how elites can convince their followers to adopt false beliefs and take actions that the followers would not want to take if they understood what the leaders were up to. (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 853)

Vote-Seeking Violence

Steven I. Wilkinson is critical towards instrumentalists, such as Brass, for placing too much emphasis on elites and their role in initiating violence, making these approaches unable to account for opposite situations where elites prevent ethnic conflict (2004, 2). He argues that electoral incentives in many cases can explain both when and where polarising violent mobilisation takes place and action taken by state governments to prevent riots (Wilkinson 2004, 205). While identity and violence construction give insight into the background for mobilisation around certain issues they have limited value in explaining violence. The construction of group identity and the perceived 'other' can explain that violence does occur, but not when it occurs and for how long.

Similar to Brass he holds the view that riots takes place due to deliberate planning and conflict engineering. While Brass explains conflict engineering as a tool which can serve various purposes, Wilkinson argues that large-scale Hindu-Muslim violence is primarily premeditated by politicians who seek electoral gains (2004). Also, a report by Human Rights Watch maintains that violent conflict is often caused by manipulative governments who play the religious card (HRW 1995). According to Wilkinson local electoral incentives may be related to the instigation of riots, state level politicians and institutions are responsible by their failure to control the riots (2004). In this perspective the electoral conditions determine the probability of political violence (Wilkinson 2004, 1). Elites are responsible by not applying resources available to them to stop violent mobilisation and prohibit large-scale rioting.

This framework explains variations in gravity and duration of conflicts and not only the occurrence of violent conflict. This perspective may contribute to understanding why Gujarat stands out in the Indian context as the state with the highest number of casualties in riots and despite not having the highest number of riots. The degree to which the state government is determined to prevent riots is the factor that most strongly affects variation in levels of violence. The following figure show how local precipitants as well as state governments influence degrees of violence.

Figure 1: The relationship between town- and state-level factors

	State Government Determined to Prevent Riots	State Government Not Determined to Prevent Riots
Local Precipitants of Violence Present (e.g. high electoral competition, previous violence, low levels of civic engagement)	Second Lowest Level of Violence More riots break out but they are quickly contained by the State	Highest Level of Violence More riots break out, and these are prolonged and bloody because they are unrestrained by either the stat or local community
Local Precipitants of Violence Absent (e.g. low levels of electoral competition, no previous violence, high levels of civic engagement)	Lowest Level of Violence Fewer riots break out and those that do are contained by the state.	Second Highest Level of Violence Fewer riots break out but they continue because they are not contained by the state.

Source: (Wilkinson 2004, 58)

He describes various factors as local precipitants of violence. With regards to the role of elites in forging ethnic hostilities and encouraging violent behaviour parties representing elites within an ethnic group is more likely to promote anti-minority sentiments by holding polarizing religious processions and other events (Wilkinson 2004, 4). Where there is a high level of competition between candidates, violent episodes are more likely to occur. Politicians might play the communal card to strengthen their support base. In electoral systems such as first-past-the-post this incentive may be even stronger as a small shift in votes can have dramatic effect on the amount of seats received by one party (Wilkinson 2004, 138). However if an anti-minority party is in power the government is likely to allow anti-minority mobilisation. At least as long as the social and economic costs do not reduce the party’s support base (Wilkinson 2004).

State-level electoral incentives are related to when and where governments utilise force to prevent riots (Wilkinson 2004, 4). Major riots will therefore not take place in states where the police are ordered to prevent riots. This is related to the degree of political competition, and the number of competitive parties. Where there are three or more parties it is likely that the governing coalition either relies on minority votes or is likely to have to negotiate with minorities in the future (Wilkinson 2004, 6-7). In states with two party systems where the government relies on minority votes they have incentives to prevent riots. Also intra-ethnic cleavages, social, economic and ideological cleavages among the majority will lead to a greater willingness to reach out to the minorities (Wilkinson 2004, 141). A poor minority that

places little demands and whose demands cost little to provide is an attractive coalition-partner (Wilkinson 2004, 142). In states where the ruling party does not rely on support from the minorities they have no incentive to provide security for the minorities (Wilkinson 2004, 7-8).

Constructivism and Violence – Rational Action and Ideology

Both within Wilkinson's and Brass's frameworks individuals are seen as rational and elite support for violence is founded in strategic interests. However, since the focus is on elites in both frameworks they have limited value in explaining why masses engage in unconventional political mobilisation. Brass holds that elites manipulate mobs to engage in violence (1997). Wilkinson does not agree with this perspective, but accepts that local authorities do contribute by holding polarising events which often lead to violence and that state governments choose to condone violence if they gain electoral benefits from doing so (2004). Also, Fearon and Laitin hold that the construction of identity by strategic actors, and that violence is a means to further reinforce ethnic identities (2000). Within these frameworks violence is seen as a strategy to satisfy personal preferences and the action taken by these actors is dependent on perceived opportunities or constraint with regard to obtaining these interests, "individuals choose those actions that satisfy their preferences to the greatest extent, taking into account the constraint" (Opp 1999, 173).

This thesis examines the rationale for individuals, other than the elite, that engage in and/or condone unconventional forms of political mobilisation. Individuals choose from various forms of mobilisation ranging from conventional mobilisation such as votes, to unconventional mobilisation such as demonstrations, boycotts and violence. The chosen form of political mobilisation is according to rational choice theory based on evaluations of tradeoffs and benefits related to this strategy. While a narrow form rational choice theory holds that actions are taken by fully informed individuals based on egoistic preferences based solely on objective constraints of behaviour, a wider interpretation of rational choice holds that all sorts of preferences and constraints can explain political mobilisation and that individuals are not necessarily fully informed (Opp 1999, 174-175). Norms and values can be possible explanations for behaviour, but this claim requires support from empirical evidence (Opp 1999, 194).

A narrow version of rational choice theory can not explain why individuals, despite taking individual risks behave in a certain way. However, religious or altruistic motives and the

norms of helping, seem to offer explanations to the rationality of this behaviour (Opp 1999, 194). Also, negative activities can be justified by norms and values. In the case of violence and the enactment of violence that can be rooted in perceived virtue of violent 'retaliation' as it is defined within the hard-line interpretations of Hindu-nationalism. According to Brass the Hindu-nationalist sentiments expressed by certain BJP politicians are troubling especially because they believe in them, act upon them and show disregard for the feelings of communities aside from the Hindu community (1997, 262). Similarly, the actions of the mobs that engage in violence and boycotts can be rooted in a belief that these actions are justified and that this can contribute to securing some objectives. The action involves major socio-economic costs and for actors involved in illegal activity it involves a risk of possible prosecution.

Hindu nationalism is rooted in the idea of a Hindu nation. The object of Hindu right political mobilisation can be related to the pursuit of this society. Behaviour may be guided by altruistic motives and internalised norms (Opp 1999). Wilkinson argues that parties in government fail to prevent riots and pogroms due to electoral incentives for condoning Hindu violence, but he fails to explain why violent mobilisation is an effective electoral strategy for parties that do not require support from minorities. Altruistic motives and internalised norms can explain costly behaviour, but it also explains conventional political mobilisation through elections (Opp 1999, 194). The violation is not restricted to violence and is related to boycotts, judicial, government and police bias. The analysis seeks to explore the rationale for this behaviour within the wider interpretation of rational choice (Opp 1999).

Summary – Cleavages, Constructivism, Violence, Votes and Ideology

In this chapter I have presented theoretical approaches that will be utilised in the analysis of variation of degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan. I have defined Hindu-Muslim conflict as a conflict where, at least, one of the religious communities seeks to neutralise, injure or eliminate members of the other community. This conflict can play out through conventional politics, voting, it can also take unconventional form such as boycotts, demonstrations, violence, and bias on the part of the authorities, judiciary, police or government. If political mobilisation is conventional the intensity of the conflict is low, while unconventional political mobilisation, often with parallel conventional political mobilisation, illustrate that intensity is high.

Cleavage theory is important for the analysis and I've discussed how this theory can be utilised in an Indian context. I've also focused on the theory of cross-cutting and overlapping cleavages and how such structures relate to identity politics. I have presented arguments for utilising a constructivist approach to the study of identity politics, and that the role of actors in constructing communal identity, and thereby influencing political polarisation relating to cleavages, will be explored.

I have also introduced frameworks that seek to explain why violence takes place. According to Brass the presence of an institutionalised riot system increases the intensity of the conflict. And the degree to which preparatory, enacting and explanatory roles are institutionalised can contribute to understand variation in the degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Electoral incentives can further explain the variation. Both theories assume that elites are rational actors, but rational choice theory will also be utilised to explore why people, other than elites, engage in violence. Both conventional and unconventional political mobilisation are seen as rational action, and within the wider definition of rational choice the purpose of such behaviour need not be egoistic, but it can also be justified by values, norms, and ideology. Having introduced the theoretical framework I now proceed to discuss the methodological approach to the study of conflict intensity.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Case Selection – Exploring the Degree of Hindu-Muslim Conflict

This chapter sketches out the case-oriented comparative method, and the logic behind employing the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) for the study of religious conflict intensity. Furthermore, I discuss case-selection with emphasis on the methodological design and the benefits of utilising this approach. I argue that the selection of cases, to the extent possible, fulfil the requirements of the MSSD, by highlighting the elimination of certain explanatory variables. Variation between Gujarat and Rajasthan that can have explanatory value are also introduced in this chapter. Challenges related to the utilisation of a case-oriented MSSD to the study of Hindu-Muslim conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan are discussed. These issues are related to questions of causality, making causal inferences, diffusion and the possible overdetermination of the dependent variable, religious conflict intensity. I also question the generality of causal inferences made on the basis of the variation between the two states. The final section of the chapter presents the variables that are explored in the analysis, the operationalisations of these variables and the data bases for the

analysis. The study of religious conflict entails challenges both in terms of availability and potential bias data. I describe difficulties related to gathering reliable data, as well as the strategies utilised in order to overcome these difficulties.

The Case-Oriented Approach – Benefits and Limitations

In order to study communal conflict in the two Indian states Gujarat and Rajasthan I employ a case-oriented comparative approach. While numerous studies on Hindu-Muslim conflict exist, none of these offer satisfactory explanations of variation of conflict intensity. An intensive study is appropriate for exploring alternative explanations to varying degrees of conflict in the two North-Indian states. While causal inferences made on the basis of the two cases have limited value for generalisation, an intensive study offer the possibilities for detailed descriptions of expressions of religious conflict in the two states, as well as the causal mechanisms involved.

Still, in the search for causal connections the comparative method is fundamentally the same as the statistical and the experimental method. All three methods aim to establish general empirical relationships between variables while controlling for the effect of other variables (Lijphart 1971, 683). The methods differ in how they confront the challenge posed by too many variables and too few cases (Lijphart 1971, 685-686). The case-oriented approach meet the challenge by seeking “to maximize the variance of the independent variables and to minimize the variance of the control variables” (Lijphart 1975, 164). The case selection is strategic so that the number of operational variables is reduced significantly.

The case-oriented comparative method differ from the statistical method as cases are considered as configurations or combinations of characteristics, as opposed to analyzing cases in terms of separate variables (Ragin 1987, 3). The units explored, Gujarat and Rajasthan, are seen holistically as systems, meaning that each systems is more than the sum of its parts (Patton 1990, 40). Exploring why Gujarat has a high level of communal conflict compared to Rajasthan therefore involves a detailed examination of the structural mechanisms, events, actors and interaction among actors involved in producing this variance. The case-oriented method permits a historical interpretive analysis as well as the search for causal explanations (Ragin 1987, 35).

The approach is also better equipped to deal with the possibilities of both conjectural and multiple causation, because cases are approached as configurations (Ragin 1987, 27). The

method is contextually sensitive and accepts the possibility that a combination of characteristics determines an outcome. As discussed in the foregoing chapter, the many competing explanations to the development of religious conflicts and more specifically Hindu-Muslim conflicts alone do not account for variations in conflict intensity. The case-oriented approach can assess whether these theoretical approaches combined can determine the outcomes more accurately (Ragin 1987, 25).

The notions of conjectural and multiple causation also have some less advantageous implications. By ascribing an outcome to a combination of characteristics, the case-oriented examination risks overestimating the explanatory value of certain variables (Lopez 1992; Przeworski and Teune 1970, 267). It is difficult to examine the explanatory effect of each individual variable. Therefore one cannot exclude the possibility that two explanatory variables within the systems account for the same part of the variation, or whether the causal pattern would change if new variables were included (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 23).

On the other hand, the case-oriented method allows the scholar to identify mechanisms that links an explanatory variable to an outcome, and by doing this the method is useful for avoiding interpreting a spurious correlation as causal (Mahoney 2007, 132).

When clear mechanisms linking a presumed explanatory variable and outcome variable are identified, one's confidence that the relationship really is causal is increased; if such mechanisms cannot be identified, one's confidence about causality is challenged. (Mahoney 2007, 132)

With a detailed understanding of the cases involved, the study increases its validity. "By learning a great deal about each of their cases qualitative researchers tend to avoid simple coding errors that may be common in some large-*N*, statistical databases." (Mahoney 2007, 128) Although qualitative studies cannot claim generality, they can claim validity in that they measure what they set off to do.

Therefore, despite methodological limitations related to possible overestimation, restricted span of explanations and the inability to assess the explanatory value of each variable controlled for the effect of others such weaknesses are compensated for because:

When one analyzes a relatively small number of cases, one can be more thorough and more attentive to details that are likely to be overlooked in statistical analysis: one can make sure that concepts are not

stretched, that the data are as reliable as possible, that the indicators are valid, and that the cases are really independent. (Lijphart 1975, 172)

The Subnational Most Similar Systems Design

By employing the case-oriented method to subnational cases, I further minimize some of the problems associated with the comparative method. First, the subnational method is useful in providing more accurate coding. Studies that treat India as a case often commit serious measurement errors, both when it comes to cultural and economic characteristics, because they often use national averages on this diverse country. The use of nation-level means is widely criticised for being inaccurate. Significant within-nation variation is often neglected, and sometimes distort the analysis and causal inference made in these studies (Rokkan, Campbell, Torsvik and Valen 1970; Snyder 2001, 49). Because the subnational comparative method is sensitive towards within-nation variation it is better equipped to analyse uneven processes of political transformation (Snyder 2001, 94). For instance if one analyse Indian politics the national elections could indicate that India has a multiparty system marked by consensus (Lijphart 1996). Upon closer examination states have in fact two-party systems and politics is confrontational (Chhibber and Petrocik 1989). Similarly, while scholars previously predicted that Indian politics in general would become dominated by Hindu nationalism, this development only took place in some regions. By coding cases more accurately the capacity for making valid causal inferences are strengthened (Snyder 2001, 103).

Secondly, subnational comparisons more easily fulfil the requirement of comparability in relation to a specific research problem. “[T]he comparative method requires the careful selection of cases that fit the research problem, and this is highly conducive to the analysis of subnational cases.” (Lijphart 1975, 167) The selection of subnational cases is therefore an efficient strategy to minimise the problem of too many variables, and therefore consistent with the logic of utilising the MSSD (Lijphart 1971, 687; 1975, 163).

The MSSD refer to the method that explores cases that differ on the dependent variable, but are similar in most other characteristics. The method simulates the experiment, in that the aim is to see the effect of one independent variable controlled for the effect of others. Ideally the cases should differ only on the dependent variable, *y*, and on one other characteristic, *x*. On the basis of such an ideal case one would infer that the characteristic, *x*, causes the outcome, *y* (Landman 2003, 29-30). While this ideal is hard to fulfil with reference to social units the

selection of similar cases “can reduce considerably the number of *operative* variables and study their relationships under controlled conditions without the problem of running out of cases” (Lijphart 1971, 687). The logic is that characteristics observed in both cases are irrelevant in determining the varying degrees of religious conflict, while differences that correspond with the level of conflict, explain the variation (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 34).

Whether it is common history, language, religion, politics, or culture, researchers working in area studies are essentially employing most similar systems design, and the focus on countries from these regions effectively controls for those features that are common to them while looking for those features that are not. (Landman 2003, 30)

While this strategy is powerful in controlling for such features it “often involves a trade-off between the ability to gain control and the ability to generalize” (Snyder 2001, 103).

The selection of neighbouring states as units challenge whether the cases can be considered as independent observations. This issue is closely related to ‘Galton’s Problem,’ the problem of diffusion. “[O]bservations at the subnational level do not necessarily provide *independent* tests of the theory, because states, counties, and other subunits within a political system are often interconnected, not freestanding.”(Snyder 2001, 95, 97) In the case of violent episodes in Gujarat one can suspect that the government in Rajasthan would employ extra resources in order to avoid the riots from spreading to their state. In fact, during the post-Godhra episode in 2002 there were some instances of riots developing in Rajasthan as well. One crucial difference between these riots and the pogrom that took place in Gujarat was that the police seemed to crack down on rioters to a much higher degree in Rajasthan (Wilkinson 2004, 61,160). This reaction was probably partly caused by a fear of experiencing violence on a scale similar to that of Gujarat. In that way diffusion may have contributed to overestimating the variation of the degrees of conflict in the two states in that particular situation. However, riots did not start simultaneously across Gujarat and the local authorities in most places in Gujarat would have had the opportunity to prepare in the same manner as in Rajasthan. Also, given the violent history of Gujarat it would be likely to anticipate violent reactions to what happened in Godhra. The government of Gujarat could have prepared to crack down on such riots with the same force as in Rajasthan. This exemplifies how the challenges posed by diffusion can be compensated for by the case-oriented approach because the cases are viewed as configurations and are examined holistically.

The user of the comparative method is also less prone to the danger of basing his conclusions on cases that are not really independent, because he is close enough to his cases to notice immediately any trace of, for instance, 'Galton's problem.' (Lijphart 1975, 171)

Despite these advantages the MSSD is criticised for being deterministic "in that a single deviation from a hypothesized pattern of necessary or sufficient causation is enough to eliminate a given explanatory factor" (Mahoney 2007, 134). In that way the method can eliminate probable causes, because a few cases do not display correlation between these attributes and the outcome. The researcher then risks attaching too much significance to negative findings (Lijphart 1971, 686). In this analysis the elimination of similar features is seen as a necessary tool in order to reduce the number of operative variables. The analysis aims at making causal inferences. As the rejection of a possible explanation is seen as probabilistic, the causal inferences made on the basis of the study of the two cases are held as probabilistic, not universal generalizations (Lijphart 1971, 686). Variables eliminated due to similarities between Gujarat and Rajasthan does not entail a rejection of established theories of Hindu-Muslim violence. "Deviant cases weaken a probabilistic hypothesis, but they can only invalidate it if they turn up in sufficient numbers to make the hypothesized relationship disappear altogether." (Lijphart 1971, 686)

The method has limited value when it comes to assessing the effect of the constant factors. By selecting comparable cases one risks that they are similar also with regard to important operative variables. All similar variables are determined as irrelevant to the outcome. The elimination of these variables from the analysis leads to the assessment that their explanatory effect is zero (Lijphart 1975, 163). The elimination of explanations on the basis of similarity is also problematic because the combinations of variables, not single variables, may explain the outcome. In other words these eliminated explanatory variables might be necessary, but not sufficient causes of intensified Hindu-Muslim conflict (Mahoney 2000, 395). That possibility also raises questions with regard to the applicability of the explanations presented in the thesis to other cases. It is probable that these explanations are applicable only to cases that possess many of the characteristics that are shared by the two states or not applicable to other cases at all. But again, the limited generality of causal inferences is the cost of achieving accurate measurement, high levels of control and a holistic understanding of the mechanisms involved in Hindu-Muslim conflicts.

Case Selection

The cases were selected to achieve the highest possible degree of control for the analysis of the variation of Hindu-Muslim conflict. The study of Hindu nationalism has often been focused on comparing cases where Hindu-Muslim violence is endemic, inferring that the characteristics shared by these cases is the cause of intensified conflict (Wilkinson 2004, 37). There have also been quantitative approaches that examines the phenomenon (see for example Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2004). Both studies have measured conflict as numbers of deaths in Hindu-Muslim violence, and these approaches are unable to account for variation of conflict intensity defined as ranging from political conflict to deadly ethnic violence. Also, Ashutosh Varshney has focused primarily on city-level violence and this approach has limited value of explaining state-level violence in Gujarat or why violence in Rajasthan has primarily taken place in rural areas. Although there are studies that include case studies of various states in relation to Hindu nationalism, these studies have examined cases separately and to my knowledge there has been no attempts at employing a systematic case-oriented comparative method to explore the state-level variation of conflict intensity. The selection of Gujarat and Rajasthan was motivated by the aim of selecting “cases on the basis of variables relevant to the making of causal inferences concerning the phenomena” (Defelice 1986, 422-423). The logic is to select cases that are as similar as possible to create an experiment-like setting (Defelice 1986, 421).

Often a subnational comparative approach can more easily fulfil the requirements of the MSSD. “Subnational units within a single country can often be more easily matched on cultural, historical, ecological, and socioeconomic dimensions than can national units.” (Snyder 2001, 96) However, within-nation analysis does not *necessarily* fulfil these requirements. There might even be more variation on crucial variables within nations than between nations. For that reason the cases included in this study were carefully selected with the intension of establishing control over a number of variables while at the same time ensuring comparability.

The comparison of a case with high values on the dependent variable with a case with more moderate levels follows from the research question. Although Gujarat is not the most riot-prone state in terms of the number of communal riots, it is the state where the highest number of people has been killed in communal riots since the mid-1960s (Varshney 2002; Wilkinson 2004). Also, other states that experience high levels of communal conflict have region-

specific characteristics that would make it difficult to make a comparison with another state. In Maharashtra, for example, the Hindu-Muslim conflict is manifest through the regional party Shiv Sena,³¹ which has not received similar levels of support in any other states, and that have different origins than BJP, the most prominent communal party. Also, most riots in Maharashtra takes place in Mumbai, India's most populated city, which makes it more suitable for a city-level analysis. Similarly, the conflicted Uttar Pradesh (UP) has seen state-specific developments. This is the state of Ayodhya which has been at the centre-stage of Hindu nationalist mobilisation since the late 1980s.³² The Hindu-Muslim violence related to the Ayodhya mosque spread across North-India, and for that reason any comparison of Hindu-Muslim violence in UP and a nearby state would be problematic with regard to Galton's problem.

Although Gujarat has extreme values on the dependent variable I argue that it could be compared to Rajasthan. The motive for choosing Rajasthan for the comparison is that the state share significant features with Gujarat. At the same time the state is exhibiting lower values on the dependent variable. Rajasthan is one of the most peaceful North-Indian states. Geographically Rajasthan borders to Gujarat, and both states also border to Pakistan in the west. That rules out proximity to Pakistan as the decisive factor for the development of intense communal conflict. However, it is impossible to rule out geographic location as a necessary condition for communal conflict in these cases.

Similar and Dissimilar Features

Both Gujarat and Rajasthan experienced pre-independence Hindu-Muslim violence and contemporary variation of conflict intensity is therefore not likely to be related to this experience. Although Gujarat has been under Muslim rule for longer periods than Rajasthan, there are no indicators that the contemporary conflict dates back to these periods. Explaining conflict by historically rooted conflict would be unable to account for why Gujarat was relatively peaceful during the 1940s and 1950s. Similarly, historical approaches that emphasise British influence as an important context for communal conflict does account for the variation (Chandra 1997, 299; Nandy 1997; Pandey 1997). According to such views the

³¹ Shiv Sena was originally a regional party that emerged from their opposition to South-Indian immigrants in Maharashtra, and especially in Mumbai. According to them Marathi-speaking Maharashtrians should enjoy supremacy in their own state.

³² The Babri Mosque in Ayodhya was allegedly built on the birthplace of the god Rama. According to popular belief there was a temple there that was destroyed during the Moghul period in favour of building the mosque. After a period of massive mobilisation around this issue, the mosque was finally by destroyed a Hindu mob in December 1992.

conflict grew more intense in provinces that were under a British viceroy than in areas that remained traditional princely states. While Rajasthan remained under princely rulers, some of the most populated areas of Gujarat were under British control. However, during the first half of the 20th century Rajasthan had more serious incidents of communal riots than Gujarat (Copland 1998; Spodek 1989). Especially the post-partition riots affected Rajasthan to a much larger degree than Gujarat (Copland 1998). It does not seem plausible that the divisive effect of British rule did not reveal itself until the major 1969 riots in Gujarat. The legacy is unlikely to explain why contemporary Rajasthan has been more peaceful than Gujarat. Theories that emphasise historical heritage do not explain the variation between the contemporary levels of conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Hence, explanations related to the pre-colonial and colonial times as well as the early independence era will not be treated in the analysis.

Culturally the two states share important characteristics. Both states are situated in North-India. In this part of India all states have experienced a certain level of conflict. Historically the states in North-India have been under Muslim Rule, and both Gujarat and Rajasthan have experienced periods of massive influence from Muslim culture. While South-India have been characterised by more peaceful inter-religious relations than northern India, it would be challenging to compare Gujarat to a South Indian states as these are significantly different historically, culturally and politically, and few variables could have been controlled for.

Politically the two states are also similar. They both exercise the single member plurality vote system, also known as the First Past the Post. This system produced Congress majorities, with the exception of a brief period after Emergency Rule (1975-77), until 1990. After a period of coalition governments in the first half of the 1990s both states have established two-party systems. In both systems Congress and BJP are the major parties, and both parties have been in majority government since the mid-1990s. The degree of popularity of the Hindu nationalist party, BJP, does not seem to offer any explanations to why the Hindu-Muslim conflict is predominately political in Gujarat while there are frequent and massive riots and anti-minority attacks in Gujarat. However, the Sangh Parivar, including the BJP, will be treated as actors, and I do not rule out that the ideologies and strategies associated with the regional chapters of these organisations can have explanatory value.

Population-wise they are both midsize Indian states, with populations of about 51 millions in Gujarat and 57 million people in Rajasthan. If anything, religious conflict intensity seems to

be correlated with population in India,³³ but the similarity between these states contradicts this pattern. Also the proportion of Muslims to Hindus can be ruled out as possible explanations. Gujarat and Rajasthan have approximately the same percentage of Muslims, about 9 and 8 percent, and Hindus, 89 and 90 percent respectively, so it is not the size of the majority or minority community per se, that determines the conflict levels in these two cases.

Hinduism is a plural religion which includes a multitude of religious expressions on the Indian subcontinent. These expressions differ from each other both in dogma and praxis and the various expressions are very much connected to regional and local culture. The proximity of the two states indicates that people in the states practise similar interpretations of Hinduism. For instance, in both states people predominantly belong to the Vaishnava section of Hinduism. Still, there are some important differences between the two states. Gujarat has historically had a greater presence of guru founded sects. Especially the Swami Narayan sect has traditionally been very strong there. Sects contribute to higher level of organisation, a stronger focus on the content of the Hindu belief, and therefore a more homogenous religious community.

Also, Gujarat has a larger presence of Scheduled Tribes (STs) who traditionally have practised a different form of worship than mainstream Hindus, and who have worshiped local gods according to local mythologies. Only recently have such expressions been included under the category Hinduism, partly due to the effort of Hindu sects, and the Sangh Parivar to include these groups. Rajasthan on the other hand has a larger portion of Scheduled Castes. That may have contributed to the fact that caste-conflicts have a larger presence in Rajasthani politics. Also, the Rajput caste has historically been in conflict with the rural middle caste, the Jats. Caste rivalry influences the voting pattern in Rajasthan and contributes to making the Hindu community more heterogeneous.

The states differ most when it comes to economic factors. Gujarat is one of India's most affluent states. Historically the state was a trade-centre and South-Asia's largest textile producer. The textile industry did not manage to compete, and most textile mills shut down during the 1960s. Still, Gujarat has established itself as one of the major business states, and remains one of the most economically developed states in India. In contrast, Rajasthan's main

³³ The other states that has experienced large-scale violence are Maharashtra and UP (Varshney 2002), with respective populations of approximately 97 and 166 million people (Census of India 2008a)

source of income is agriculture. This state is also known for tourism and handicrafts. There are also wide disparities between rural and urban areas, and the conflict is centre and periphery plays an important role in Rajasthan. These differences relate to both cultural and economical factors. Economically, the rural areas are less developed, both in terms of income and human development. This gap also relates to the caste issues, and the rivalry between Jats and Rajputs in Rajasthan. The following table is a summary of the similar and dissimilar features in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Table 2: Comparison of Gujarat and Rajasthan

		Rajasthan	Gujarat
Dependent variable:	Level of conflict	Low	High
Geographic features:	Proximity to Pakistan	X	X
	Proximity to UP	X	X
Historical development	Partially under Muslim Rule	X	X
	Muslim cultural influence	X	X
	Pre-independence religious conflict	X	X
	Early independence experience with riots.	X	X
Culture	Percentage Muslims	X	X
	Percentage Hindus	X	X
	Vaishnava Hinduism	X	X
	Presence of homogenizing actors	Low	High
	Level of caste conflicts	High	Low
Political features	Historic Congress dominance	X	X
	Two-party competition: BJP and Congress	X	X
Electoral Institutions	Single-member Plurality vote	X	X
Economy	Affluence	Low	High
	Economic rural-urban conflict	High	Low
	Mobilisation of 'backwards' castes for economic benefits	High	Low

X signify similar presence of certain cleavages

Following the above outline the variation indicates possible causal patterns that might explain the variation of conflict intensity. The operationalisations of variables are presented below, as well as the expected causal relationships between independent and dependent variables.

Table 3: Operationalisations and Casual Relationships, Part one

Variables	Operationalisations	Expected causal relationships
Dependent variable: Religious conflict intensity	<p><i>Low levels of conflict:</i> Political support for a party that represent religious issues. Conventional political mobilisation.</p> <p><i>High levels of conflict:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Inter-communal and anti-Muslim riots, pogroms, looting and economic boycotts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number of incidents - number of people affected in these incidents - the way people are affected by incidents, displacement etc. 2) Judicial partiality, government partiality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether perpetrators are held accountable - government officials defence of perpetrators - police ability to protect victims 	

Part 1 of the Analysis	Cleavages and Constructivism the Politics of Identity in Gujarat and Rajasthan	
<i>Independent variable:</i>		
Hindu Identity: unity or conflict	Measured by whether cleavages crosscut or coincides with religious cleavages. A homogenous Hindu majority with regards to political preferences indicates a strong Hindu identity. Political mobilisation around cleavages that crosscut religious identity indicates a less homogenous group and Hindus will not mobilise as a block. Cleavages that potentially crosscut Hindu identities, underlying variables, are presented below.	High levels of intra-Hindu conflicts will prevent communal politics. Low levels of intra-Hindu conflicts will facilitate the mobilisation of Hindus as a block, and therefore lead to intensified Hindu-Muslim conflict.
<i>Underlying variables</i>		
Linguistic and Regional Cleavages	History of language-based mobilisation The degree of state cultural homogeneity as opposed to competing local identities. The role of local and regional identities in political mobilisation	Linguistic and regional cleavages cause intra-Hindu conflicts and prevent the Hindus for perceiving themselves as a homogenous group.
Caste Rivalry	Caste as cultural groups. The importance of caste (cultural) conflicts in politics. And changes in these patterns. Whether competition between castes are sources of political mobilisation.	Rivalry between castes cause intra-Hindu conflicts and prevent the Hindus for perceiving themselves as a homogenous group.
Urban-Rural Conflicts	The degree to which urban-rural conflicts are a source of political mobilisation.	Urban-rural conflicts cause intra-Hindu conflicts and prevent the Hindus for perceiving themselves as a homogenous group.
Caste and Class conflicts	The degree of class identity. Mobilisation by class that crosscut caste, tribal and religious identity. The importance of labour unions, the degree to which distribution is an issue in politics.	1) Mobilisation of 'lower' castes prevents Hindus from seeing themselves as a homogenous group. 2) Mobilisation around class can bridge Hindus and Muslims and therefore lower the degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict.
The role of actors in constructing a Hindu identity (and a muslim 'other')	1)The strategies and degree of presence of the Sangh Parivar. 2)NRI funding for these organisations 3)The ideology promoted in school textbooks. 4) Hindu sects, Swami Narayan, that contributed to perceived unity.	The presence and of actors that seek to construct a Hindu identity will lead to intensified conflict. Funding for these organisations will have impact on their success rate. Communal school textbooks can increase anti-Muslim sentiments among the Hindu majority. Organised religion is homogenising.

The above mentioned variables are explanations of conflict between groups, but they do not offer an explanation as to when and why unconventional methods of mobilisation are employed. In other words reasons why inter-communal and anti-Muslim riots and pogroms occur are not accounted for. There has traditionally been a larger presence of Sangh Parivar actors in Gujarat than in Rajasthan. Similarly the government has had a closer link to these organisations, in particular the RSS. While Rajasthani police has efficiently prevented riots the Gujarati police forces have been criticised for taking sides. Similarly, both government and the judiciary in Gujarat have been widely criticised for partiality. In the second part of the analysis the causal relationship between actors, the number of riots and the number of people affected by them will be explored. The operationalisations and the expected causal relationship between this variables and the dependent variable are presented below.

Table 4: Operationalisations and casual relationships, part two

Variables	Operationalisations	Expected causal relationships
Part 2 of the Analysis	Violence, votes and Elites	
The role of actors in initiating violence	Examining specific incidents of violence and attempted violence. The role of Sangh Parivar organisation in spreading rumours, holding provoking processions and initiating violence	The presence of actors that favours the use of violence will lead to increased number of riots.
The role of police in violence	<i>Complicit:</i> Passive, accepting or partaking in the actual violence. Failure to investigate reported cases or protect witnesses. <i>Not Complicit:</i> Equal respect of the rights of all citizens. Protect minorities from attacks and follow up reported cases.	A police force that accepts the use of violence will lead to increased number of riots. A police force that accepts the use of violence will lead to longer duration of riots. A communalised police force will fail to protect the rights of the Muslim segment of the population
The role of Political Elites	<i>Complicit:</i> Encouragement and defence of violent behaviour in speeches. Failure to stop violent riots through taking control of police forces. <i>Not complicit:</i> Promote respect for the equal rights of minorities. Give clear orders to police to protect minorities. Prevent Sangh Parivar organisations from holding processions in Muslim neighbourhoods etc. <i>Election Strategy:</i> Is violence and anti-minority attacks related to electoral strategies.	A government that defends the use of violence will lead to increased number of riots. A government that defends the use of violence will lead to longer duration of riots. A government that do not prevent police discrimination fail to protect the rights of the Muslim minority. Elections will lead to a larger number of riots because communal violence facilitates the mobilisation of Hindus as a block.

Sources – Potential Bias and Strategies for Collecting Reliable Data

In order to explore the abovementioned relationships I have collected both primary a secondary sources. In the following I describe how the data collection was carried out and challenges related to the potential bias of data on communal violence are discussed.

The subject of Hindu-Muslim violence is a controversial issue. There are various ways in which information on this subject can be biased and unreliable. Firstly, official sources frequently underestimate the issue in order to avoid further disturbances. They are restrictive when it comes to releasing information about communal incidents, and they seem to portray a picture of India as harmonious and peaceful (Varshney 2002). Similarly, they are restrictive when it comes to examining causes, and communal riots are portrayed as spontaneous and un-planned intra-community conflict, while they in fact are most often planned anti-minority attacks (Brass 1996; Gupta 2005). Still, official accounts are useful as they illustrate how governments refrain from confronting the issue of communal conflict and underestimate the impact of these events. Another advantage of official reports is that they discuss both states utilising the same definitions and measures. However, the reports are not easily available and official figures are easier obtained for large-scale riots. It would therefore be difficult to obtain official figures for Rajasthan that has limited experience with such riots.

Secondly, the Hindu right frequently underestimates the scale of conflict. Their views are represented in different ways. According to some the problem is widely exaggerated. Accounts of violence and systematic discrimination often place the blame on policies that appease minorities, and violence is portrayed as a majority reaction to these unfair policies. The most extreme hold that the Muslims had it coming. Massive violence is legitimised as natural reactions to Muslim behaviour. During the 2002 anti-Muslim pogrom Gujarat's Chief Minister Narendra Modi justified the violence by his own twist on Newton's law claiming that "for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction" (Kaur 2005, 101). Hindu nationalist accounts are of little use when it comes to mapping out the degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict or the role of the actors involved, but they are useful to gain insight in Hindu nationalist ideology, popular myths about the Muslim 'other' and the perspectives of the Hindu nationalist actors involved in the conflict.

Thirdly, accounts can be biased in the opposite direction. Many of the reports on the subject are published by activists with a clear ideological bias. In some of these works there are instances of conspiracy theory and hastily drawn causal conclusions. However, because of the systematic underestimation of the conflict in most official sources these are necessary and can be useful if approached critically. Also, there is a close link between academics and activists in India, and often academics have been active in producing these reports. In those cases the reliability of the report data increases. There are also vast amounts of data published

by more professionalized NGOs, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Oxfam that are reliable sources of Hindu-Muslim violence.

Another problem relating to the examination of the conflict is that there is a great deal more information about religious conflict in Gujarat than on Rajasthan. Gujarat has received much attention, especially after the 2002 riots. Therefore there are numerous reports, both Indian and international, on the conflict. Because of the relatively low levels of conflict in Rajasthan, communal incidents and politics have received less attention and have involved fewer observers. This sort of selection bias might lead to the systematic measurement error overestimation of the difference between the two states, and the effect of explanatory variables might be overestimated (King, Keohane and Verba 1994, 132, 156).

Data Collection

The analysis relies on written sources as well as interview data. By conducting a two month fieldwork in India I gained access to data that otherwise would have been inaccessible. I got a temporary membership of the Teen Murti, Nehru Memorial library, one of the most extensive libraries when it comes to information about Indian states. Also, I had access to libraries connected to some of the major research institutions and NGOs, among others the Institute of Development Studies in Jaipur, and the NGO Prashant in Ahmedabad. During my visits to NGOs I collected numerous reports which I have utilized critically, keeping in mind the potential bias already discussed.

There are an uncountable numbers of books and articles published on the subject of Hindu nationalism and Hindu-Muslim conflict. In order to secure that the secondary literature was as reliable as possible I started collecting articles published in peer reviewed journals and utilised the snowball sampling approach, making use of the references in order to find other secondary literature. 'Economic and Political Weekly' is a useful source to Indian politics. It includes articles written by notable Indian and international scholars and has articles on state politics, communal riots, economic development, caste conflicts and more. I also took the opportunity, during interviews, to ask scholars about reliable secondary and primary sources.

The caution with regard to potential bias also applies to the interviews conducted during my stay. I conducted 23 interviews during my stay in India.³⁴ The first three weeks of my stay I

³⁴ List of Interviews is included in the Appendix 1

spent in Delhi. Getting the first interview proved difficult. I had been trying to set up interviews before going to Delhi, sending the basic outline of my project and a detailed request, but was unable to set up appointments in advance. Contacting relevant people in person proved much more efficient (Goldstein 2002, 671). After, attending a workshop on Communities and Development (Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi 26. and 27.03.2007) I was able to establish some contacts, and from there I utilised the snowball sampling approach (Thagaard 2003, 54). Although I arrived in Rajasthan and Gujarat with plenty of contacts it took time to schedule the first appointment. But after a few days I managed to spend my days efficiently. In both states I encountered the problem of not being able to conduct interviews with all relevant contacts I had acquired, due to the time limitations.

I frequently received help from respondents to set up interviews. Despite utilising the snowball sampling technique I was able to find respondents with various backgrounds (Goldstein 2002, 671). I mentioned the names of people I wanted to get in touch with, and the informant often happened to know these particular people. Given the size of the states and cities in question it was surprising how often this strategy worked. Still, the range of respondents is limited as I did not contact the Sangh Parivar organisations themselves. The choice not to contact these organisations was that I expected them to be unwilling to answer questions about communal violence, and I feared unpleasant reactions to the subject of my thesis. At some occasions I was advised to visit their offices, but to conceal my purpose and present them with an alternative research topic. However, in my view it would be unethical to carry out interviews with a hidden agenda.

The interviews I did conduct were semi-structural, somewhere between informal conversational and the general interview guide approach (Patton 1990, 280). The reason for utilising this approach was that the study is exploratory. Also, if an informant brought up interesting issues that were not included in the interview guide I followed up these issues. I wanted to get in-depth knowledge and detailed insight, and a semi-structural approach is useful for that purpose (Patton 1990, 18). Throughout the stay my understanding deepened and the flexibility of the semi-structural research design made me able to adjust the interview guide as I became more knowledgeable and the questions of interest became clearer (Patton 1990, 41). Also, I varied the questions asked depending on the informant and concentrated my interview on the areas where I expected the respondent to be most knowledgeable. By concentrating on questions I would receive the most payoffs, as I was able to spend both the

informant's and my time more profitable (Berry 2002, 680). For instance I made references to theory while talking to researchers. While in Rajasthan most informants were knowledgeable about Gujarat. Interviews held in Gujarat, for the most part, did not contribute much to my understanding of Rajasthan as it has not received similar attention. I focused the attention on each informant's area of expertise. Still, as most of my informants were activists or researchers with expansive areas of knowledge, beyond the scope of my thesis, I had to be careful so that I remained in charge over the interview. I therefore utilised bridges to get back to the subject area of my interests (Berry 2002, 682).³⁵

Generally, the interviews went well. Whenever possible I met with people in their offices. Because of the sensitive nature of this issue, I feared that the informants could be inhibited by crowded surroundings. In Ahmedabad I encountered that problem. Because there were no other available options I had to conduct the interview in a restaurant. Although it was a Muslim restaurant and most guests had poor English skills, my informant requested to speak in codes, among other things signalling Muslims by M and Hindus by H and alike.³⁶

The main purpose served by the interviews was to provide me with greater knowledge and understanding of the Hindu-Muslim conflict, the cultural and political context and to get an overview over written sources. The interviews were useful for discovering particular pieces of information (Goldstein 2002, 669). In reading about the states and about religious conflict, I frequently encountered that knowledge about social structures, especially castes, were taken for granted. The interviews provided an arena where I could check my understanding of such structures and how they relate to the dependent variable correctly. Secondly, the interviews provided me with new perspectives, new information and different ways of interpreting the sources I already had. Any information collected in the interviews will be used with care because of the sensitive issues (Patton 1990, 467). In that way the interviews were useful both for informing and guiding my thesis, even though the main emphasis lies on other sources of data (Goldstein 2002, 699). While the interview provided first hand accounts of violent incidents and the perception of governments role, the information received by informants is further validated by the use of multiple sources (Berry 2002, 680).

³⁵ Appendix 2 display rough Interview Guide that took form during the course of my stay. It was supplied by questions directed towards specific informants.

³⁶ This caution was not unique for that particular interview. When copying reports and alike, NGO activists insisted to make arrangement for me and they utilised 'safe' copy shops.

I sent preliminary outlines of the analysis to those of my informants who had provided me with personal e-mail contacts. Because of the complexity of Indian society I wanted to secure that my interpretations of the information obtained in interviews correctly,³⁷ and that the data, both primary and secondary, was accurate. The feedbacks I did receive were positive,³⁸ which increases the reliability of the data utilised for the thesis and adds to the credibility of the general argument of the thesis.

Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the benefits and limitations of utilising the case-oriented approach for studying degree of Hindu-Muslim conflict. I have argued that a subnational MSSD is useful for examining degree of conflict because it makes it possible to control for similar features, and therefore narrow the focus by the exclusion of variables that are similar in the two cases from the analysis. I have also shown that the cases Gujarat and Rajasthan are similar in many respects and I have excluded these similarities as explanations of the variation of Hindu-Muslim conflict intensity. Furthermore I have presented the possible explanatory variables that differ between these two states and how they will be operationalised in the analysis. There are various cleavages that cross-cut Hinduism in Rajasthan than in Gujarat. The latter state has also a stronger presence of actors who seek to homogenise the Hindu majority. Militant Hindu Right actors have closer bonds to the government in Gujarat than in Rajasthan and while the government have prevented riots in Rajasthan, the Gujarati authorities, police, judiciary and government, have all been critiqued for their Hindu Right bias and their unwillingness to protect the Muslim minority.

In the final section I have discussed challenges of obtaining reliable data on the issue of religious conflict intensity in the two states. First, there are vast amounts of data on religious conflict in Gujarat while communal conflict in Rajasthan is relatively unexplored, which might lead to the overestimation of the difference between the two states. Second, the literature on communal conflict is often biased. This potential bias may also relate to the primary data, interviews and NGO reports, collected during my fieldwork. Method triangulation provides a strategy to minimize such biases. Third, studying a different culture

³⁷ A few of my informants had requested a quote check.

³⁸ Sharada Jain (06.05.2008) commented that she was positive to the discipline of details presented in the analysis. Avinash Kumar (14.05.2008) also confirmed correct quotation and was positive to the rigour of the arguments presented in the thesis. He gave some additional information and comments that I have included in the final thesis. Raheel Dhattiwala (06.05.2008) and Ifthikar Ahmad (24.05.2008) also gave positive feedbacks.

involves the risk of misinterpretation and misassumptions. Semi-structured interviews and dialogue related to the content of my thesis serves as tools for minimising these risks.

In the following chapter I analyse conflict intensity in Gujarat and Rajasthan related to structural variables, cleavages, which differ between the two states. This analysis rests on the theory of cross-cutting or overlapping cleavages. The focus is on identity construction through structural developments and the role of actors who seek to homogenise Hindus and minimise cleavages that cross-cut the Hindu majority.

Chapter 4: Cleavages and Constructivism – The Politics of Identity in Gujarat and Rajasthan

This chapter explores degrees of Hindu-Muslim polarisation by utilising cleavage theory. The analysis also incorporates actor-oriented approaches to understanding how identity is constructed. Both structural developments and events, as well of the deliberate role of actors construct group identities. I argue that structural and cultural developments that have taken place in Gujarat has increased to the degree to which Hindus perceive themselves as homogenous. The Sangh Parivar has contributed to widening the Hindu-Muslim divide, propagating Hindu unity and portraying the Muslim as an ‘other’. In Rajasthan the Sangh Parivar has not been as effective both because their organisation in the state is not as dominant, but also because the Hindus themselves remain divided by other cleavages and because some cleavages bridge Hindus and Muslims.

The first section compares the two states in terms of cleavages. I discuss whether cleavages such as region, language, urban-rural interests, class and caste polarise state politics and changes relating to the degree of polarisation related to these cleavages. I also discuss the degree to which cleavages crosscut or overlap the religious cleavage. The second section discusses the role of actors in constructing identities and reducing within-Hindu conflict.

Linguistic and Regional cleavages

I argue that the linguistic-regional movement in Gujarat has led to a cultural homogenisation and therefore facilitated the Hindu unification across territorial lines. While this movement in itself does not explain Hindu-Muslim conflict it reduces within-Hindu conflicts and thereby lead to a more homogenous Hindu majority. Due to the success of the movement linguistic-regional cleavages no longer bridge Hindu and Muslim identities. Rajasthan remains divided

along sub-regional cleavage lines. Region is a source of cultural identity that bridge religious identity, crosscut Hinduism and therefore impedes Hindus from mobilising as a block.

After the Independence most of current Gujarat was part of the Greater Bombay state. From the mid-1950s there was a strong linguistic movement to create a language-based state. The mass-movement was supported by local Congress leadership and was successful in creating Gujarat in 1960 along linguistic borders, the area where Gujarati is the primary language (Yagnik and Sheth 2005, 226-227). Demands for a linguistic state indicate a strong sense of regional identity, and a linguistic mass-movement is likely to have further reinforced this sense of identity, as conflict and confrontation reinforces the regional and linguistic identities as joint struggles contribute to the construction of ethnic identities (Fearon and Laitin 2000).

Contrary to Gujarat, Rajasthan did not experience similar developments. The state formed in 1947 merged nineteen princely states and three chiefships, into one political entity (Rudolph and Rudolph 1966). Still there are strong local identities and sub-state political units often correspond with the former political entities. There is an awareness of the cultural disparities between the previous princely states. The relationships between Hindu and Muslim communities also vary from locality to locality.³⁹ Local identities crosscut Hindu and Muslim cleavages on state-level. The presence of cross-cutting cleavages is likely to reduce degree of polarisation on the religious cleavage (Lijphart 1977).

Although Rajasthan has Hindi as regional language, there are local variations of languages and dialects spoken, but despite these variations linguistic or other secessionist movements did not emerge.⁴⁰ Local and regional identities are all in minority in Rajasthan and are represented by elected officials as they their district as well as their party. Therefore, although national parties dominate in Rajasthan, regional cleavages do contribute to mobilisation as candidates does represent their regions. Instead of trying to present an image of cultural unity, Rajasthan's government expresses pride over the state's unusual cultural diversity (Rajasthan 12.01.2008).

The standardisation of Gujarati identity seems to have been largely successful as state politics has been little affected by regional politics. Former princely state, Baroda, is affected by the

³⁹ Personal interview with Harsh Sethi, Consultant Editor of *Seminar* (05.04.2007)

⁴⁰ Personal interview with Harsh Sethi, Consultant Editor of *Seminar* (05.04.2007)

same political cleavage, predominantly the religious, as the rest of Gujarat. In that sense Gujarati regional culture seem to overshadow local heritage, which displays the success of political movements in establishing sources of identity, other than the local, in the districts of the state. The political landscape is largely one-dimensional, represented by the Congress and the BJP, and the conflict plays out on a state-level. The degree to which conflicts are state-wide may be related to the construction of a state-wide regional and linguistic identity during prior to the establishment of the Gujarati state.

Although the same parties are the main competitors in Rajasthan they represent different issues and conflict is multi-dimensional. According to Professor of Sociology, Arvind Kumar Agrawal the BJP came to power in Rajasthan because of a Congress mistake. Congress candidates did not keep local issues in mind while competing for elections. Among the biggest caste, the Jats, there was growing discontent towards the congress leadership.⁴¹ Religious cleavages were not an issue during the campaign.⁴² In Rajasthan local identities crosscut Hinduism and there are great variations between Hindus from various areas within Rajasthan. Also, local identities bridge religious identities. While Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat share language and regional culture this issue no longer has mobilising potential within state politics and therefore do not bridge Hindus and Muslim politically.⁴³

Caste, Urban-Rural and Class Impact on Religious Conflict

Regional conflicts, caste, urban-rural conflicts and class can potentially divide the Hindu majority and therefore reduce the potency of Hindu-Muslim conflicts. Urban-rural and class identities can potentially mobilise Hindus and Muslims alike and bridge religious divisions. Gujarat is one of India's most prosperous states with approximately the double domestic product of Rajasthan (National Accounts Division 14.02.2008).⁴⁴ I argue that socio-economic developments have led Gujarat to become more homogenous than Rajasthan, in terms caste, urban-rural cleavages and class. There are few conflicts that create within-Hindu conflicts and Hindus can therefore more easily be mobilised as a block and these developments have contributed to constructing a more homogenous Hindu majority. Rajasthan is more heterogeneous also in terms of these categories. As already discussed caste is both a cultural and an economic category.⁴⁵ Caste conflicts will therefore be examined in terms of cultural

⁴¹ Personal interview with Dr. Arvind Kumar Agrawal, University of Rajasthan (10.04.2007).

⁴² Personal interview with Dr. Arvind Kumar Agrawal, University of Rajasthan (10.04.2007).

⁴³ In national level politics politicians do represent state identity and interests.

⁴⁴ Per capita net state domestic product at current prices

⁴⁵ See Chapter 2

rivalry between dominating castes, but the category will also be discussed under class. Because of the division of labour and the geography relate to caste the category also relates to urban-rural cleavages. However, both urban-rural and class are primarily economic conflicts while caste rivalry is concerned with cultural conflicts. I will start by discussing the cultural aspects of caste conflicts and go on to discuss urban-rural and class impact on religious conflict in Gujarat and Rajasthan. The more intensified these conflicts are, the less intense is the religious conflict likely to be, as these conflicts crosscut religious cleavages.

Caste Rivalry or Hindu Unity

While the cultural dimension of caste is relatively rigid there have been demands for economic mobilisation for some 'backwards' castes. From the late 1960s, castes and communities became increasingly concerned with their social and economical situation and demanded a greater share in power. Ideologically Congress had a long-term commitment to fight caste-based discrimination, and initiated wide reaching land reforms. In Gujarat a 'middle' caste, the Patels or Patidars, were the main beneficiaries of these reforms (Engineer 2006, 85).⁴⁶ The Patels were not among the 'upper' castes, but were known as hard workers and acquired large land holdings, partly due to agricultural reform.⁴⁷ They emerged as socially and economically prominent. Despite the Patidar-Patels belonging to the Baniya (merchant) caste, they became the dominating caste in Gujarat (Gupta 2005, 102).

Due to this development the Patidars emerged as a significant force. But despite that they had become economically strong they were sidelined politically.⁴⁸ Although emerging castes like the Patidars were courted for electoral purposes by Indira Gandhi during the mid-80s, the Patels found that by supporting the BJP agenda they could gain a greater share of real political power than if they supported Congress (Engineer 2006, 85). Congress had adopted a catch-all agenda, claiming to benefit groups with different and sometimes converging interests, often causing discontent among these groups because they were incapable of benefiting all of these groups and their policies mirrored conflicting interests. The last major conflict took place after Congress proposed quotas for 'Other Backwards Castes' (OBCs) in Gujarat in 1985. There were massive riots in Ahmedabad between 'upper' and 'lower' castes, but during the riots violence between religious communities started to take place.

⁴⁶ This refers to the category OBC, 'Other Backwards Classes/Castes'

⁴⁷ Personal interview with Raheel Dhattiwala, Journalist with Times of India (17.04.2007)

⁴⁸ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of People's Union for Human Rights (PUHR) (20.04.2007).

While the notion of ‘communal’ until then tended to refer to frictions between top and bottom of the caste hierarchy, the social forces pushing the Hindutva agenda gave a different slant to the term by propagating the unity (although most certainly not on equal par) of Hindus high and low. (Breman 2005, 77)

The BJP who had mainly been supported by the ‘upper’ castes had initially been critical of affirmative action in favour of ‘backwards’ classes, but changed their strategy in order to appeal to these groups during these riots (Engineer 2006, 85). By polarising mobilising marginalised sectors towards Muslims instead of ‘upper’ caste Hindus, the Sangh Parivar avoided intra-Hindu polarisation and contributed to strengthen the role of Hinduism as a source of identity (Shani 2005).

According to Raheel Dhattiwala, because the Patidars enjoyed a unique position as a powerful OBC mobilisation on background of caste has little meaning for this group and the ‘communal card’ has been played in order to please this group. The state is the only state where the lower caste is dominating the economy, and that may have facilitated the rise of Hindutva ideology.⁴⁹ The Patidar presence in the Sangh Parivar movement in Gujarat enabled the party to remove themselves from an ‘upper-caste’ image. The economic mobility of the Patidars has simultaneously decreased the impact of the caste hierarchy. The rise of this caste can partly explain why a conflict between ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ and lower castes is not politically manifest in Gujarat. The combined effect of the rise of the Patidars and their support for the BJP has also contributed to the Sangh Parivar appealing more to the ‘lower’ castes and tribes and it has contributed to making the hierarchy associated with caste to be seen as less rigid. The rise of an OBC illustrates that class mobilisation is possible. Also the communal rhetoric contributed to ‘backwards’ castes rising in esteem of ‘upper’ castes and facilitated the ‘backwards’ classes gaining real political influence (Engineer 2006, 85).

Congress’ catch-all agenda contributed to BJP widening its base as there was a growing discontent with Congress policies. Congress had successfully mobilised utilising the so-called KHAM strategy, a strategy aimed at securing votes from the warrior/ruler castes (Kshatriyas), the SCs (Harijans), the STs (Adivasis) and the Muslims. As a social and economic powerful caste the Patidars were unwilling to be left out in favour of KHAMs. The BJP anti-minority agenda was more compatible with their interest as well as providing a vehicle for gaining political power (Sud 2007). Also, Congress’ attention towards KHAMs

⁴⁹ Personal interview (17.04.2007)

did not involve making significant changes and Congress failed to improve their conditions.⁵⁰ Congress courted the groups referring to the cultural category of caste and Muslims in particular were seen as homogenous, loyal and reliable voters, and therefore of huge significance in a pluralistic context, unlike Hindus who were perceived to be inapproachable as one block of voters due to their heterogeneity.⁵¹ 'Lower' castes and tribes were mobilised as cultural groups not classes, which undermined the development of class-based parties.

The political change in Gujarat can also be seen as related to the previous strength of Congress in Gujarat. As the home state of Mahatma Gandhi it was a stronghold of Congress during the independence movement. Gandhian institutions dominated all segments of society, and all major movements were incorporated within the party.⁵² It was a consensus system which prevented major cleavages from dividing the population. However, the decline of the Congress left a vacuum. The vacuum and the relative absence of cleavages such as caste that divides the Hindu majority, may have contributed to Hindu religious identity emerging as a source of political mobilisation.

On the contrary, Congress was not as strong socially in Rajasthan. Prior to independence Rajasthan was largely feudal and had low degrees of social or political organisation (Rudolph and Rudolph 1966). Jaipur had no official Congress movement, but established a native independence movement.⁵³ Organisations did not crosscut caste on the basis of economic or civic interests, but followed traditional boundaries (Rudolph and Rudolph 1966, 156). After independence Congress dominated politically, but did not incorporate all social movements in the same way as in Gujarat.

Also, while the BJP has achieved a great deal of success in terms of vote mobilisation in Rajasthan this was not achieved by mending caste cleavages, but by adapting to them (Jenkins 1994). The hierarchic structure of the caste system has remained more firmly in place in Rajasthan. The division of labour remains traditional and lower castes and tribes are heavily discriminated against, particularly in the villages.⁵⁴ To a certain degree BJP is still

⁵⁰ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007).

⁵¹ According to Dr. S.Mohammad Sajjid mobilising the Hindu majority as a block was not seen as a possibility until the anti-Sikh riots in Delhi in 1984 (Sajjid, personal interview)

⁵² Personal interview with Dr. Avinash Kumar, Oxfam (19.04.2007)

⁵³ Personal interview with Harsh Sethi, Consultant Editor of *Seminar* (05.04.2007).

⁵⁴ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007).

associated with certain 'upper' castes.⁵⁵ But, caste conflicts in Rajasthan are not exclusively restricted to conflict between 'upper' and 'lower' castes, but also related to caste rivalry. Rajasthan is characterised by more social stratification than Gujarat and communal politics is a manifestation of caste issues.⁵⁶

The particular brand of Hindutva in Rajasthan is characterised by an approximation to specific caste conflicts.

The chain of reasoning through which communalist ideology links nationalism, regional identity, and caste politics tends to shift over time in response to the unfolding of political events. The spin also varies according to who is speaking and who listening. But the basic story is fairly consistent and is able to draw on the richness of Rajasthani history with all of its ambiguities and contradictions. (Rob Jenkins in Jha 2007, 20)

The local chapter of BJP is identified with the Rajputs, the former ruler castes of Rajasthan. The previous leader of Rajasthan's BJP, a Rajput, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, has been important in establishing the party's position in the state.⁵⁷ Shekhawat was widely respected for his political skills and was seen as a moderate BJP politician. Under his leadership BJP became associated with anti-corruption issues and under his leadership corruption was reduced (Jenkins 1994). The people of Rajasthan had expressed mistrust in Congress politicians and Shekhawat was perceived as more credible. The centralising of power in his hands was regarded as positive and during the 1990s voting for BJP was seen as voting for him.⁵⁸ In that manner BJP's popularity was centred on Shekhawat rather than an anti-Muslim agenda and the BJP governments of Rajasthan, 1990-92 and 1993-1998, were seen primarily as Shekhawat's governments.

The Jat community, the largest caste in Rajasthan, was reluctant to lend their support for BJP. Jats are peasants, and rivalry between Rajputs and Jats dates far back (Rudolph and Rudolph 1966, 157-158). Rajputs was the dominant ruler caste, but also Jats controlled some of the previous principalities, Bikaner and Bharatpur. Also, the Rajputs had remained economically

⁵⁵ That being said, the lower degree of caste conflict in Gujarat does not mean that caste does correspond with economic development in Gujarat.

⁵⁶ Personal interview with Achyut Yagnik, Coordinator of the Centre for Social Knowledge and Action (SETU) (17.04.2007)

⁵⁷ Shekhawat is a well respected Rajput clan in Rajasthan

⁵⁸ Personal interview with Sharada Jain, Director of the Society for Study of Education and Development (Sandhan) (11.04.2007).

strong while the Jats had become relatively poor during colonial rule. Similarly, the Jats have traditionally been rivals of the merchant communities, the Banyas. The Banyas of both Gujarat and Rajasthan are associated with the Sangh Parivar, and Jats have therefore traditionally supported Congress. The RSS in particular is associated with the Banyas and therefore the Jats has been reluctant to join the Parivar.⁵⁹ Also, Rajasthan Congress was led by a Jat, Ashok Gehlot, between 1994-1994, and he was the ruling Chief Minister of Rajasthan from 1998 to 2003. Still, under Shekawat's government the BJP managed to gain some Jat support, but the Jats are not as communal and this was mainly a political introduction.⁶⁰ Also, the current Chief Minister of Rajasthan courted castes. While running for elections in 2003 Vasundhara Raje presented herself as a daughter of the Rajputs, daughter-in-law of the Jats and mother-in-law of Gujjars (another caste), appealing to caste at the same time as increasing her support among women (EPW 2003). By appealing to caste, and not religion, Raje secured an overwhelming victory, and particularly increased support for BJP among the Jats.⁶¹ The two-party competition evolves more around caste than religion in Rajasthan. Identity remains multilayered and the rise of BJP is related to caste politics.⁶² While Jats have been incorporated in the BJP, they remain sceptic to RSS which leads to hard-line elements of the Sangh Parivar having less influence over BJP in Rajasthan.⁶³

In addition to rivalries among 'upper' and 'middle' castes, there are also numerous examples of mobilisation among 'backwards' castes who protest about their condition in Rajasthan. The Jats were previously a powerful community they have become increasingly marginalised and has sought to be defined as an OBC (Datta 1999). While SCSTs are defined with reference to Hinduism, OBCs are defined by the economic conditions of specific communities and therefore castes and communities that perceive themselves as discriminated against tend to mobilise in order to be defined within this category (Datta 1999). In Rajasthan, there have been many of these movements among others by the Jat community. Caste mobilisation makes it difficult to perceive Hinduism as the dominant source of identity. The popularity of BJP is closely linked to the existing conflicts between Hindu castes and caste is still an important indicator of party support.

⁵⁹ Personal interview with Dr. Pralay Kanungo, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) (04.04.2007)

⁶⁰ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

⁶¹ While the BJP had won fourteen and seven seats in 1993 and 1998 they won 24 seats out of 39 in the Jat-dominated area in the northern desert in Rajasthan in 2003 (Mrug 2004, 16).

⁶² Personal interview with Dr. Arwind Kumar Agrawal, University of Rajasthan (10.04.2007)

⁶³ Personal interview with Dr. Pralay Kanungo, JNU (04.04.2007)

The degree to which caste is a manifest conflict in Rajasthan and Gujarat influences the level of religious conflict. Because of various conflicts within the Hindu community in Rajasthan BJP represent caste as well as religion. The party is associated with the Rajputs and the Banyas, making it less capable of mobilising their rival caste the Jats. The degree to which ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ caste conflict is present in Rajasthan also disables the Parivar from achieving Hindu unity. Despite that ‘backwards’ castes still lag behind economically in Gujarat, caste-related conflicts are hardly present in Gujarati politics. Politically there are no caste cleavages that crosscut the religious cleavage. In Rajasthan, on the other hand, the presence of caste-based political mobilisation impedes the mobilisation of Hindus as a block. As I argue in the following section, the same pattern is evident with relation to the urban-rural cleavage. In Rajasthan this conflict crosscut the religious cleavage, while the social development in Gujarat has led to decreasing degrees of urban-rural conflict.

Urban-Rural Relations - Conflict or Harmony?

In this section I argue that low degrees of urban-rural conflict in Gujarat have contributed to increasing the Hindu-Muslim divide. To the contrary, the presence of rural-urban conflict in Rajasthan decreases the sense of unity among urban and rural Hindus and reduces religious polarisation.

Villages in rural India are by no means isolated from the cities. In Gujarat 38 percent of the population lives in urban areas, while urban population in Rajasthan 23 percent. Gujarat has both an urban and a rural middleclass since there have been both a green and a white revolution the distinction rural-urban is not so significant.⁶⁴ There has been a decline in the growth of agriculture and a heavy increase of the number rural people working in urban India (Gupta 2005, 103; 2007, 42). While other sections of Gujarat’s economy have grown rapidly, agriculture has lagged behind. Given the low growth rate of agriculture compared to other sections of the economy, villagers have been forced to look to the cities, especially when, as in Gujarat, industrialised, business and technology sections are growing and provide work opportunities in urban areas. This also influences the political views of villagers, who become increasingly appreciative of urban ideologies such Hindu nationalism. As a communal ideology, Hindutva can provide a sense of unity to villagers who have been uprooted from their rural community and prevent the feeling of alienation that follows from the uprooting (Gupta 2005, 104). These developments correspond with the spread of communal conflict in

⁶⁴ Personal Interview with Achyut Yagnik, Coordinator of SETU (17.04.2007)

Gujarat, both through conventional political mobilisation and violence. Contrary to theories that held villages to be virtually 'riot-proof' (Varshney 2001; 2002), "[t]he villages of Gujarat saw widespread killings, and it did not matter how many generations had lived cheek by jowl when it came to expressing strong ethnic loyalty with the Hindu majoritarian version of the nation-state" (Gupta 2005, 103).

The Patidars has also played a role in the spread of communal ideology to rural Gujarat. "These Patidars have always had one foot in the village and one in the city from as early as the 1920s and the 1930s." (Gupta 2005, 102) Their merchant activities have also helped diminishing the distinction between rural and urban areas. The decreased distinction between urban and rural interests due to socio-economic development combined with the role of the Patidars decreased the salience of urban-rural cleavages. In Gujarat there is a high degree of political consensus on economic policies and urban-rural cleavages do not divide Hindus politically. The absence of urban-rural cleavages facilitates the political mobilisation of Hindus as a block.

In Rajasthan the links between cities and rural areas are not as strong as in Gujarat, and agriculture remains the main source of income. The state has not developed a business sector of significant size. Therefore the division between urban and rural preferences is still a source of conflict in the state. There is also some degree of peasant organisation.⁶⁵ This conflict involves urban business sectors and rural landowners (see Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan and Hagtvet 1987).

The urban rural-conflict in Rajasthan overlaps and reinforces caste conflicts.⁶⁶ Because the economic-territorial conflict corresponds with divergent cultural interest, caste, these conflicts reinforce each other (See Chapter 2). Since there is a conflict between urban and rural Hindus the salience of religious cleavages is reduced. Urban-rural conflict can also bridge the Hindu-Muslim divide and contribute to inter-religious alliances. An urban-rural cleavage that crosscuts the religious cleavage can partly explain low levels of religious polarisation in Rajasthan. Conflicting economic interests reinforce the traditional rivalry between castes making a all-Hindu alliance unlikely. The Hindu community in Rajasthan remains divided, which prevents hard-line anti-Muslim mobilisation.

⁶⁵ Personal interview with Sumitra Chopra, President of All India's Democratic Women's Alliance (AIDWA) in Rajasthan (12.04.2007)

⁶⁶ Personal interview with Harsh Sethi, Consultant Editor *Seminar* (05.04.2007)

The BJP is linked to urban economic interest in Rajasthan, and is seen as pro-business and modernisation. They are strongest in urban pockets, among traders and business men.⁶⁷ The BJP is commonly described as having two separate wings, one of which emphasise Hindu nationalist issues, and a more moderate economically liberal wing (Jaffrelot 2005a, 307-308). The leadership in Rajasthan has predominantly belonged to the latter wing, first under Shekhawat and then under Raje, Chief Minister of Rajasthan since 2003. Generally the government is seen as moderate and liberal, and activities of more extremist elements of the Parivar are dependent on BJP and not vice versa.⁶⁸ Economic cleavages therefore remain important in Rajasthani politics and continue to divide Hindus.

According to Sumitra Chopra leader of the women's wing of Rajasthan's Communist Party (Marxist) the BJP government is not so liberal as they are generally are perceived to be.⁶⁹ RSS and VHP are increasing their impact and are rapidly contributing to communalize their members, but compared to Gujarat these organisations are weak in Rajasthan.⁷⁰ The main reason why communal elements are defeated is the fact that the peasantry are organized. There are communal elements in Rajasthan, but areas where grass root level movements are strong communal elements are weak.⁷¹ A possible explanation is that such movements crosscut the Hindu-Muslim cleavage, thus creating intra-Hindu divide while at the same time bridging Hindus and Muslims with shared economic interests.

Also, divergent economic interests do not correspond with the Hindu-Muslim cleavages in Rajasthan. Both rural and urban Muslims in Rajasthan are poor and marginalised and do not compete for the control of resources. In Gujarat the lack of urban-rural cleavages prevents Hindus and Muslims from being united by shared economic interests. The absence of urban-rural conflicts also facilitates mobilising Hindus as a block. Likewise the absence or presence of class-related mobilisation may influence the degree of religious polarisation in the two states. The presence of class-based conflicts is likely to divide the Hindu community and thereby reduce religious division.

⁶⁷ Personal interview with Dr. Arvind Kumar Agrawal, University of Rajasthan (10.04.2007)

⁶⁸ Personal interview with Dr. Pralay Kanungo, JNU (04.04.2007)

⁶⁹ Personal interview with Sumitra Chopra, President of AIDWA Rajasthan (12.04.2007)

⁷⁰ Personal interview with Sumitra Chopra, President of AIDWA Rajasthan (12.04.2007)

⁷¹ Personal interview with Sumitra Chopra, President of AIDWA Rajasthan (12.04.2007)

Communities and Class

In Gujarat class-based cleavages to a very little degree are sources of political mobilisation. Instead of solidarity among poor sections they are divided along communal lines and perceive the 'other' community as competition. There are also some prosperous Muslims in Gujarat and their prosperity reinforces the communal divide. In Rajasthan Muslims are not perceived as economic threats, and the division of labour is still very much rooted in tradition as castes and Muslim communities engage in the labour they have traditionally belonged to.

A factor that may have facilitated the mobilisation of rural Hindus under a hard-line Hindutva ideology in Gujarat is that some rural Muslims in Gujarat are very prosperous (Gupta 2005). Muslims are generally economically marginalised both in terms of real income and human development indicators (Sachar 2006). However, in Gujarat, particularly in the north, there are some rich Muslim communities, Memons and Bohras. The average rural Muslims are more prosperous, compared to SCSTs, but also the average rural Hindu population in Gujarat (Sachar 2006). These numbers are also reflected by the literacy levels of Gujarati Muslims. While the general level of literacy is lower for Muslims than for Hindus in Gujarat, rural Muslims have relative high levels of literacy compared to rural SCSTs as well as the average score for Muslims (Sachar 2006, 288-289). However, the pogrom in 2002 "mostly affected poor Muslims and the conflict can not be reduced to a class conflict" (Gupta 2005, 105). Well-to-do Muslims can, nevertheless, have influenced the degree to which rural Hindus have adopted an anti-Muslim ideology in the first place and it may have facilitated the mobilisation of economically 'backwards' Hindus. Within a hard-line interpretation of Hindutva ideology Muslims are regarded as second-class citizens that are not entitled to the same benefits as Hindus. Overlapping class and religious cleavages may have increased the communal divide, as cleavages that the same groups of people are divided by two cleavages (Lijphart 1977).

In Gujarat's cities the average Muslim population is marginalised. But, economically marginalised Hindus and Muslims have not been united by class-based mobilisation. Gujarat was early industrialised compared to other Indian state. There were some unions that fronted class interest, but these unions were incorporated within the Congress. However, as a consequence of being unable to compete on the international market, large parts of the industry closed down during the 1980s. From the early 1980s about 100,000 lost their jobs in the textile mills of Ahmedabad, driving workers into the informal economy, characterised by

low wages, uncertainty and limited possibilities for work, in many cases driving women and children into the labouring process (Breman 2005, 70). In this manner Dalits, OBCs and Muslims became competitors on an insecure labour market. They had previously been co-workers in a relative secure industry protected by what was then the largest Indian union. While there had been Hindu-Muslim clashes in the past, the textile mill unions had been effective in reducing inter-communal tension during riots and had been instrumental in promoting peace during the communal conflicts (Varshney 2002, 219-238). The downsizing of the industry and the size of organised labour the remaining labour organisation ineffective (Breman 2005, 72). “Without a strong left wing trade union there was very little chance of an alternative secular identity emerging in among the underclass of Gujarat” (Gupta 2005, 102). In fact, it was in the previous mill localities where violence reached its peak among Dalits, and intermediate castes (especially Patels), and Muslims (Breman 2005, 71). This example shows how class issues previously downplayed and overarched communal identities (Breman 2005, 72). As marginalised communities were forced to work in an informal and volatile labour market and the competition between groups reinforced religious cleavages and made the Hindu communities more susceptible to adopting an anti-Muslim ideology in Gujarat.

There are examples of well-to-do Muslims in urban Gujarat as well. There is a trading class among them, who enjoys a higher public presence than in Rajasthan. An area where Muslims were perceived as a threat was in relation to the illicit liquor industry. In Gujarat alcohol is prohibited and there is therefore a large black market. Muslims have traditionally been in control of these activities. The industry was seen as immoral, but at the same time some Muslims were making lots of money, and some Hindus, especially Dalits, wanted control over the market.⁷² The overlap of economic and religious interest may have facilitated the mobilisation of Dalits, and the economic dimension was evident during the 2002 pogrom where the Muslim liquor industry was specifically targeted.⁷³ But, communal conflicts cannot be reduced to economic conflict. During the violent riots in 2002 the violent actors included all segments of the society, including ‘middle’ and ‘upper’ classes.⁷⁴ The widespread support for Hindu nationalism is evident as BJP acquired two thirds of the state assembly in 2002.

Unlike Gujarat, the labour market in Rajasthan is not characterised by competition between communities. The state has maintained a more traditional division of labour along caste and

⁷² Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

⁷³ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

⁷⁴ Personal interview with Dr. S.Mohammad Sajjid, Jamia Millia Islamia University (28.03.2007)

community lines. Business sectors are generally controlled by upper-class Hindus, while Muslims are primarily involved in manual labour. According to Harsh Sethi the average Muslim is poor and poorly educated, often they artisans, not traders and dealers. All major industries are owned by Hindus, but over the years Muslims have had some upward mobility because of their skills.⁷⁵ There are some examples of Hindu traders who prefer workers from the same community, but skills are generally held higher than religion.⁷⁶ Muslims are perceived to possess more work discipline than Hindus and are therefore, for the most part, highly regarded labourers in Rajasthan. Muslims are not seen as constituting a threat and economic as well as human development of the Muslim community is low compared to Hindus in both rural and urban areas (Sachar 2006). They have never been politically powerful because they are concentrated and only make a difference in some constituencies.⁷⁷

While the division of labour may reduce conflict related to economical competition between groups, the territorial separation and limited interaction can also reinforce religious cleavages (Varshney 1997). Ethnic separation facilitates the construction of an ethnic group as ‘others’ (Fearon and Laitin 2000). While all larger cities in India, including Jaipur, have clearly Muslim dominated areas, cities in Gujarat, particularly Ahmedabad and Vadodara/Baroda, are characterised by stronger territorial separation. In Vadodara and Ahmedabad Hindu and Muslim areas are clearly separated, however it is problematic to view this separation as the cause of intensified conflict (Varshney 2001). Intensified conflict has also increased the separation of religious communities so there is no clear cause and effect relationship. “Practically every episode of violence, and these cities have seen numerous, must have worked to make the spatial boundaries between ‘Hindus’ and ‘Muslims’ a little sharper.” (Robinson 2005, 48) Ahmedabad has undergone a period of ‘ghettoisation’ where members of the minority-society have been driven away from their homes. There have been collective deportations since 1993, and minorities have fled to marginal sites in the outskirts of the city, popularly known as mini-Pakistans (Breman 2005, 74). There was massive migration from homes during the 2002 riots, both voluntarily and coerced, to Muslim dominated areas and relief camps established by humanitarian agencies (Kaur 2005, 37-39). According to Raheel Dhattiwala a journalist with Times of India, the situation in Ahmedabad today is that there are two different cities.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Personal interview, Consultant Editor of *Seminar* (05.04.2007)

⁷⁶ Personal interview with Sharada Jain, Director of Sandhan (11.04.2007)

⁷⁷ Personal interview with Harsh Sethi, Consultant Editor of *Seminar* (05.04.2007)

⁷⁸ Personal interview (17.04.2007)

The anti-minority violence, for example in Gujarat, does not just keep traditional community boundaries in place, rather it helps push boundaries further afar, which when redefined create demographic pockets of social isolation, produce subjugated minority groups, and therefore, actualise a social order that matches the sacred socio-political landscape imagined by the often dominant majority group. (Kaur 2005, 20)

In addition to growing ghettos, the western part of the city has been increasingly closed to Muslims, regardless of class (Robinson 2005, 48). Ahmedabad is divided into an older and a newer upmarket area. Because the older part was considered as unsafe and had significant experience with communal riots in the past, the newer area, west Ahmedabad had attracted affluent Muslims. However, both Muslim residences and shops in this area were systematically looted and set on fire during the riots in 2002 (Kaur 2005, 38). Muslims are now largely excluded from these up-marked neighbourhoods and often prohibited from buying properties. It is legal to form homogenous societies and under the pretext of homogeneity Muslims have been prevented from living side by side with well-to-do Hindus on the west bank of the Sabarmathi river in Ahmedabad.⁷⁹ Muslims now feel trapped in the ghettos, as they are barred from Hindu-dominated areas (Robinson 2005, 49).

There is a clear connection between conflict intensity and territorial separation of ethnic groups. Limited interaction between ethnic groups reinforces negative perceptions of the other community, which again facilitates the use of violence on that community. The spatial separation is connected to defining people belonging to a different faith as the 'other.' The more segregated the groups are the easier myths and ideologies that express the superiority of one community over another can gain foothold (Robinson 2005, 38-77). The "rearrangement of urban spaces in favour of the dominant groups" is often an overlooked element of religious violence (Kaur 2005, 36). While there might be someone who's petty economic interest these events serve, such interests does not sufficiently justify ethnic movements" (Gupta 2005, 106). Many of those who regularly participate in violence in Gujarat have no economic gains for this activity, and cleansing certain areas from Muslim presence are therefore not primarily motivated economic factors.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Personal interview with Raheel Dhattiwala, Times of India (17.04.2007)

⁸⁰ Motivation for ethnic violence will be discussed in Chapter 5

In other words religious anti-minority ideology motivates everyday discrimination of Muslims. However, the degree to which an ideology gains foothold is clearly influenced by other factors. Economic disparities between affluent rural Muslims and Hindus, and marginalised Hindus and Muslims competing in the informal economy in the cities of Gujarat have facilitated the mobilisation of Hindus within an anti-Muslim ideology. In Rajasthan the religious cleavage does not correspond with economical cleavages in a similar manner. The Muslim minority is poor and there is also a reciprocal relationship between Hindus and Muslims as the latter group are labourers and the Hindus control the business sector.⁸¹ Inter-group dependence reduces the impact of radicalised Hindutva ideology in Rajasthan.

However, the degree to which Hindus feel united is not purely related to structures, economic or cultural. The following section argues that the manifestation of certain political conflicts in favour of others depends on the agency played by certain actors in influencing ideologies and perceptions of identity. While the above section have discussed construction of identities related to events and structural changes the following section will focus on the role of agents in shaping political cleavages, and specifically the Hindu-Muslim divide. The section in particular discusses the role of the Sangh Parivar, in constructing Hindu unity and the perception of Muslims as the ‘other.’ The degree to which the Parivar is has impact on the degree of Hindu-Muslim polarisation.

Creating a Hindu Rashtra

Unlike movements spurred by economic grievances where there are chances of a compromise, statuses seeking ethnic movements are absolutist in their scope. This is probably why ethnic movements invite so much violence without any remorse. The ethnic ‘other’ is after all an alien, someone who does not belong to the nation-state (Gupta 2005, 107)

In Gujarat the ghettoisation of Muslims clearly display the quest for pure Hindu territories free from ‘foreign’ elements. Hindus increasingly view themselves as *one* community. The forced movement of Muslims from Vadodara and Ahmedabad is seen as ‘purification,’ and Muslims have been forced to move to areas far from the city centre (Robinson 2005). The violence acquires a symbolic meaning as “[t]he sites of violence often become sites of purification where undesirable elements – members of the ‘other’ community, their property and places of worship are ritually removed and boxed in ghetto-like locations” (Kaur 2005, 36). Also, in villages where Hindus and Muslims had lived side by side for centuries Muslims

⁸¹ Personal interview with Sawaii Singh, Jan Sangharsh Samiti (09.04.2007)

were forced away, and the villages added the term ‘Hindu Rashtra’ to their village name. The separation of Hindus from Muslims implies a vicious circle where riots further separate communities, while ideologies and prejudices grow stronger which again triggers violence.

The communalisation of Hindus across caste, class and urban-rural division may have been facilitated by economic developments in Gujarat, but the role of the Sangh Parivar should not be underestimated as they have actively sought to downplay cultural and economic conflicts between Hindus (see Chapter 2). Religious mobilisation across caste cleavages stands in contrast to not only economic disparities within the Hindu community, but also cultural and religious conflicts. While Dalit and Adivasi religious praxis differ from the Brahminical tradition in many regards, such as not requiring strict vegetarianism, worshipping different gods in different temples and so forth, cultural conflicts between these groups are not manifest in Gujarat. According to some observers, the ‘Hindutvaisation’ of the lower castes is part of a conscious strategy on the part of the upper castes, and was successful because of their portrayal of the external enemy, the Christians and the Muslims, through anti-minority propaganda (Puniyani 2005, 13). As previously mentioned the BJP changed their strategy in order to appeal to these castes, but despite employing this strategy in other states, Gujarat is where this has been done most effectively. The cultural and economical cleavages that separate ‘middle’ and ‘upper’ caste Hindus challenge the ability of mobilising Hindus as a block. However, according to activist Hanif Lakdawala, actors within the Hindutva movement have sought to reinterpret Hinduism in order to bring Dalits and Adivasis together with the mainstream. The Congress had failed to improve their conditions, but the Sangh Parivar made them feel as Hindus, and “they feed on this identity.”⁸² While originally representing urban middle classes the BJP expanded into rural areas and established wider support for their ideology during the Ayodhya mobilisation period. In Gujarat, and under Modi, the BJP was particularly successful in establishing support in different classes and occupations.⁸³

The RSS had traditional been strong in Gujarat and during the National Emergency they played an important role in mobilising for the reinstatement of democracy.⁸⁴ In fact Gujarat’s current Chief Minister (CM) was important in this movement and this is highlighted in his government profile where it says that “Mr Modi, who stayed underground for the entire

⁸² Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

⁸³ Personal interview with Dr. S. Mohammad Sajjid, Jamia Millia Islamia University (28.04.2007)

⁸⁴ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

period, was instrumental in fighting a spirited battle against the fascist ways of the then government” (Government of Gujarat 19.05.2008). The role of RSS in combating the national emergency increased their credibility. Since then they have actively sought to mobilise the grassroots of the Gujarati society.⁸⁵ This strategy has increased the Hindu-Muslim divide. It has also made Hinduism increasingly uniform. There are few religious forms in Gujarat that contest the vision of what it means to be a Hindu presented by these organisations. Muslims are made to be suspects while Hinduism is getting increasingly uniform.⁸⁶ Society has become polarised due to these strategies and none of the groups are tolerant towards the other community.⁸⁷ Under BJP rule people have in increasing degrees come to define themselves in communal terms.⁸⁸ To bring together different castes the BJP started to present Hindus as one community and mobilise around symbols.

The government of Gujarat replaced the symbol of Gujarat, a tree with many branches carved out in the Mosque of Ahmedabad.⁸⁹ Another symbol that has been politically exploited is the Somnath temple. According to the legend the temple was the richest and most magnificent temple in India, but it was destroyed by a Muslim ruler in the eleventh century (Kakar 1996, 49). Somnath came to be known as a symbol of Muslim invaders and intolerant Islam and is interpreted in popular perception as the defeat and humiliation of Hindus by Muslims (Kakar 1996, 49-50). The temple destruction is also portrayed as Islam’s entry into India, and Gujarati people tends to see their state as the gateway through which Muslim invaders entered India, and therefore blame themselves for the introduction of Islam in India (Mayaram 1993, 33). Because of the parallels to Somnath, the Ram temple movement, Ayodhya, was particularly strong in Gujarat. According to Hanif Lakdawala the temple destruction did not have so much impact when it happened, but has been raved up in popular culture the last 150 years. There is a popular conception that the temple destruction traumatised the Hindu psyche and revenge is justified.⁹⁰

Through anti-Muslim strategies communalism has changed from being a city phenomenon towards becoming a state-wide issue. BJP utilised anti-minority propaganda to increase their

⁸⁵ Personal interview with Dr. Avinash Kumar of Oxfam (18.04.2007)

⁸⁶ Personal interview with Dr. Manoj K. Jha, University of Delhi (05.04.2007)

⁸⁷ Personal interview with Raheel Dhattiwala, journalist with the Times of India (17.04.2007)

⁸⁸ Personal interview with Sawaii Singh with Jan Sangharsh Samiti (09.04.2007)

⁸⁹ Personal interview with Cedric Prakash, Director of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

⁹⁰ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

support from SCSTs.⁹¹ By propagating an image of Muslims as anti-national and claiming that they were increasing in numbers they managed to mobilise STSCs around this anti-Muslim agenda.⁹² However, this was not mainly due to political slogans, but was aided by the long-term presence of the Sangh Parivar's civil organisations. These organisations have worked actively on grassroots level contributing to a more uniform perception of Hinduism.⁹³

The Sangh Parivar has especially directed their attention to Tribals. There has been a massive influence by RSS and other Sangh organisations among Tribals in Gujarat, especially among the Bhils in the north. Bhil violence against Muslims have occurred since the late 1980s, and in the Bhil-dominated areas, Sabarkantha and Panchmahals, violence reached its peak in 2002, when these were among the rural areas most affected by violence. Politically Tribals have also begun to favour the BJP. The Sangh Parivar has actively sought to mobilise Tribals under the Hindutva banner, and their participation in the violence illustrates their adoption of a hard-line anti-Muslim ideology.

After experiencing how Christian missionaries appealed to Tribal people, the Parivar chose to employ a similar strategy offering education, health services and infrastructure. Tribals have historically been excluded from the Hindu community, but within the Hindutva ideology they are more highly regarded. The inclusion of Tribals added to the construction of a monolithic Hindu community that mend traditional boundaries. Tribal areas that were more heavily influenced by the Parivar experienced higher levels of violence than areas where Tribals have not developed similar links to the Sangh (Gupta 2005, 102). The inclusion of tribes within the Hindu community has influenced the level of conflict in rural Gujarat. Tribals have to an increasing degree started to define themselves in terms of religion, as opposed to cultural characteristics that separates them from the mainstream Hindu community. This has led to a decrease of intra-Hindu conflict and an increase of communal Hindu-Muslim conflict.

While large parts of Gujarat are situated within this tribal belt, only the southernmost parts of Rajasthan have a significant presence of Tribals. In fact the proportion of SCs and STs are about opposite in the two states (Census of India 28.05.2008a; Census of India 28.05.2008b). But, North Gujarat and Southern Rajasthan are similar and there have been efforts in

⁹¹ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

⁹² Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

⁹³ Personal interview with Dr. Manoj K. Jha, University of Delhi (05.04.2007)

Rajasthan to mobilize Hindu nationalism and the same kind of forces as Gujarat.⁹⁴ The Sangh Parivar and especially the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has directed more attention towards Tribals than Scheduled Castes.

After the 2002 pogrom the Sangh Parivar increased their presence in the rural areas of Rajasthan.⁹⁵ RSS is opening new branches in all tribal areas. They are playing an active role in mobilizing STs.⁹⁶ Still, generally in Rajasthan there has been more resistance to communalism. There is a softer Hindutva ideology in the state and there have been few major violent outbreaks of this conflict.⁹⁷ As previously mentioned conflicts between ‘lower’ caste and ‘upper’ caste Hindus have massive impact on Rajasthani politics, and the Parivar has not succeeded in constructing a monolithic Hindu community in the same scale as in Gujarat, nor have they succeeded due to traditional rivalry between Hindu groups. However, in recent years the Parivar has increased their activity also in Rajasthan, and according to some observers it is only a question of time before a similar situation will develop there.⁹⁸ Within the most extreme organisations of the Sangh Parivar movement, Bajrang Dal and VHP, there have been an increased emphasis on Rajasthan and some members have even expressed a wish to repeat the ‘success’ of Gujarat in Rajasthan (Harish Bhatt in Setalvad 2003).

Despite efforts to mobilise the rural population within the Sangh Parivar, the creation of a Hindu unity that mend other cleavages is challenging in Rajasthan. While there is a growing grass-root membership of the Parivar organisations in Rajasthan, intra-Hindu conflicts have not been erased in a similar manner. However, observers have seen a changing pattern of conflict emerging in Rajasthan. There have been an increase in violent attacks on Muslims in some rural localities (Setalvad 2001b). There has also been more resistance in the civil sectors of Rajasthan and there are several actors who are working actively to avoid communalization of the state.⁹⁹ The civil society is more bridging⁹⁹ and RSS has not been as effective in their effort to mobilise under a Hindu nationalist banner.¹⁰⁰ Still there are areas where Hindutva has managed to communalize the grass root.¹⁰¹ According to various

⁹⁴ Personal interview with Harsh Sethi, Consultant Editor of *Seminar* (05.04.2007)

⁹⁵ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India Rajasthan (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

⁹⁶ Personal interview with Dr. Avinash Kumar, Oxfam (19.04.2007)

⁹⁷ Personal interview with Shabnam Hashmi, Trustee and Executive Secretary of, Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (Anhad) (18.04.2007)

⁹⁸ Personal interview with Kavita Shrivastava, of People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) (12.04.2007)

⁹⁹ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India Rajasthan (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

¹⁰⁰ Personal interview with Dr. Arvind Kumar Agrawal, University of Rajasthan (10.04.2007)

¹⁰¹ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

accounts people have in increasing degrees began to identify themselves in communal terms.¹⁰²

Generally, Hindutva mobilisation has been more successful in homogenous areas.¹⁰³ In more heterogeneous countries, like Rajasthan, support for BJP relates must be seen in relation to other conflicts such as caste, Hindutva is the umbrella concept, but attributing the conflict to religious conflict alone would be reductionism.¹⁰⁴ In Gujarat there was a stronger degree of homogeneity prior to Sangh Parivar efforts to polarise community on religious terms. The degree to which the Hindutva agenda has gained foothold among 'lower' castes and Tribals in Gujarat can partly be attributed to that the religious praxis and beliefs was more homogenous prior to Sangh Parivar influence. Hindu reformist sects, among others Swami Narayan, have traditionally had a strong presence in Gujarat. Narayan Swami Guru was among the pioneers in anti-caste movements (Parekh 2002, 6). Reformist sects allow all castes to worship in the same temples, and they have therefore contributed to combating the social exclusion of 'backwards' castes. The sects also undertake missionary activities and advocate a certain interpretation of Hinduism. The development of such 'church-like' sects can be seen as contributing to homogenising the Hindu community by influencing how people view 'Hinduness' and making them more aware of their religious identity.

The presence of Sangh Parivar affiliated organisation have contributed to constructing perception of Hindus as 'us' and Muslims as the 'other' in both states. But due to fewer competing identities they have been more effective in Gujarat. Unlike Rajasthan there were hardly any movements that contested the development in Gujarat.¹⁰⁵ One issue that relates to their presence in Gujarat is the degree to which Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) have had impact in the two states. Many of these are affiliated with the Sangh Parivar, and especially with the hard-line organisation VHP.

The NRI Connection

While there are no official figures on how much NRIs contributes to the Gujarati economy people generally agree that their funding gives them a special position in Gujarati politics.¹⁰⁶ Especially among the Patidars there have been migration to Africa, North America and the

¹⁰² Personal interviews with Kavita Shrivastava, of PUCL (12.04.2007) and Sumitra Chopra of AIDWA (12.04.2007)

¹⁰³ Personal interview with Dr. Manoj K. Jha, University of Delhi (05.04.2007)

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview with Dr. Manoj K. Jha, University of Delhi (05.04.2007)

¹⁰⁵ Personal interview with Sheba George, Sahrwaru (19.04.2007)

¹⁰⁶ Personal interview with Raheel Dhattiwala, Times of India (17.04.2007)

UK, and they have generally done very well in diaspora (Patel and Rutten 1999, 952). Rajasthan has not got a similar proportion of migration to other countries and diaspora communities are not seen as having a major influence on society or politics of the state. The case is different in Gujarat as these NRIs are seen as contributing in particularly to Hindutva organisations.¹⁰⁷ Especially the prosperous Patidars remains influential through their ties with their origins. In diaspora they have become increasingly concerned with identity issues. After having been uprooted from their society Indians in U.K and U.S compensate for their rootlessness by becoming more ultra-Hindu and “more Indian than Indians in India” (Engineer 2003, 17).

As previously mentioned the Patels have links in both urban and rural Gujarat, and also in Gujarat these communities have been mobilised within the Hindutva. The Patels have been active in the Sangh Parivar, especially within the VHP, which has offices throughout the world. “The VHP has been thriving financially mostly because of these NRIs, especially in Gujarat.” (Nussbaum 2007, 50-51) Their conservative ideology combined with the distribution of financial aid and missionary activity has been instrumental in securing a foothold for Hindu ideologies and Hindu partisans in rural Gujarat (Engineer 2003, 17). This has contributed to massive influence of the more conservative wing of the Sangh Parivar in Gujarat, namely the VHP and its youth organisation the Bajrang Dal.

The VHP has been actively working towards Tribals and Dalits, among other things contributing to their education (VHP 14.05.2008). This is likely to have had major impact on the degree to which these communities have accepted the interpretation of Hinduism that is advocated by the conservative elements of the Sangh, as well as giving their interpretation of Hinduism popular support. However, state remains in control to decide the curriculum in both public and private education. Still, the curriculum in Rajasthan and especially in Gujarat has received much attention, for promoting communal interpretation of history.

School Textbooks

The issue of school textbooks has received much attention due to the developments that have taken place in Gujarat. The degree to which people have accepted the hard-line Hindutva

¹⁰⁷ Personal interview with Dr. Pralay Kanungo, JNU (04.04.2007)

ideology has been linked to the content of textbooks in schools. As textbooks are defined by the state government they can provide a medium of indoctrination within an ideology.¹⁰⁸

Despite the presence of Sangh Parivar organisations in rural areas villagers are mainly government school educated, but according to Hanif Lakdawala both governmental and private schools utilise textbooks with communal content. Often there are assistant teachers in government schools who are not qualified, many of whom are also associated with the VHP or Bajrang Dal.¹⁰⁹ Textbooks are discriminating to Christianity and Islam and they contribute to further marginalisation of these communities.¹¹⁰ Also Rajasthan is experiencing this development as Hindutva ideology has subtly been introduced in schools and entangled in educational institution.¹¹¹ The curriculum is under state authority and the central government cannot intervene for constitutional reasons.

As the Hindu nationalism wish the long term creation of a Hindu Rashtra education provides an important tool for the creation of such a state. It is evident that from their internet sites that education, especially of marginalised Hindus is a high priority. Education is sited as one of main objectives of VHP (VHP 02.05.2008). On RSS web site the following was quote of the day, “If your plan is for a year, plant rice. If your plan is for a decade, plant trees. If your plan is for a lifetime, educate children” (Confucius quoted in RSS 02.05.2008). RSS and affiliated organisations are running schools and nursery in both Gujarat and Rajasthan.

According to Achyut Yagnik also university boards are dominated by people with a BJP affiliation in Gujarat. This trend is apparent in all education institutions. There are separate schools for the different segments of the population.¹¹² The state has always been active in the spreading of Hindutva ideology.¹¹³ According to Cedric Prakash Hitler is portrayed in Gujarat as a hero. The founding fathers of Hindu nationalism, such as Gowalkar and Savarkar are also frequently referred to and their ideology is widely supported. According to the Hindutva ideology the majority does need others, but only as second class citizens.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁸ Personal interview with Sweta Singh,

¹⁰⁹ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

¹¹⁰ Personal interview with Fr. Cedric Prakash, Head of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

¹¹¹ Personal interview with Fr. Cedric Prakash, Head of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

¹¹² Personal interview with Achyut Yagnik, Coordinator of SETU (17.04.2007)

¹¹³ Personal interview with Shabnam Hashmi, Executive Secretary of Anhad (18.04.2007)

¹¹⁴ Personal interview with Fr. Cedric Prakash, Head of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

In Rajasthan the NECRT demanded the changing of the curriculum of the state.¹¹⁵ The BJP government in Gujarat has been accused for distributing school textbooks with questionable contents that promote “hatred and prejudices against Dalits and minorities” (The Hindu 2007). Furthermore, textbooks praise the founders of RSS and display a positive image of fascism (The Hindu 2007). Similarly Gujarat textbooks are supportive of fascism with High School textbooks chapters having titles such as “Hitler, the Supremo” and “Internal Achievements of Nazism.” Under “Ideology of Nazism” the textbooks says:

Hitler lent dignity and prestige to the German government within a short time by establishing a strong administrative set up. He created the vast state of Greater Germany. He adopted the policy of opposition towards the Jewish people and advocated the supremacy of the German race. He adopted a new economic policy and brought prosperity to Germany. He began efforts for the eradication of unemployment. He started constructing public buildings, providing irrigation facilities, building railways, roads and production of war materials. He made untiring efforts to make Germany self-reliant within one decade. Hitler discarded the Treaty of Versailles by calling it just 'a piece of paper' and stopped paying the war penalty. He instilled the spirit of adventure in the common people. (Gujarat High School textbooks quoted in Mehta 2004)

The atrocities of Nazism, on the other hand, are mentioned in one sentence (Mehta 2004). The content of these textbooks clearly display a hard-line Hindutva influence on the students in Rajasthan and Gujarat. The textbooks have been adopted under BJP governments. It is likely that the promotion of nationalism, and in some cases also fascism, will strengthen the position of Hindu nationalist ideology and therefore widen the Hindu-Muslim divide. However, the effect of these textbooks remains to be seen, but it is illustrative of the ideology represented by influential actors in both Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Summary

Variation in religious polarisation relates to the degree to which cleavages crosscut or overlap. More specifically the lack of cleavages that crosscut the Hinduism has contributed to the increased salience of Hindu-Muslim conflict in Gujarat. In Rajasthan, on the other hand, religious ideology is not the main source of political mobilisation as the Hindu majority does not perceive themselves as a homogenous group. There are also examples where cleavages mend the Hindu-Muslim divide. The degree of polarisation on the religious cleavage is related to the construction, reconstruction or deconstruction of identity, through structural

¹¹⁵ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

developments, or through the role of actors who contributes to widening the Hindu-Muslim divide.

Gujarat grew out of regional political mobilisation. While this movement originally united religious communities the success of the movement has made regional identity superfluous, at least in within-state politics. In Rajasthan, on the other hand, regional cleavages remain salient. Such cleavages create intra-Hindu division and unite Hindus and Muslims who share regional identity. In Rajasthan regional identity to some degrees overlap caste identities. Rivalry between castes remains important in state politics in Rajasthan and parties need to accommodate caste identities in order to secure support. Caste rivalry prevents Hindus from perceiving themselves as homogenous. That also applies to 'lower caste' mobilisation that continues to divide the Hindu majority in Rajasthan. While caste dominated the political scene previously in Gujarat, the rise of an OBC, the Patidars, has reduced the impact of caste-based political mobilisation. The influence of actors oppose caste discrimination has also contributed to reduced caste conflicts. Guru-founded sects, such as Swami Narayan, contest the traditional caste hierarchy and has influence the society in Gujarat. Hindus are therefore a more culturally homogenous group than in Rajasthan. The presence of urban-rural cleavages is also a factor that varies between the two states. Gujarat is more industrialised and has developed a strong business sector, with large section of the population living and working in urban centres. The state lacks peasant organisation and urban-rural cleavages does not polarise politics. The presence of well-to-do Muslims in some areas in Gujarat may add fuel to the Hindu-Muslim divide. In Rajasthan, the urban-rural cleavage does polarise politics to some degree. There are some peasant organisations, and where these are strong religious conflict is low.

Class-based mobilisation is weak in both states. Labour, to a large degree, follows traditional caste and community lines. The early and rapid industrialisation in Gujarat led to the emergence of a worker class in Gujarat. However, their organisation was incorporated within the Congress and therefore there was no class-based political conflict. Furthermore, with the decline of the textile industry the labour organisation has lost its impact in maintaining communal peace. Large sections of Hindus and Muslims are now competitors in the informal economy, and instead of being united by shared economic interests they perceive the 'other' community as competition. Another reason for this divide may be that the Sangh Parivar has systematically promoted their ideology among 'backwards' Hindu castes and tribes,

contributing to the perception that Muslims constitutes a major threat as opposed to predominantly Hindu 'upper' classes. The Parivar has worked particularly towards Tribals and resulting in them defining themselves as Hindus and having internalised the ideology promoted by the Parivar. This pattern is also to some degree evident in Rajasthan. In the southern part of Rajasthan BJP has increased their popularity, and this area is also where most violent mobilisation takes place.

Cleavage theory does contribute to the understanding of the variation of Hindu-Muslim polarisation in the two states. In Rajasthan rural-urban, regional and caste cleavages crosscut religious identity Hindus are not mobilised as a block and religious identity is not the primary source of political mobilisation. Some of these cleavages, urban-rural and regional, also unify Hindus and Muslims with shared interests. The absence of such conflicts in Gujarat has led to politics becoming more one-dimensional, centred on the religious cleavage. The degree to which actors have been successful in promoting antipathies towards other groups is related both to the organisational strength of the Sangh Parivar as well as the social context in which it operates. In Gujarat the Sangh Parivar has a huge presence. At the same time the decline of the Congress organisation left a vacuum and Hindutva was not challenged by other sources of political mobilisation. In contrast, Rajasthan has not had as strong presence of the Parivar and the movement has contested by other ideologies and preferences. While cleavage theory does explain degree of polarisation it has limited value for understanding how, when and for what motive conflict becomes violent. The following chapter seek to discuss these issues.

Chapter 5: Institutionalised Violence: Vote-seeking or Ideologically Motivated

This chapter explores unconventional political mobilisation, operationalised as violence, boycotts, demonstrations, and also as bias expressed by government, police and judiciary. First, the chapter discuss political mobilisation in its more extreme form, violence. The chapter starts by quickly mapping the two states' experience with violence. Second, I utilise Paul Brass' theoretical framework that focus on the role of elites in the three phases of violence, preparation, enactment and explanation (Brass 2005). I separate between long-term preparations where actors justify the violence as a form of political mobilisation and immediate preparations. In exploring immediate preparations, enactment and explanation the 2002 riots provide an example and are analysed in terms of police, state government and national government role in these phases in order to understand why and how violence could escalate. The events of Gujarat 2002 are compared to the history of communal violence in

Rajasthan, and the choices made by actors in this context. Due to the moderate level of communal conflict in Rajasthan the analysis of violence will be more focused on Gujarat.

After having analysed the role of actors in violence in the two states I discuss the incentives for violence. According to Brass violence is instrumental to elites (Brass 1996). Wilkinson further argues that the scope of the riots is related to electoral incentives of the government (Wilkinson 2004). I utilise both these approaches, but with reference to a rational choice perspective also the behaviour of people who do not belong to elites is seen as rational (Opp 1999). Unconventional politics is not restricted to violence alone and this section discusses ideological motives for unconventional politics. The conviction in anti-minority ideology is discussed through exploring the justice process in the aftermath of the 2002 violence. Finally, the chapter discusses pro-Hindu bias of state authorities in Rajasthan and Gujarat.

From Ayodhya to Godhra

From the mid-1980s Gujarat established itself as the most riot-prone state in India, defined by number of deaths. Also Rajasthan experienced a steady increase in violence. But when violence reached its peak less than 50 people died in communal violence in Rajasthan. Gujarat was the worst affected state in India during the Ayodhya mobilisation and approximately 340 people died in communal riots in 1992-1993 in Gujarat (Varshney 2002). In the aftermath the situation remained tense, especially in Ahmedabad, and during religious festivals riots between Hindus and Muslims routinely broke out, claiming lives every time (Engineer 2003, 14). According to the state government there had been 443 major communal riots in Gujarat prior to the 2002 pogrom (Jahangir 2008, 2). In the post-Ayodhya period Rajasthan has remained peaceful and communal relations have been good except for small isolated pockets of religious intolerance.¹¹⁶

Prior to the Ayodhya mobilisation the city Surat had been peaceful compared to the two other major cities Ahmedabad and Vadodara, but the city experienced the first serious riots since partition in 1993. Altogether 197 people were killed, 22 Hindus and 174 Muslims (Varshney 2002, 255). In addition to violent attacks, Muslims have also been victims of other kinds of unconventional political mobilisation such as economic boycotts. The Muslim-owned Italian Bakery is an example of a business that was affected by boycotts, but there are numerous other examples. In 1992-93 pamphlets encouraging boycotting the bakery was circulating,

¹¹⁶ Personal interview with Dr. Arvind Kumar Agrawal, University in Rajasthan (10.04.2007)

and as sales started to drop and the bakery was forced to close many of its shops.¹¹⁷ From the early 1990s anti-Muslim violence has increased in frequency and victims of violence have by and large belonged to minorities. For instance, in 2001 about 550 Muslim were forced to move from a small town in the Patan district of Gujarat. It was reported that Muslim mass graves with marked with Saffron flags were found in the same village (Setalvad 2001a).

Still, the violence of 2002 differs from previous experiences with violence in the state. It was a state-wide pogrom and while governments have previously passively supported violence, the 2002 pogrom was unique as agents of government actively prepared and enacted violence. According to some, the pogrom, is different from previous riots because it included all segments of the population, and while previous riots was restricted to poorer neighbourhoods the violence in 2002 affected middleclass areas as well (Engineer 2003, 14). But according to Dr. Manoj Kumar Jha both 'middle' classes and workers have taken equal parts in riots in recent years. Contrary to popular belief 2002 is not a cut-off date because these tendencies have developed over time.¹¹⁸ However, the participation of middle-class professionals and state officials were more evident in 2002 than in any previous riots. The following section will describe the agents involved in the preparing collective violence.

Preparing Violence

According to Brass there are three phases in riots and pogrom (2005). This section discusses the first of these phases, the rehearsal or preparation phase. In the study of actors' role in initiating violence I focus on civil society organisations, particularly the Sangh Parivar and its political wing the BJP. In viewing preparations I not only discuss the preparations for individual riots, but also long-term preparation that influence the execution of each riot. The first section presents how actors are establishing 'riot-friendly conditions' and the degree to which they are allowed to do so. The next section discusses the preparation phase of one specific violent event, namely the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat.

Long-Term Preparations – Establishing 'Riot-Friendly' Conditions

As discussed in the foregoing chapter, actors within the Sangh Parivar has in increasing degrees made their presence known both in Gujarat and Rajasthan. They have focused their attention towards Tribals and 'lower' castes in an attempt to create a Hindu block and often Muslims are portrayed as threatening 'others.' While polarisation is a precondition for riots,

¹¹⁷ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

¹¹⁸ Personal interview with Dr. Manoj K. Jha, University of Delhi (05.04.2007)

long-term preparations of violence involves the legitimisation of these actions and the incorporation and acceptance of anti-minority ideology in government institutions.

In Gujarat hard-line Hindutva ideology has gradually become the dominant ideology. From 1990 billboards started to be erected in various cities and towns that declared Gujarat to be a Hindu Rashtra (nation). While the state is constitutionally bound to ensure equal status for all religions local BJP governments has not intervened to remove these billboards and the people responsible for these billboards claimed that ‘their’ government was in power (Sud 2007, 19-20). Actors promoting Hindutva ideology were freely allowed to promote anti-minority ideology and while organisations such as the RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal was under observation in the past, the Gujarat state stopped monitoring their activities under BJP rule and instead these hard-line organisations received state support (Chenoy 2002, 4, 25). Even as they systematically promoted “that Muslims were conservative, anti-national, fundamentalist and pro-Pakistan”, the state have remained either passive or supportive of these activities (Chenoy 2002, 4). Sections of the Parivar became “bold and began attacking the minorities openly,” but were allowed to uphold these activities largely undisturbed (Engineer 2003, 16).

People associated with these organisations were integrated in the state administration. The state BJP had a larger presence of former RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal cadres, and the infiltration of state institutions by Sangh Parivar activists and sympathisers became evident during BJP rule, from the mid-1990s. Hard-line Hindu nationalists got posted to the most important positions in the bureaucracy and both promotions and transfers in government institutions favoured those who were associated with the Parivar (Chenoy 2002, 21).¹¹⁹ There are reports of some unconventional tasks being executed by the police. Police officers were ordered to conduct surveys about Muslims involved in communal riots, Muslim organisations, Pakistani nationals, etc (Chenoy 2002; Varadarajan 2002, 13). Similar surveys were conducted by civil society organisations. The VHP, for instance had conducted large-scale surveys in order to map out who were Muslims and where they lived, which most likely were utilised in the 2002 pogrom.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Personal interview with Dr. S. Mohammad Sajjid, Jamia Millia Islamia University (28.03.2007)

¹²⁰ Personal interview with Shabnam Hashmi, Executive Secretary of Anhad (18.04.2007)

Because of the pervasive presence of the Sangh Parivar, Gujarat was seen as a threatening example of communal politics also prior to 2002. Teesta Setalvad commented that the utilisation of strategies that had polarised the religious society in Gujarat posed a threat to communal peace in Rajasthan. Both, RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal had increased their presence in Rajasthan with the aid of BJP (Setalvad 2001b) One of the aforementioned strategies was the distribution of *trishuls*.¹²¹ The systematic distribution of these weapons in Gujarat was part of the preparation to the 2002 pogrom (Setalvad 2003). Similar activities have taken place in Rajasthan. Hindus are told to beware of the danger and there are pamphlets that recommend them to be armed that are distributed along with *trishuls* (Setalvad 2001b). But, in the aftermath of the 2002 pogrom Rajasthan government has banished *trishul* distribution, but the VHP and Bajrang Dal continues to defend and distribute the weapons (Setalvad 2003). Also prior to 2002 there were stronger political opposition to the activities of hard-line Hindu nationalists in Rajasthan than in Gujarat. The Rajasthani Chief Minister (1998-2003) wrote the Prime Minister demanding a ban on the Bajrang Dal (Setalvad 2001b).

In 2003, BJP won a majority in the Rajasthan state elections. However, unlike the Gujarat government they have imposed restrictions on hard-line Hindutva propaganda and action. Among other things, they took measures to arrest S.A. Sankla the chief of the Shiv Sena commando force after holding an inflammatory speech where he urged Muslims to leave the town if they wanted to avoid another Gujarat. In the same speech he encouraged Hindu youth to “rape Muslim women and thereafter sever their body below the waist so that proof of the rape is destroyed” (Sankla quoted in Setalvad 2003). Sexual violence against women was massive in the 2002 riots and encouraging such crimes in Rajasthan can be interpreted as an attempt to prepare future violence.

Government actions towards Sankla demonstrate a willingness to intervene in the activities of the Hindu right, but there are also examples where they have been lenient towards Hindutva activists. Harish Bhatt, a former national secretary of the Bajrang Dal and Member of the Legislative Assembly in Gujarat, gave similar speeches in Rajasthan without being sanctioned. He stated that the “Operation Clean-up” that had started in Gujarat would be continued in Rajasthan, and he went on to say that he opposed the ideology of non-violence and “[i]f anyone slaps us, we will cut his hand off” (Harish Bhatt quoted in Setalvad 2003).

¹²¹ A *trishul* is a religious symbol and a six-eight inches long knife.

There is a strong link between the BJP and other Sangh Parivar organisation including hard-line organisations such as the RSS, VHP and the Bajrang Dal also in Rajasthan (Mayaram 1993, 18). However, the central leadership of the BJP has remained more moderate, unlike Gujarat where many dominant political leaders have a background from these organisations. In the early 1990s as now there were two factions within Rajasthan BJP. Shekhawat headed the non-RSS faction while the RSS faction was headed by Lalit Kishore Chaturvedi. The fact that the Shekhawat leadership was followed by another moderate, Raje, shows that the moderate faction remains dominant.

Even if there are examples where hard-line actors within the Parivar has been allowed to make encourage, defend and normalise violence in both states, Rajasthan has to a larger degree cracked down on such actors than Gujarat. In the following section I discuss the immediate preparations for one specific violent episode, namely the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat.

Immediate Preparations – Preparing a Violent Attack

In this phase there are actors within an *institutionalised riot system* who has a role in transforming an incident into violent mobilisation (Brass 2005, 32). These actors involved in this phase there are messengers to political leaders who informs of possible violence, propagandists who creates and delivers messengers to specific parts of civil society and the general public, media who gives inflammatory news, and recruiters who collect possible perpetrators (Brass 2005, 32-33). There are *fire tenders* who brings notice to situations sensitive to communal relations and *conversion specialists* who decides whether an incident will be exaggerated and placed into a communal discourse (Brass 2005, 32). They deliberately inflame crowds and instruct the violence. In the following section examines the role of such actors in the aftermath of the Godhra incident.

On February 27 compartment S-6 of a train with *kar sevaks* heading back from Ayodhya caught on fire.¹²² Along the route there had been confrontations between the Hindu activists and Muslims. After the fire incident rumours blaming an armed Muslim mob started to spread in Godhra. That very same day a group of officials including Chief Minister Narendra Modi and the VHP general secretary, Jaideep Patel, visited the site. According to witnesses Patel was arranging that pictures of the burnt victims would be in the next day's newspaper, knowing that tensions could escalate due to the coverage (Sundar 2002).

¹²² A volunteer working for the restoration of a Rama temple at Ayodhya.

The government itself adopted this role as a *fire tender*. Without having any clear evidence the Gujarati government were quick to place blame. Just after the incident the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, stated that Godhra Muslims in collaboration with Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence Agency (ISI) were responsible (Sud 2007, 22). This assumption was supported by the national government as well and the Minister of Home Lal Krishna Advani also maintained that suspicion pointed towards the ISI (Varadarajan 2002, 5).¹²³ Similarly the Prime Minister quickly linked the incident to Pakistan intelligence and international terrorism, playing on fear of Al Qaeda (Nussbaum 2007, 46-47)

Further increasing the tension the state government decided to bring the burnt bodies to Ahmedabad the next day. Knowing about the communal sensitive nature of Gujarat, and especially Ahmedabad, the decision to bring the burnt bodies of the Godhra victims to the city was questionable. Crowds were allowed to collect the bodies at the railway station and bring them in public processions in the streets (Chenoy 2002, 25). In that way the devastating incident was portrayed vividly to people in Ahmedabad as well as across Gujarat through various media. The Sangh Parivar utilised the funerals of the Godhra victims to further spur communal sentiments (Chenoy 2002, 28)..

The VHP started to spread pamphlets and other propaganda immediately after Godhra. Although the content of these were illegal no action was taken to prevent this from happening (Chenoy 2002, 28-29). Similarly the VHP decided to call for a *bandh* (strike) the day after. The BJP government supported the bandh, despite their knowledge about the previous history of Ahmedabad (Chenoy 2002, 17). Two years earlier the government had supported a similar *bandh* which led to violence and destruction of Muslim properties, shrines and problems related to police partiality (Sundar 2002, 77; Varadarajan 2002, 11). As the Supreme Court had decided to ban *bandhs* both the encouragement of the strikes as well as the government's decision to support it was illegal (Chenoy 2002, 17).

A Sangh Parivar bandh [...] marked a premeditated transition from a local riot to an organised and pre-planned State-wide protest which was bound to result in a bloodbath, especially in the light of the political signals to officialdom to intervene minimally. (Chenoy 2002, 17)

¹²³ In 2002 the national government was a BJP-led coalition and both the Minister of Home who is responsible for order and the Prime Minister represented the BJP.

According to a former minister of Modi's cabinet during the 2002, the Chief Minister had instructed police officials, on a meeting the 27. of February, not to interfere with rioters on the street the next day (Engineer 1984, 229). The allegations has not been further investigated as Harin Pandya, who testified to the People's Inquiry Commission was later assassinated.

The preparatory phase also includes planning the actual violence and recruiting people to enact it (Brass 1997). Actors within the Hindu Right organised the actual attacks. The morning after the Godhra incident there were individuals who had detailed information about Muslim properties and carried mobile phones and lists with addresses. According to Shastri these lists were prepared on the same day, but he is unwilling to answer on what data material they were created (Chenoy 2002, 17,19). According the Mahadev Vidrohi of ABICHRAM the VHP planned riots, and had a meeting where they decided on which houses to loot.¹²⁴ Dr. S. Mohammad Sajjid supports this view, and claims that the manner in which property, areas and specific Muslims were targeted gives support to the claim that the carnage was planned and not a spontaneous riot.¹²⁵ An indication that violence was prepared prior to Godhra was that the Hindu mobs were armed with liquefied petroleum gas cylinders. Just a few weeks prior to the violence there had been a shortage of these cylinders, but the rioters in Ahmedabad were armed with thousands of these (Chenoy 2002, 19). However, there is no conclusive evidence that gas cylinders were stored for the purpose of attacking Muslims.

Still, it is clear that in the immediate phase after Godhra Sangh Parivar actors, within the government as well as civil society, prepared for a violent attack. A violent incident may have happened without such preparations, but the manner in which it was organised indicates that the preparatory phase is institutionalised. Despite the likelihood of post-Godhra violence there are no sign of precaution on behalf of the government. To the contrary their behaviour encourages violence as hard-line actors are given free space to mobilise forces and promote anti-Muslim sentiments (Parekh 2002, 2).

The Enactment of Violence – Willingness and Capacity for Control

Following the concept *institutionalised riot system* some actors has the role of enacting the actual enactment of violence. Muslims were collectively held accountable for Godhra and Muslims were seen as allied with Pakistan and therefore as an 'enemy within' (Parekh 2002, 3). Revenge was unleashed against all Muslims and resulted in unprecedented violence

¹²⁴ Personal interview (16.03.2007)

¹²⁵ Personal interview (28.03.2007)

involving looting of Muslim properties, systematic use of sexual violence towards Muslim women, displacement and murder of Muslims. Official estimates of lives lost are around 1000 while unofficial records say that 2000 or more have been killed (HRW 2002). One of the reasons it is impossible to make accurate estimations is that entire Muslim settlements have been wiped out, with no one left to report the losses (Chenoy 2002, 30-31).

The violence also included the destruction of Muslim holy places, *dargahs* and mosques, and their replacement with saffron flags and statues of Hanuman (Parekh 2002, 3).¹²⁶ The looting targeted Muslim houses, shops and industrial units, and the revenge actions also unleashed an economic boycott (Parekh 2002, 3). “Sangh Parivar leaders were repeatedly identified by victims and other informants as instigating and leading the marauding mobs.” (Chenoy 2002, 29) However, the perpetrators also included groups of professionals, especially doctors, lawyers and teachers. While most often avoiding active participation these groups “donated money, offered moral support and encouragement, and provided free services to Hindu victims of violence” (Parekh 2002, 3). They were often seen in the midst of the violence where as “[t]hey drove in their cars to burning buildings and watched the horrid spectacle with a measure of relief and even pride.” (Parekh 2002, 3)

Police and State Government

A distinction between Gujarat 2002 and other riots and pogroms is the duration, the graveness and the number of people affected. Anti-Muslim violence continued for three months. Explanations that focus on state capacities to control violence (Kohli 1990), have little explanatory value as Gujarat as the state did not utilise available resources to prevent riots. I argue that large sections of the police and the State Government were complicit either through actively partaking or passively accepting violence. The responsibility is not only extended to the acts of state agents, but the state has failed to protect rights of life, liberty and equality in the face of non-State players (Verma 2003, 261)

The morning the 28th of February when the attacks of the minority community had started, offenders included the police as well as civil society. Large sections of the police force were part of the mob and displayed open bias (Engineer 2006, 117) For example in Morarji Chowk

¹²⁶ The saffron colour is a symbol of Hindu nationalism and is associated with the RSS, Bajrang Dal, VHP, but also with the political wing of the Sangh Parivar, the BJP The God Hanuman is also very popular among these organisation. In the Ramayana he defends Rama and Sita. The replacement of Muslim dargahs with Hanuman temples can be interpreted symbolically. In the Ramayana, Hanuman’s tail is put on fire. In revenge he went to all houses and “burnt them by the tail” (Iftikhar Ahmad, interview).

and Charodia Chowk in Ahmedabad police were present and allegedly could not prevent Hindu-Muslim confrontation where all forty people killed were Muslims (Setalvad 2002, 181). Furthermore, throughout the state “[g]oons from the RSS, BJP, VHP and Bajrang Dal were given a free hand by the state authorities and police” (Varadarajan 2002, 9)

After curfew was imposed Muslims had to remain inside while Sangh Parivar activists were allowed to run free (Sundar 2002, 99). There were various incidents where the police fired at Muslim and provided cover for the mobs (Sundar 2002, 99). The lower levels in the police were more closely aligned with the Hindutva forces than the upper sections (Chenoy 2002, 27). Just behind a Police headquarters a Muslim shrine was bulldozed and replaced by a Hanuman temple. The complete destruction of this structure would have taken several hours, still the police did not try to intervene (Engineer 2003, 20).

A former Member of Parliament, Ehsan Jafri, along with 19 members of his family and 20 friends was brutally killed. Frightened by the massive mob assembling outside his house he phoned various authorities including the Police Commissioner and politicians without receiving help (Engineer 2003, 20). There were police patrol cars were in the area, but they did not intervene (Chenoy 2002). While violence were escalating on the 28th of February two state ministers sat in the control room and directed the operations (Sundar 2002, 100). One of them, Gujarat Home Minister Ashok Bhatt gave explicit instructions that the police should not take any action (Engineer 2003, 20). Investigation in the aftermath of the riots implicated that the government condoned the violence by pacifying the local police force and administration (Hansen 2005, 126). This impression is validated by testimonies from people within the police force. Police officials have reported that top politicians instructed them to be passive and that their hands were tied (Chenoy 2002, 27). The ongoing attacks on Muslims were facilitated by the perpetrators knowing they would not be held accountable for their actions and members of the VHP and Bajrang Dal were shouting “[i]t’s an open secret, the police is on our side” during the riots (Setalvad 2002, 177) As a senior police officer put it the problem was “not lack of force, but lack of will” (Chenoy 2002, 28).

Evidence implicating the government gets further affirmation by their handling of efficient officers. In the few areas where the police had efficiently prevented riots, such as Kachch, the officers in charge was transferred. In fact, on March 24 twenty-seven police officers, among them the most efficient, were transferred, often to less significant assignments (Chenoy

2002). Many of those who were transferred had arrested VHP leaders or others associated with the Parivar and/or named them in FIRs (First Information Reports). The government defined the transfers as routine transfers. However, a day prior to the transfers Modi and BJP Members of the Legislative Assembly had met to discuss the situation. According to an officer present on the meeting the police commissioner had “pleaded Modi to be allowed to take action against VHP and Bajrang Dal activists” (Setalvad 2002, 195). The police are legally autonomous, and the officer reacted to the commissioner having to beg authorities to be allowed to conduct his job. In the same political meeting Hindus were referred to as ‘us’ and Muslims as ‘them’ (Setalvad 2002, 195).

The actors who prepared for the riots, in particular the VHP was also active in its enactment. The government was also complicit, both by being passive, by ordering police to passivity, by interfering in cases where the police were efficient and in some cases actually leading the mob themselves. Eyewitnesses have pointed out that several ministers from the Modi cabinet personally led mobs in the attacks. “[T]he state apparatus - both the leading political party and government agencies - condoned or even facilitated the pogrom, rather than stop it while it was taking place” (Breman 2005, 69).

National Government

Whenever a state government is incapable of providing security for its citizens and maintaining law and order the responsibility ultimately lies on the federal government. The central government, which also was dominated by the BJP, refrained from taking action “allowing the local units of RSS and VHP and many local supporters to wreak deadly revenge on Muslims all over the state” (Hansen 2005, 126). The army has generally been perceived as less biased and more capable to provide peace in during communal violence. The fact that the Gujarat Government did not request army intervention is illustrative of their bias. Still, the Central Government could have intervened given the fact that there was no rule of law in Gujarat. In cases where the rights and safety of citizens are at risk the national government can and should impose Article 356 of the Indian Constitution, President’s Rule. This has been utilised at various occasions in India, among others after the riots in Rajasthan in the early 1990s, where the degree of conflict was minimal compared to Gujarat 2002.

Indeed, the situation in Gujarat was by far the clearest case in post-Independence India for the rightful imposition of that article, which has been misused countless time during the past fifty years for inappropriate, partisan political reasons. (Brass 2005, 390).

In Gujarat there was a complete breakdown and the state did not provide life, liberty, equality and dignity as it is constitutionally required to do (Chenoy 2002, 30). However, the national government, also dominated by the BJP, remained supportive of Gujarati authorities. According to some observers the clearest breakdown of institutions was the failure of the central government to dismiss the Gujarat state government (Brass 2005, 390). The same national government had imposed President's Rule, the year before in Manipur even though the scale of violence in Manipur was much smaller (Chenoy 2002, 30). The inconsistent use of this constitutional prerogative is illustrative of the ideological bias involved. On May 6 a unanimous Rajya Sabha motioned the national government of India to intervene.¹²⁷

That this House expresses its deep sense of anguish at the persistence of violence in Gujarat for over six weeks, leading to loss of lives of a large number of persons, destruction of property worth crores of rupees and urges the Central Government to intervene effectively under article 355 of the Constitution to protect the lives and properties of the citizens and to provide effective relief and rehabilitation to the victims of violence. (Verma 2003, 262)

The federal government took few measures to follow these directions and remained passive. However, a police officer K.P.S. Gill, who was known for efficiently preventing violence, was appointed as security advisor to the Chief Minister by Home Minister Advani (Brass 2005, 391). Despite previous experience with violence and his arrival to Gujarat in May, when the situation had calmed compared to the first few days, he described the situation as “exceedingly bad” (Gill in Brass 2005, 391). Despite having been appointed by the federal government he did not receive as many forces as he requested from the Gujarati government. But, more than 200 Hindu Right activists were arrested after his arrival, 53 people were charged with crimes. The charges were related to offences that took place in Ahmedabad and among the people attained were some local BJP leaders (Brass 2005, 391). While the state government is complicit by actions as well as inaction, the complicity of the federal government lies primarily in its passivity. Ultimately, the federal government is responsible of the wellbeing of its citizens and the Constitution clearly state that the federal government can and should declare President's Rule in cases of state failure.

¹²⁷ Rajya Sabha is the upper house of the Parliament of India. Consist of 250 representatives, 238 are elected as state representatives and the remaining 12 are appointed by the President.

According to the National Human Rights Commission's preliminary report the government failed to take anticipatory steps to prevent the initial tragedy as well as the subsequent violence (Verma 2003, 262). The report further observes that some violence-prone areas managed to control violence, while other districts had succumbed to communalism. This variation is attributed to local factors and local 'players' (Verma 2003, 263). In the preliminary report to the government of Gujarat the NHRC questions why the state did not take appropriate action to stop organised persons who systematically single out properties or why public servants who perform their duties are transferred (Verma 2003, 264). None of these questions were answered. Similarly, offenders named by the NHRC were not prosecuted nor were these allegation rebutted (Verma 2003, 264-265).

The Explanatory Phase

The final stage involved securing the definition of the violence. Typically in this stage actors involved seek to define the events in their favour. This section discusses the explanations offered by the Hindu Right. This includes civil society associations within the Sangh Parivar as well as its political wing represented in state and federal governments. These accounts are compared to the conclusions presented by independent reports and investigation. I argue that the preparation, execution and explanatory phases the long-duration pogrom are not separate stages, but takes place simultaneous and explanations are just as much a preparatory as both stages concern the legitimating of violence.

Godhra – Explaining the Train Fire

In utilising the concept riot to describe the events that took place in Gujarat, actors display a bias as the term indicates spontaneity and equal participation on the part of both communities. The main arguments that legitimise, defend or express understanding of the persecution of Muslims are rooted in the horrible incident that took place in Godhra. "Citing the Godhra carnage, the entrepreneur class and burgeoning Hindu middle class found no difficulty in justifying open violence, including the lawlessness of the state." (Yagnik 2002, 6) The more calculated Godhra is portrayed, the more 'just' are the post-Godhra attacks perceived to be. After the incident government officials rapidly blamed Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) (Brass 2005, 388).¹²⁸ The details surrounding the attacks were quickly overshadowed by the atrocities that followed. However, the hastily conclusions reached by the governments, federal and state, has been questioned.

¹²⁸ Such accusations were put in doubt by both Indian Frontline and the Washington Post.

The police report supported the conclusion of the state government and claimed that the cause of the fire was arson and that it was a pre-planned attack. The Special Investigation team claimed that 120 litres of petrol was poured inside the train compartment and followed by Muslim militants throwing burning rags inside. However, these conclusions have been contested. Independent investigation of the incident has not been able to find evidence that the train was put on fire. Two years after the incident the Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav appointed a commission to look into the incident. The former Supreme Court justice U.C. Banerjee headed the commission. The investigation did not support the police reports on various points. For instance, Muslim militants allegedly kicked in the door, but according to the Banerjee Commission's preliminary report it was not possible to kick in the door from outside. Second, the militants supposedly poured gasoline on the floor, but the commission concluded that the fire could not have started from the floor because survivors who crawled out along the floors had burns on the upper parts of their bodies. Furthermore, the use of inflammable liquid was ruled out completely and according to the commission the probable cause of the fire were people cooking inside the train and not arson (Nussbaum 2007, 33-35).

The importance attached to defining Godhra as an attack is evident from events that took place during the investigations of the Banerjee Commission. An important piece of evidence, a canvas, was lost during the investigation and was thereafter replaced by a different canvas that was ripped in a manner that would have supported the police explanations (Nussbaum 2007, 34). Defining Godhra as an attack is necessary for promoting the view that Hindus are victims and Muslims aggressors.

The government of Gujarat has not acknowledged the conclusions of the Banerjee Commission and maintains that the train was torched by a Muslim mob (BBC 2005). Similarly, the BJP has not accepted the findings and has deemed them to be politically motivated (BBC 2005). Because of an already ongoing commission inquiry the High Court of Gujarat ruled the commission inquiry to be illegal as the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952 says that two different commissions cannot be appointed by the state and the centre. The state had appointed the Nanavati Panel to inquire into the Godhra and the post-Godhra violence, however the panel have not submitted their report.¹²⁹

¹²⁹ The Liberhan Commission inquiry to the destruction of the Babri Mosque in 1992 has not delivered their report despite that the commission originally was given a timeframe of three months. The Nanavati panel inquiry is also likely to be delayed, a new member of the panel was appointed April 8 2008.

The Banerjee Commission was deemed unlawful due to the presence of state appointed commission, not by the manner in which it reached its conclusions. In the absence of a report by the Nanavati panel, the Banerjee Commission is the only independent inquiry to the Godhra incident. The Gujarati police cannot be seen as impartial due to its complicit role in the enactment of the post-Godhra violence. It is also clear that it is in the interest of segments within the police, civil society actors and politicians to define Godhra as an attack. The Banerjee Commission excluded arson as the cause of the incident, but they had insufficient evidence to conclude how the fire started. Nonetheless, it is clear that the continued certainty with which activists and BJP politicians claim Godhra to be a terrorist attack lacks documentation and is politically motivated.

Emotional Revenge or Systematic Persecution?

In the explanatory phase it is crucial for the actors involved to justify their actions. An acknowledgment of the possibility that Godhra was an accident would mean recognition that the post-Godhra violence was targeting innocent people. Furthermore, accepting these conclusions would lead to questions about why and how Gujarat's government, VHP, Bajrang Dal and RSS could claim so ardently that they had been victims of a terrorist attack only few hours after the attack. This again raises questions about whether violence was an emotional, spontaneous and uncontrolled revenge or systematic persecution.

As argued above, the accusations of terrorism was instrumental in preparing a violent attack on the Muslim minorities and it contributed to excusing and defending retaliation. Violence against Muslims was perceived as just since it was initiated by Muslim extremists. Gujarat's government defined the riots as a natural and uncontrollable reactions to Godhra (Nussbaum 2007, 28). The reduction of the horrible events as a natural reaction is a clear portrayal of their sympathies. The events that follow can hardly be seen as a proportionate reaction nor can they be seen as a natural and uncontrollable reaction. As illustrated above available evidence points to the post-Godhra violence as systematic pogrom

enacted with precision and extreme brutality, by persons and organizations in the institutionalized riot system of the RSS family of organizations, members of the BJP government, the police and even members of the elite Indian Administrative Service (Brass 2005, 388).

Also the Indian Prime Minister emphasised the offence on the majority community. In a speech delivered April 12 2002, he also emphasised the importance of not to “ forget how the

tragedy of Gujarat started” (Varadarajan 2002, 25). However, this does not explain why the entire Muslim community in Gujarat are held accountable for the actions of a small group. In the same speech he also claimed that:

Wherever Muslims live, they don't like to live in co-existence with other, they don't like to mingle with other; and instead of propagating their ideas in a peaceful manner, they want to spread their faith by resorting to terror and threats. The world has become alert to this danger. (Former Prime Minister Vajpayee quoted in Varadarajan 2002, 25-26)

Therefore the entire community is dangerous and the reaction is justified by their violent nature and inability to adjust to others and also the constant threat of terrorism as where “there is a Muslim population in the world, the country lives under threat of militancy and terrorism” (Prime Minister Vajpayee quoted in Engineer 2003, 23). Terrorism and militancy is therefore seen as inherent in Islam.

The one-sided attack on the group has led observers to conclude that it could be defined as genocide. Mass killings and rapes took place on the grounds of religion and slogans to kill and slaughter Muslims, to not have mercy and to assert Hindu superiority (Nussbaum 2007, 44). The United Nations Convention on Genocide defines genocide as follows:

genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical or religious group, as such : (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measure intended to prevent birth within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (Nussbaum 2007, 45)

The above violations were committed, except forcibly transferring children from of the Muslim community to the Hindu to community. During the violent episodes women were frequently raped and children as well as adults were murdered. The ongoing economic boycott is additional proof of the long-term and deliberate marginalisation of Muslims (Nussbaum 2007, 45). But, despite overwhelming evidence that violence is organised and deliberately planned the police and official inquiries see the crowds as impersonal, uncontrollable, and emotional not rational (Hansen 2005, 127).

The authorities not only try to minimize claims of violence in general, but are also actively downplaying specific incidents. In the case of the attack on former Congress MP Ehsan Jafri where a mob comprised of many Sangh Parivar activists attacked his residence the official account was that Jafri was firing on the mob. When confronted with this incident Chief Minister Modi said in an interview on television that “What is happening is a chain of action and reaction. What I want is that there should be no action and no reaction” (Modi translation in Varadarajan 2002, 22). At the time there were overwhelming evidence that Jafri had done what he could to seek help from the police and the government and he was shooting in an attempt to disperse the mob Jafri fired against the crowds outside his house. Muslims had come to his home thinking they would be safe. Jafri was lynched and the house was burnt to the ground with a large Muslim crowd still inside the house (Varadarajan 2002, 22). Members of the mob broke in the house and stripped and raped his daughters who were burnt alive along with their father afterwards (Chenoy 2002, 6). Despite the horrible event Modi defended and justified these crimes with his action-reaction explanation.

Also there are overwhelming evidence of the complicity of civil society organisations such as the RSS, VHP and Barjang Dal. Still, the BJP both in Gujarat and nationally continues to have a close relationship with these organisations and is positive to their activities exemplified by the statement of its current Prime Minister candidate:

The RSS is a nationalist organization whose contribution to character-building of millions and towards inculcating in them the spirit of patriotism, idealism and selfless service of the motherland has been incomparable. (Advani 2007, 191-192)

Questionable activities of these actors were downplayed and defended. In Gujarat part of the government’s role in seeking to explain and downplay the conflict is relating to them restricting the information available on the subject. During the violence they banned direct reporting by privately owned television channels (Hansen 2005, 126). In the aftermath of what happened they have banned films, such as the ‘Final Solution,’ a documentary that is critical to the government and its ideology. It is clear that the violence was selective and not a frenzy as the government and their Parivar seek to portray them.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Personal interview with Dr. S. Mohammad Sajjid, Jamia Millia Islamia University (28.03.2007)

Rajasthan

Because Rajasthan has not experienced any major riots in its recent past, it follows that there is very little data on agents and actors preparing, enacting and explaining violence. However, the state's experiences in between 1989 and 1992 show that there are such actors in Rajasthan as well. There have also been some smaller incidents located in some districts of the state. To understand how agents contribute to increased conflict intensity, by preparing, enacting and explaining violence it is useful to draw on the experience Rajasthan has with violence, including pre-1992 violence and examples contemporary violent religious conflict.

Also in Rajasthan the police has been seen as incapable and unwilling to act on Hindu mobilisation, often tacitly supporting Hindu rioters (Mayaram 1993, 39). But, even though police partiality is evident in arrests, charges etc, they did a more efficient job in preventing large-scale rioting than in Gujarat. They frequently imposed curfews, for instance in a riot in 1989 where 1 person was killed, curfew was imposed for nine days. Also, curfews were enforced only few hours after the riots had begun (Mayaram 1993, 30-31)

The government was more effective in combating communal violence than Gujarat's government has been. The army was asked to intervene on many occasions, sometimes even the same day as the riots started (Mayaram 1993, 31). By utilising the army in conflicts the Rajasthani government display a willingness to prevent communal violence. Also, after the Godhra incident in 2002, the Rajasthani government was prepared to ask the army to intervene in case of riots (Wilkinson 2004). Even though the violence did not escalate to that scale there were reports about violence and looting occurring in several villages, and in Sarada, near Udaipur, Hindus were looting Muslim houses and there were open violent conflicts between Tribals and Muslims.¹³¹

Despite handling violent conflicts relatively well, compared to Gujarat, the authorities, especially the police have been seen as biased. In many cases the police have communal links and in the explaining and investigating incidents this bias was particularly evident.¹³² Like in Gujarat, an independent commission inquiry questioned the police claim that riots were unplanned and spontaneous (Tibrewal 1992). Furthermore, the police portray Muslims and Hindus as equally responsible and equally affected by violence, and the action of Hindus are

¹³¹ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

¹³² Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

most often portrayed as retaliatory and defensive (Mayaram 1993, 37). As in Gujarat the majority of the victims of communal riots are Muslims, but there were also incidents where Muslims took part in the violence. There were violent Muslim gangs that attempted to mobilise the community by distributing pamphlets with the message that Muslims should not be cowards but “that they must prepare themselves to retaliate strongly against Hindu violence as justice cannot be expected” (Mayaram 1993, 52,55). At least one retaliatory incident took place where a group of Muslims destroyed a temple and killed several Hindus (Mayaram 1993, 55). Still, communal violence has generally affected Muslims.

The state government, by and large, succeeded in establishing peaceful conditions post-Ayodhya. But some districts, especially in the tribal area south in Rajasthan, are experiencing an increase in violent communal conflicts.¹³³ In these areas the Bajrang Dal, VHP and Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad (VKP) have sought to mobilise Tribals. But attacks and intimidation is more frequently directed towards Christians than Muslims (Srivastava 2004).

There were three incidents of communal riots in 2000 in Rajasthan, and several incidents defined by police as communal tension and in 2001 there was a further increase, but the majority of incidents took place either in Bhilwara or Ajmer districts (Setalvad 2001b). In Jahazpur, Bhilwara there were various communal riots and a *dargah* (shrine) was destroyed, followed by economic and social boycott of Muslims. These strategies strikingly resemble what have been happening in various districts in Gujarat since the early 1990s. The presence of Sangh Parivar affiliated organisations is increasing, and especially the Bajrang Dal engage in violent offences. In August 2001 members of the Bajrang Dal were responsible for killing Muslims who refused to give monetary contributions to a Hindu religious festival (Setalvad 2001a). The police did not stop violence which went on for three days. Demands to register complaints against Bajrang Dal were followed and their actions went unpunished (Setalvad 2001a). The Bajrang Dal prepared and enacted violence, aided by police passivity.

There have been repeated attacks on Muslim properties. Two-three month prior to my visit in Rajasthan in 2007, 28-30 Muslim shops had been burnt to the ground.¹³⁴ As in Gujarat some riots have resulted in communally homogenous colonies in the state as Muslims in riot-prone

¹³³ Personal correspondence with Dr Avinash Kumar, Oxfam India (14.05.2008)

¹³⁴ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

areas often feel that they have to stay together in order to be safe.¹³⁵ Hindu nationalists have also used more subtle methods, such as the boycott of products manufactured by Muslims.¹³⁶ Conflicts of this kind continue to be restricted to smaller towns. Compared to Gujarat the police are able to control violence, but police action against rioters and actors who promote fear, hatred and violence have been inadequate in some areas of the state. But the government have prevented large-scale riots. The government has not promoted violence, nor have they passively allowed hard-line nationalist to carry out offensives. They have for instance banned various pamphlets containing objectionable content, and filed a case against the publishers of pamphlets that could potentially cause communal disturbances (Setalvad 2002). Therefore the Bajrang Dal and the VHP, who claim credit for the publications, are not allowed unrestricted freedom to spread anti-minority propaganda that encourages violence.

In Rajasthan, as Gujarat, some members of the police have been passive in combating the spread of communal ideologies and they have often been lenient towards perpetrators of anti-minority violence. Still, compared to Gujarat, all levels of government have been successful in preventing violence from escalating. When necessary the government has imposed curfew and requested army intervention. While there are actors who promote and enact violence these are generally not within the state institution which have prevented intensified communal conflict. The variation of conflict intensity in Gujarat and Rajasthan seem to be partly related to whether conflicts are state-wide or local. Also the role of the state seems to be decisive for the scope of violence. In the following section discusses incentives, and especially government incentives, for utilising violence as a form of political mobilisation.

Electoral Incentives for Violence

The above analysis of violence in Gujarat and Rajasthan clearly display that there are actors who deliberately provoke violent mobilisation, and violence involves preparation prior to the enactment, and explanation its aftermath. Despite having shown that riots and pogroms are intentional it is not evident what these intentions are. Paul Brass holds that violence plays an instrumental role to actors and that they profit from their actions (1996). These profits can be material, electoral or ideological (See Chapter 2). While material gains may be present at a local level, state-level violence involves massive cost for the entire society.¹³⁷ Since the focus of this thesis is to explain variation in state-level conflict intensity this section discusses

¹³⁵ Personal interview with Sharada Jain, Director of Sandhan (11.04.2007)

¹³⁶ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

¹³⁷ In Chapter 4 I discussed economic conflicts between rural Muslims and Hindus, and economic competition between urban 'lower' classes that reinforces conflicts. Such factors may effect local violence.

electoral motivations for violent mobilisation. The analysis draws on Steven I. Wilkinson framework (2004). The section discusses electoral incentives for preparing and enacting violence. I argue that electoral incentives partly explain within-state variation of conflict intensity, but is insufficient for explaining variation between Gujarat and Rajasthan.

The BJP in Gujarat had come to power in 1998 with an overwhelming electoral victory, winning 117 of 182 seats in the state assembly (Election Commission of India 1998a, 9-10). But, during their time in government their popularity had decreased. In 2000 they lost the two most important municipal corporations, of the six they previously had controlled. Furthermore, in the election of 25 district *Panchayats* the same year they lost almost all of them (Chenoy 2002, 6). Narendra Modi replaced Deshubhai Patel as CM of Gujarat late in 2001. In the bye elections, only four days prior to Godhra, Modi himself contested and won, but with reduced margin compared to previous polls and BJP lost the two other seats they had previously held (Chenoy 2002, 8). The government was perceived as corrupt and unable to govern, particularly in the light of the major earthquake that took place in 2001 (Engineer 2003, 18). With the reduced popularity of the BJP it was unlikely that they would win the upcoming elections in February-March 2003.¹³⁸

Given these trends “[t]he only trick up the sleeve of the BJP was the polarisation of Hindus and Muslims, and thus the consolidation of Hindutva forces” (Engineer 2003, 18). The fear of loosing the election may have contributed to government participation in preparing, enacting and explaining violence. Their role in the immediate preparation was important in transforming the conflict from local to a state-wide. But, their role in the pogrom was important in consolidating support for BJP. Communal violence secured that religious identity became the main source of political mobilisation. Seeking to benefit from increased religious polarisation the Modi cabinet announced election during the violence, almost a year before scheduled time (Chenoy 2002, 8). However, the election committee postponed elections until the rule of law could be re-established (Nussbaum 2007, 31).

Elections were scheduled to December 2002. Pictures of the burning train compartment frequently aired on television as part of BJP’s campaign. In line with the BJP tradition Modi also launched a *yatra*. The inappropriately named *gaurav yatra*, Journey of Pride, paid visits

¹³⁸ BJP had lost other states they had previously controlled such as Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Uttaranchal.

to the districts which had experienced the worst violence, playing on feeling of hate and fear (Kaur 2005, 23). The state stance on violence and its negligence and lack of empathy for minority groups was approved of by large sections of the population, and BJP won an overwhelming electoral victory (Kaur 2005, 24). BJP's popularity in the state reached an all time high as they won 127 of 182 assembly seats (Election Commission of India 1998b, 9-10). But, according to Raheel Dhattiwala this strategy would not necessarily have led to an electoral victory. If Modi wasn't such a good leader he could not have taken the Hindutva ideology as far and showed its official colour. Also, the opposition was very weak and people did not challenge communalism as half the people are communal.¹³⁹

Still, the events that took place in Gujarat therefore suggest that there is correlation between violence and electoral victory. However, according to Wilkinson violence takes place because an election is coming up, but in this case the relationship is not as straightforward. Elections were moved forward because the ruling party assumed that this would secure a victory. However, both the duration and the graveness are likely to be related to the probable electoral benefit for the ruling party. Also, violence was most intense in areas that were dominated by Congress, which seem to support that violence was "engineered with an eye on the forthcoming elections" (Yagnik and Sheth 2005). The ruling party knew they could reschedule elections and the Godhra incident provided a pretext for violent mobilisation.

There were some attempts at violent mobilisation against Muslims after the Godhra incident also in Rajasthan, but the state government prevented riots from escalating, and police effectively cracked down on violent behaviour. The deaths that did occur in Ajmer, Kishangarh and Gangapur were due to police action against rioters (Wilkinson 2004, 160). This affirms the theoretical expectations to the relationship between government party and violence as the ruling government in Rajasthan was the Congress party which relies on minority votes. While the Congress party in Rajasthan had an estimated 92 percent support rate among Muslim, the BJP in Gujarat had no support from the Muslim minority (Wilkinson 2004, 156). Still, elections were scheduled in 2003 and theoretically one would therefore expect stronger efforts on the part of the Sangh Parivar to mobilise violently. Violence remained restricted to the usual zones and there was no state-wide effort to mobilise.

¹³⁹ Personal interview with Raheel Dhattiwala, Times of India (17.04.2007)

While the ruling party's electoral victory may explain the occurrence of one particular riot it does not explain cross-time variation. In both states there had been both Congress and BJP governments since the early 1990s, and in both states the BJP does not appeal to the Muslim minority. Still, Gujarat has been consistently more violent than Rajasthan. During the early 1990s both states experienced violence, Gujarat in on a larger scale than Rajasthan. In 1993 the BJP won majority in Rajasthan after a period of violent riots, but under their government communal violence decreased. Also, elections were not scheduled for 1993 to begin with. Because of violence in Rajasthan, the federal Congress government had imposed President's Rule on the state, and re-elections were held after the situation had stabilised.¹⁴⁰ In 1998 Congress won and there are no records of an attempt to resort to violence by the ruling BJP.

To the contrary, Gujarat has had frequent and serious riots also during Congress governments. But apart from 2002 no Indian government has played such an active role in violence. According to Wilkinson three parties or more as well as government that rely on minority votes are likely to reduce the occurrence of violence because votes from the minority has a larger impact on the electoral outcome (2004, 6). In the early 1990s both Gujarat and Rajasthan had three dominant parties. Still, except for 2002 the period between 1989 and 1993 was the most violent in both states. Despite the high levels of political competition conflict intensity was high in this period.

There are few sources that systematically analyse causes of riots.¹⁴¹ However, according to one account there were 106 major communal riots between 1987 and 1991 in Gujarat, political rivalry during election triggered about 40 percent of these. Tensions during religious processions had led to 22 percent of the riots. The remaining riots were triggered by "personal ill-feelings, cricket matches, sudden quarrels, love affairs between Hindu girls and Muslim boys and vice versa , and so on" (Chenoy 2002, 4). However, none of these events explain the underlying cause of riots. They are prepared and executed by someone and with a motive, despite being portrayed as sudden, unintended and spontaneous. While electoral incentives may explain government complicity in 2002, they do not provide explain variation between Gujarat and Rajasthan. Nor do they offer explanations to the behaviour of the police or the mobs that executed the violence. It does not explain why anti-Muslim violence is a winning strategy for the BJP either. Also the explanation includes an underlying assumption

¹⁴⁰ Elections were due 1995 if the central government had not imposed President's Rule.

¹⁴¹ See Chapter 3

there are no limits to the length a political party will go in order to win an election. The following section argues that the ideology of these actors defines violence legitimate and that in violence is defended on ideological and moral grounds.

Judicial and Government Partiality – Ideology and Intensified Conflict

According to Ahmedabad journalist, Raheel Dhattiwala “communalism is ultimately what people believe in, their ideology.”¹⁴² This section argues that the actors involved in violence believe that their actions are justified. Furthermore reasons why violence mobilise voters are related to popular support for this form of mobilisation. Both voting and enactment of violence are actions perpetrated by rational individuals (Opp 1999). Judicial and government partiality are also expressions of increased conflict intensity, because this entails a violation of the rights of the minority community. The degrees to which anti-minority ideologies have infiltrated government institutions are measures of conflict intensity. Furthermore, the policies are illustrative of the ideology that is sought realised.

The first section discusses the judicial processes post-2002 in Gujarat. The second section compares degrees of conflict, defined as government bias, between the two states. I argue that variation in the ideologies of political actors, and mainstream society, explains variation in the form of political mobilisation in the two states.

Seeking Justice

The judicial system in Gujarat has been widely criticised. Harsh Mander, a former IAS (Indian Administrative Service) servant, now an activist has expressed that “the aftermath of the carnage has witnessed the most elaborate deliberate subversion of legal justice by the government in independent India” (Mander 2007, 851).The Supreme Court has expressed that it has little faith in Gujarat’s judiciary.¹⁴³

This failure started with the police’s initial unwillingness to register offences. Even when official complaints were filed the police did not register FIRs (First Information Report) Furthermore, whenever FIRs were made the police was often unwilling to investigate or only did so half-heartedly and the complaint most often did not result in charges against the offenders. Especially when prominent members of the Sangh Parivar were identified as playing key roles in the violence the police was reluctant to file complaints. BJP Members of

¹⁴² Personal interview (17.04.2007)

¹⁴³ Personal interview with Fr. Cedric Prakash, Head of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

the Legislative Assembly in both Ahmedabad and other localities were repeatedly reported to the police for their role in the violence. Where FIRs were taken out against BJP MLAs the investigators were frequently replaced and in the end no formal charges were placed against them (Setalvad 2002, 197-198; Sundar 2002, 86-87). One example is a man who witnessed his shop being looted reported the offenders to the police.¹⁴⁴ The police told him that he had to remove the name of influential BJP people, in order for them to investigate. Ignoring this advice he filed their name in the Complaint and sent a copy to both the Director General of Police and the National Commission on Human Rights. Despite these efforts his case was taken up summarily with other cases.¹⁴⁵ In fact the majority of the registered cases were taken up summarily by the justice system.¹⁴⁶

During the investigation officers who overlooked offences were rewarded. The officer, P.N. Barot was given the responsibility to investigate both the Ehsan Jafri case and the Naroda Patia incident. He concluded, as the Chief Minister had, that Jafri was killed due to him firing.¹⁴⁷ In Naroda Patia more than 100 people were burnt alive, girls and women after having been raped (Engineer 2003, 21).¹⁴⁸ The police were present as spectators and did not intervene. Barot concluded that the massacre started by Muslims attacking and killing Hindus and therefore caused the massacre (Chenoy 2002, 21). The officer did not approve of the FIRs raised against altogether 16 people, including a prominent Bajrang Dal activist. He accused his colleagues for falsely implicating individuals saying: “How could police have identified 5-6 people in a mob of a thousand?” (Chenoy 2002, 21)

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) recommended that cases should be transferred to the Central Bureau of Investigation due to the failures of the state investigation and the degree to which the police is influenced by “extraneous considerations or players” (Verma 2003, 270). The government of Gujarat rejected this critique saying that:

An investigation conducted by the State Police cannot be discredited, cannot be put into disrepute and its fairness questioned merely on the basis of hostile propaganda.(Verma 2003, 270)

¹⁴⁴ He had been warned by his neighbour in advance. However, from the bushes behind the shop he witnessed the same neighbour take part in the violence.

¹⁴⁵ Personal interview with Iftikhar Ahmad, Aman Biradari (28.03.2007)

¹⁴⁶ Personal interview with Iftikhar Ahmad, Aman Biradari (28.03.2007)

¹⁴⁷ See previous section of this chapter. *Enactment of Violence*. Police and State Government

¹⁴⁸ Unofficial sources hold that more than 200 people were killed (Engineer 2003, 21).

There are numerous examples where judicial branch of the government failed to provide justice for Muslim victims of communal violence. One of the most notorious cases was the 'Best Bakery' case where a Muslim family witnessed the incineration of their business and the killing of fourteen people. They identified twenty-one responsible for the offence. However, during the trial forty-four of seventy-one witnesses changed testimonies and the accused were acquitted. The public prosecutor had not secured that witness-protection and did not investigate possible witness tampering (Nussbaum 2007, 37). One of the witnesses, Zahira Sheikh, claimed to the NHRC that she had been threatened by powerful politicians to change her story. The NHRC motioned the state to appeal against the acquittals, but the Gujarat High Court rejected the appeal. The Supreme Court, however, accepted Sheikh's petition for a change of venue, and the case reopened in Mumbai where of nine of the accused were convicted.¹⁴⁹

This case is not unique in that respect. There is an ongoing campaign to reopen cases, both that have reached the court system and cases that were closed after investigation. In 2004 the Supreme Court ordered 2108 cases that had been closed by the Gujarat police to be reopened (BBC 2006). This has also led to the investigation of police officers and their role in the violence. But still, few cases have gone to court and very few have led to a sentence (BBC 2006). The Government and the police have utilised more recourses to find those responsible for Godhra, than on the post-Godhra offences. Hindus and Muslims have been tried under different laws, Muslims under POTA (Prevention of terrorism act) and Hindus are tried under Indian Penal Code (Parekh 2002, 2). The utilisation of these laws exclusively towards Muslim is consistent with the view propagated by Hindutva organisation that terrorism is a Muslim phenomenon.

The crucial role played by non-state actors, NGOs, the Supreme Court and NHRC, for achieving justice is illustrative of the pro-Hindu bias in the state police and judiciary. Muslims are systematically discriminated against and are subjects to different laws. These are long-term injustices on the Muslim community and cannot be related to electoral incentives. The failure by the government, judiciary and the police to take a stance against Hindu-Muslim violence strengthens the perception that post-Godhra violence was perceived

¹⁴⁹ During the trial Zahira Sheikh once again changed her story, claiming that human rights activist Teesta Setalvad had pressured her to appeal to the National Human Rights Commission. CM Narendra Modi then went on to call for an investigation of NGO's. However, Sheikh was later accused and sentenced by the Supreme Court for perjury.

as legitimate. The next section compares Rajasthan and Gujarat in terms of government policies and pro-Hindu bias.

Government Partiality – Cross-State Comparison

The Indian constitution clearly states that the country is secular and that citizens are equal irrespective of religion (Verma 2003, 293). Furthermore, it is one of the world's most liberal constitutions when it comes to freedom of religion, and minority religions are especially protected. Despite a comprehensive legal framework to protect the rights of religious minorities, there is a general discontent with the implementation of this framework (Jahangir 2008, 2). Police, judiciary and governments frequently undermine these rights. According to Sumitra Chopra, the President of AIDWA, the women's wing of the Communist party, in Rajasthan, communal parties spread their ideology not only for the purpose of gaining seats, but also because they believe in it.¹⁵⁰ Whenever government consist of communal parties one would therefore expect conflict to intensify as they are likely to marginalise the 'other' community. Therefore communal policies increase the level of conflict intensity. The following section compares Rajasthan and Gujarat in terms of communal policies. Policies that marginalise minorities are likely to covariate with communal violence and this section discusses ideological motives and incentives behind such anti-minority policies and violence.

According to Shail Mayaram the main reason why Rajasthan was experiencing intensified conflict between 1989-92 was that the ideology and the organisation of the dominant party, BJP, and their Sangh Parivar allies combined with a biased police force and a regional print media contributed to escalating violence (Mayaram 1993). VHP and BJP leaders actively promoted anti-minority positions, including the slogan "Muslims must get up and leave for there are only two places for a Muslim, Pakistan and the gabrietan (graveyard)" (Mayaram 1993, 23). However, because Rajasthan was generally peaceful post-Ayodhya there has been little attention on communal ideologies in the state.

To a certain degree that has also been the case for Gujarat. Because of explanations of 'riots' as spontaneous unplanned events, there have been few efforts to explore causes prior to 2002. While elites have been seen as rational there has been little focus on the motives of those who play the most important role in engaging in the actual violence, and these have in many cases been seen as irrational and manipulated by elites (Brass 2005; Engineer 1984). The Sangh

¹⁵⁰ Personal interview (12.04.2007)

Parivar has repeatedly labelled India as pseudo-secular, claiming that the state systematically favour minorities. Instead they have openly promoted that Hinduism, widely defined as Indian religious, should enjoy superiority. The majority does need others, but they are reduced to second-class citizens within this ideology.¹⁵¹ The idea of a Hindu nation, propagated by BJP, VHP and RSS is not simply an idea used for electoral purposes, but something believed in by these actors as well of large sections of the mainstream society.¹⁵² In Gujarat the discrimination of minorities is now widely accepted and the dominant position of this ideology has developed over time.¹⁵³

Muslim representation in the legislative assembly in Gujarat was also very low during the late 1990s, and it has never been more than four percent even under Congress rule (Parekh 2002, 7). None of the members of the Modi cabinet were Muslims. The same trend is evident also in other government branches. Muslim presence in the police force and civil service in Gujarat has always been small (Parekh 2002, 7). And the Muslims who are a part of the police force have been giving marginal and most often administrative positions since BJP took office in 1998 (Setalvad 2002, 200). Only eight out of the 141 Indian Police Service officers are Muslims and they have been kept from influential posts (Setalvad 2002, 200).

Prior to the 2002 pogrom the BJP government had received attention for their anti-minority position. In 2001 Gujarat experienced a devastating earthquake and in its aftermath government bias was evident in the government relief operations. In rebuilding villages Muslims, Dalits and OBCs were territorially separated from other segments of the villages (Yagnik 2002, 5). Due to the decreasing support for the Chief Minister in the handling of the disaster, he was replaced by a former RSS *pracharak*,¹⁵⁴ Narendra Modi in 2001. With the instalment of Modi observers anticipated an increase in communal violence. He was the first RSS leader to become Chief Minister and was known for his hard-line position and Teesta Setalvad accurately predicted that “[g]iven the fact that he is a hardliner, the communal situation under his dispensation is expected by political observers to get considerably worse” (Setalvad 2001a). The minister of state for Home, Zardari, was also a VHP activist and the governor of Gujarat S.S. Bhandari was a former RSS leader.¹⁵⁵ The role and function of the

¹⁵¹ Personal interview with Fr. Cedric Prakash, Head of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

¹⁵² Personal interview with Raheel Dhattiwala, Times of India (17.04.2007)

¹⁵³ Personal interview with Fr. Cedric Prakash, Head of PRASHANT (18.04.2007)

¹⁵⁴ A Pracharak is a leader of a local group of RSS volunteers.

¹⁵⁵ The Minister of Home is in charge of police and the maintenance of law and order.

government is influenced by the most extremist elements of the Sangh Parivar, such as VHP and Bajrang Dal (Chenoy 2002, 23).

These organisations, which politicians proudly present themselves as former members of, were leading the violence in 2002. In many cases prominent members of these organisation have sought to defend the perpetrators of violence normatively, claiming their actions to be unfortunate but necessary. During the riots a local VHP leader, Ashok Singhal, claimed that rioting was “a matter of pride” and an appropriate “reply to what has been perpetrated on the Hindus the last thousand years. Gujarat has shown the way, and our journey of victory will begin and end on the same path.” (Ashok Singhal quoted in Nussbaum 2007, 27).

The burning and killings of Muslims by Hindu crowds were, in other words, nothing but expressions of the inert sovereignty of the Hindu community-nation, an entirely natural and inevitable violence that could not – and should not – be controlled by the state. (Hansen 2005, 126)

Similarly the chairman of the Gujarat unit of VHP, Keshavram Kashiram Shastri justified the communal violence by saying “it had to be done” he also says that the crowds consisted of “well-bred Hindu boys” and went on to defend the VHP saying that not all of them were members (Shastri quoted in Chenoy 2002, 17). The systematic killing and raping of Muslims and destruction of their homes and businesses are according to these VHP officials nothing but justice enforcement and the redemption of Hindu pride at the hands of well-bred boys. The BJP government enabled them not only to perform these actions, but also to celebrate their success.

To the BJP, the control of state power meant the capacity to prevent the assertion of state’s monopoly of legitimate violence, to suspend the law and legal procedures, to transfer what were seen as overly diligent police officer, and to openly celebrate that the Hindu community had taken its revenge, and that the ‘natural justice’ had been exercised. (Hansen 2005, 127)

One of the most credible charges of government bias comes from the former Director-General of the Police, R.B. Sreekumar (Nussbaum 2007, 27). He headed the intelligence since April 9 2002 and according to him the government did not facilitate his job. Among other things he experienced pressure from political leaders not to register riot offences (Nussbaum 2007, 27). When Shreekumar confronted Modi, suggesting that the government should take strong actions against Hindu leaders involved in the violence and restore Muslim confidence in the state government, he was told that such action was against government

policy (Nussbaum 2007, 27-28). Furthermore, Shreekumar was told not to concentrate on the Parivar, but instead to focus on Muslim militants. He was told that this was the policy and that anyone who were to disturb the coming elections were to be eliminated (Nussbaum 2007, 28). Although this support those anti-Muslim agendas are important in the election strategy of communal parties it also display that it is part of a larger political agenda.

In the aftermath of the violence the government of Gujarat did not set up a single relief camp (Varadarajan 2002, 309). In contrast, after the earthquake a year prior to the pogrom the government had actively provided relief for people. Also, while they were reluctant to provide relief for displaced Muslims they were in many cases “very quick to build roads, temples, and Hindu business establishments over the ruins of Muslim homes” (Nussbaum 2007, 31). Where Muslims were forced to establish themselves in colonies on vacant land the government did not provide legal status, Non-Agricultural certificates, to these settlements. The status of the areas is that they are illegally occupied for residential purpose and that the colonies can be destroyed in favour of agriculture.¹⁵⁶

Although they had also favoured Hindus to Muslims after the 2001 earthquake, their position was more explicit in the post-Godhra violence. The government proposal to compensate the victims of the post-Godhra riots half of the Godhra victims was not reversed until families who where affected by Godhra agreed to equal compensation (Chenoy 2002, 29). Another example of unequal compensation of Hindus and Muslim was related to the destruction of 46 garages during the pogrom. While the Muslims received no form of compensation Hindus were given new shops by the Gujarati state.¹⁵⁷ Previously Muslims dominated the auto-repair market, but Hindus have now an increased their share of the business. These are examples of how government policies explicitly value Hindus more than Muslims.

Both the violence and its aftermath can therefore be seen as an attack on secularism, and a clear demonstration of a societal hierarchy of people according to their religious beliefs. During the violent riots governmental institutions set out to protect secularism and equality were under attack, among others the Minority Development Board in Gujarat (Parekh 2002, 2). The violence is therefore also an attack on the values that such institutions represent.

¹⁵⁶ Personal interview with Iftikhar Ahmad, Aman Biradari (28.03 and 02.04.2007)

¹⁵⁷ Personal interview with Hanif Lakdawala, Vice President of PUHR (20.04.2007)

The victims of violence often express their rage at being treated like ‘second class citizens’ – deprived of protection, fundamental rights and basic human dignity. Perhaps, realisation of the victim’s secondary status is what the perpetrators aim at, since the sentiment of ‘teach them a lesson’ often accompanies the actual violence. (Kaur 2005, 20)

The long-lasting assault on religious freedom, and the equal value of individual citizens and the equality of religions in the Indian constitution continues to be under strain in Gujarat (Sud 2007, 1-2). According to activist, Sheba George, constant discrimination has the strongest and longest impact. It creates backwardness among discriminated groups and is the most efficient way to create secondary citizenship for Muslims.¹⁵⁸ Also in the aftermath of violence the state is clearly supportive of a militant Hindutva ideology that is incompatible with the Constitution (Sud 2007, 3). According to activist and academic Sharada Jain the events that happened was a power demonstration in order to make Muslims obey as secondary citizens.¹⁵⁹ Even if Muslims are poor they want to impose total alienation.¹⁶⁰

Several of their members of the BJP have expressed satisfaction of having created a Hindu Rashtra in Gujarat. The general secretary of the national VHP claimed that Gujarat was an experiment and that “[w]e will make a laboratory of the whole country.” Furthermore, he expressed that “Gujarat has become the graveyard of secular ideology.” (Praveen Togadia quoted in Nussbaum 2007, 27)

Although Gujarat has seen the highest number of riots in India in 2004, these were effectively controlled by the police (Engineer 2006, 147). The ideology has been manifest through other channels. According to both researchers and activists the ideology of Hindutva has penetrated all levels of government.¹⁶¹ Fr. Cedric Prakash, a Jesuit priest and a human rights activists with PRASHANT, presented examples from a test formulated by the Gujarat Public Service. In this examination, for Ayurvedic doctors, some of the questions contained clear communal content. One of the questions was formulated as follows: “Which date is observed as ‘black day’ by minorities, but as ‘victory day’ by the Sangh Parivar?” The test was a multiple choice test where the correct answer was December 6, the day Sangh Parivar activists successfully destroyed the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya (Gujarat Public Service Exam 2007). The question itself insinuate government pride in an episode where the authorities failed to fulfil its

¹⁵⁸ Personal interview with Sheba George, Sahrwaru (19.04.2007)

¹⁵⁹ Personal interview (11.04.2007)

¹⁶⁰ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India (10.04 and 13.04.2007)

¹⁶¹ Personal interviews, Kavita Srivastava PUCL (12.04.2007) and Shabnam Hashmi, Anhad (12.04.2007)

responsibility to protect historical, religious and cultural sites.¹⁶² Such questions express a clear religious and political bias and imply that support for the ideology of Hindutva is a precondition for being accepted in Gujarat Public Service Commission

According to Sabir Khan of Action Aid India the secular space is narrowing also in Rajasthan. As a secular Muslim he describes the feeling as he is living in a sandwich, squeezed by Muslim fundamentalist at one side and Hindu nationalist on the other.¹⁶³ Shabnam Hashmi, an atheist with a Muslim name, confirms this feeling of pressure. The mindset is becoming communal, even supposedly secular parties like Congress are not contesting the development.¹⁶⁴ However, the Gujarat leadership is extremist and there are closer links between the RSS and other hard-core communalist organisation and the BJP party in the state than in Rajasthan.¹⁶⁵ However, there are some hard-line actors within Rajasthan's government as well. For instance, one minister tried to hold an anti-Christian rally, but the Chief Minister, a moderate, stopped the rally.¹⁶⁶ Although sections of the police are biased upper officials in Rajasthan are not as communal.¹⁶⁷ But, according, to Kavita Srivastava the Sangh Parivar has learnt how to communalize bureaucracy, police, judiciary and universities and these strategies are currently employed in Rajasthan.¹⁶⁸

Rajasthani authorities have failed the Muslim minorities on various occasions. One example of violation was when Muslim meat shops were forced to close in a town in Rajasthan in 2004. With no prior notice, police and municipal administration along with prominent Bajrang Dal and BJP cadres closed the shops claiming that the slaughter houses did not possess licences, which they did in fact have. The closing of the shops took place just before the Muslim festival Eid and led to unemployment and deteriorating conditions for the affected (Srivastava 2004).

Events like these are attacks on India's secular and egalitarian and tolerant constitution. They are expressions of perceived Hindu superiority and intolerance. But, the degree to which the

¹⁶² Another question, "Who has said that Christians have the right to convert others?" included a choice of answers between the Prakash himself, along with the Pope, the United Progressive Alliance and Sonia Gandhi.

¹⁶³ Personal interview, referred to himself as a secular Muslim as he has a Muslim background and name.

¹⁶⁴ Personal interview with Shabnam Hashmi, Executive Secretary of Anhad (18.04.2007)

¹⁶⁵ Personal interviews with Achyut Yagnik Coordinator of SETU (17.04.2007), Raheel Dhattiwala, Times of India (17.04.2007) and Mahadev Vidrohi, head of ABICHRAM (16.04.2007)

¹⁶⁶ Personal interview with Sawaii Singh, Jan Sangharsh Samiti (09.04.2007)

¹⁶⁷ Personal interview with Sabir Khan, Action Aid India, (10.04. and 13.04.2007)

¹⁶⁸ Personal interview with Kavita Srivastava , PUCL (12.04.2007)

institutions are infiltrated varies between the states. Hard-line ideologies are evident at all levels of the Gujarati states, while in Rajasthan the leadership seem to be more moderate. Also, the liberal wing of the BJP seems to be stronger in Rajasthan than the RSS affiliated wing. In that case conflict intensity, either through judicial and government partiality or violence, may escalate in the future in Rajasthan. In Gujarat, the government has utilised policies to fulfil their agenda. Despite not having major riots post-2002 the religious level of conflicts remain high.

These events are taking place independent of elections. Systematic discrimination of Muslims and other minorities through the judiciary and through government policies lead to the degrading of these to minorities. A goal that is compatible with Hindutva ideology. The justification of violence during and after violence by government, police and judiciary further degrades Muslims to second-rate citizens and as a community where the (alleged) actions of some members of the community justify the attack on the entire group. Taking cases up summarily further reinforces the perception that actions are enacted by communities, not individuals, a praxis that does not compatible with the secular democratic constitution of India.

Summary

The chapter compared the cases, Gujarat and Rajasthan in terms intensified conflict and actors involved in creating such conflicts. By utilising Paul Brass' classification of phases, preparation, enactment and explanation, of communal violence I have shown that there are such actors in both states. But the role of state authorities and the constraints to violent mobilisation partly explain the frequency and scope of Hindu-Muslim violence. In both states there have been actors involved in long-term preparations of violent political mobilisation. These preparations involve the promotion of a hard-line ideology that seeks to create a Hindu nation and accept violence as a legitimate means of realising this objective. Muslims are depicted as enemies and Hindus are told to carry arms and be ready to defend themselves.

Immediate preparations, enactment and explanatory phases of violence are explored through the analysis of *one* particular incident of communal violence, the 2002 pogrom. I argue that government, police and large sections of the civil society were complicit in the violence. Both the government and prominent actors within the Sangh Parivar contributed to preparing violence by creating state-wide tensions and mobilising people to enact violence, playing on the horrible event that took place in Godhra and implicating terrorism and Pakistan. Neither

the government nor the police took measures to prevent riots, and thereby did not constrain mass violence. In various cases politicians from the ruling party and police took part in anti-Muslim violence. The explanatory phase started while the violence was still going on. National and state governments, VHP and BJP leaders emphasised that Godhra triggered the violence, and that what happened was a natural and spontaneous reaction.

The Sangh Parivar has not as much influence in Rajasthan as in Gujarat. They have supporters within the police and the government, but generally they are more moderate in Rajasthan. While there have been incidents of violent mobilisation these have effectively been prevented from becoming large-scale riots and pogroms by utilising tools such as curfews and on occasion also utilising the army for intervention. Engaging in violent activities therefore entails major risks.

After having established that violence is intentional and involves active participation the discussion related to the purpose of these activities were further discussed. The events support Wilkinson's claim that escalating violence is related to electoral ambitions of the state government. However, electoral incentives provide more to the understanding of within-state variation than between-state variation as the approach does not explain absence of state-wide violence in Rajasthan. State government support for violence relates to expected electoral gains in Gujarat. But while electoral incentives partly explain the role of the state it fails to explain why this is efficient. Also the continuing violation against Muslims through police, judiciary and government bias must be explored within a wider framework.

A hard-line Hindutva ideology defines people not as individuals, but as communities through the context of the nation. Legitimate members of that nation are the majority community while 'foreign' minorities are reduced to secondary citizens and in some cases threatening enemies that need to be put in place. Violence, conventional policies and judiciary provide institutions that can realise ideological objectives and as rational actors they choose to employ the most effective action that involved the least amount of cost. After having been re-elected the Gujarat government have prevented riots from escalating, but they have utilised other means of minority suppression. There is also a tendency to a slight increase in the utilisation of such methods in Rajasthan, but the state leadership remains moderate.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

From the late 1980s there has been an upsurge in religious conflict in India, both in conventional form with the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party and through an increase in communal violence. The secular constitution of India and the freedom it ensures for religious minorities has been under attack. However, conflicts have primarily played out on state level and the degree of conflict has varied between states. In order to understand variations in conflict intensity I have carried out a case-sensitive comparison utilising the Most Similar Systems design. The study compared Rajasthan, which has moderate levels of Hindu-Muslim conflict, to Gujarat which is characterised by intense religious conflict. Since the relationship between conventional Hindu-Muslim conflict, party-competition and unconventional mobilisation on this cleavage has received little attention and the study is therefore explorative.

The analysis was therefore twofold, where the first part draw on theories that explains degree of polarisation related to cleavages. The degree to which cleavages crosscut or overlap religious cleavages influence the degree of Hindu-Muslim polarisation in a state. However, the study also sought to include a constructivist approach to ethnic identities, whereby identities and cleavages are subject to change due to historical events and structural developments as well as the role of actors. While constructed identities and political mobilisation related to these identities, cleavages, can explain polarisation on an issue it does not account for when and where conflicts leads to unconventional forms of mobilisation.

In the second part of the analysis I employed theories related to the utilisation of unconventional political mobilisation. By employing Paul Brass' separation between preparatory, enactment and explanatory phases to explore the 2002 riot in Gujarat I have explored the dynamics of violent mobilisation and actors involved. This framework was also utilised in Rajasthan. Having established that there are actors involved in mobilisation violence in both states, I went on to discuss incentives for violent mobilisation. Electoral incentives can partly explain variation in the role of the government in riots and pogroms. However, this has limited value for explaining why individuals from all sections of the society took part in violence and an overwhelming majority supported the party that blatantly condoned violence. In seeking to explain why actors engage in violence and/or support parties that do so I have utilised rational choice theory. This can further explain persistent high levels of conflict through government and judicial bias. The mode of mobilisation and

the degree of conflict is motivated by norms and values defined within the ideology of Hindutva.

Empirical Findings

Violent conflict has often been isolated from conventional politics and previous studies of Hindu-Muslim conflict have in many cases been restricted to towns and cities characterised by endemic violence. State-wide conflict is evident in state politics as well as state-wide violence in Gujarat 2002, and by frequent local violent riots in towns and cities throughout the state. This study provides a systematic comparison of conflict intensity across time and between cases. Through thick descriptions and a detailed analysis of mechanism and actors involved in producing conflicts the analysis seek to contribute to the study of Hindu-Muslim conflicts. Furthermore, by describing state-level conflict and variation in degrees of conflict the study approaches communalism from a new perspective.

In Gujarat the religious cleavage dominates the political landscape. Hindus have become increasingly homogenous and identities that potentially crosscut religious identity, such as caste and tribe, are no longer a source of political mobilisation in state-level politics. Furthermore, socio-economic and regional interests that could bridge members of the Hindu and the Muslim communities, and divide the majority community are not manifest. Due to linguistic mobilisation Gujarati identity became increasingly homogenous and because the language-based movement was successful regional mobilisation is no longer an issue in within-state politics. In the case of socio-economic mobilisation economical marginalisation of both 'lower' caste Hindus and urban Muslims has increased polarisation as the minority community is seen as a competitors on an insecure labour market. In rural Gujarat there are areas where Muslims are more prosperous which is likely to have added fuel to the conflict as economic and religious cleavages overlap. While urban-rural cleavages could potentially join Hindus and Muslims that is not the case in Gujarat. The degree of urbanisation and the decreasing distinctions of urban and rural areas, partly due to the role of the Patidar communities, have reduced the salience of urban-rural conflicts. The Patidar/Patel community took part in the rise of Hindutva in Gujarat. They were economically and socially powerful, but had been excluded from political power in the Congress party. The role of actors such as the Patidars played an important role in homogenising the Hindu community. The strong presence of Sangh Parivar organisation contributed to the decreasing the impact of caste and especially tribal cleavages. This organisation also promoted a perception of Muslim as an 'other' and an enemy within.

While the degree of polarisation between religious communities is a central in religious conflict it does not explain the utilisation of violent forms of mobilisation. However, hard-line Sangh Parivar actors legitimated anti-Muslim violence, boycotts and other forms of unconventional mobilisation throughout the 1990s. Their activities have been uncontested by politicians and authorities in the state, and positions in state institutions have systematically been filled by people sympathetic to these views. The pro-Hindu bias of authorities became evident during the 2002 riots and its aftermath. The government and the police played complicit roles in the preparation and the enactment of the violence. In most cases they were complicit by passivity, but there are also cases where they actively engaged as well. In the aftermath they explained violence as spontaneous and uncontrollable, but violence was also defended as a legitimate reaction to Muslim behaviour. It is evident that violence were utilised for electoral purposes as the government sought to reschedule election while it was taking place. There have been various smaller riots after 2002, but these have been prevented from becoming large-scale riots. However, the violation of Muslims has continued in the aftermath through judicial bias, police failure to investigate offences and anti-minorities policies. This clearly illustrate that the realisation of Hindutva ideology is an incentive for political mobilisation. That further explains why people from all sections of the society, other than political elites, took part in violence and supported a party which condoned and defended a Hindu-Muslim pogrom.

In Rajasthan conflict intensity has been moderate and has mainly been directed through conventional political mobilisation. Apart from some districts with intensified conflict the state has been peaceful. Unlike Gujarat politics in Rajasthan is multi-dimensional. Urban-rural cleavages as well as regional identities are important in Rajasthani politics. These are cleavages that crosscut the religious cleavage and thereby bridge Hindus and Muslim, and prevent Hindus from mobilising as a block. Caste also constitutes an important source of political mobilisation, and the category creates intra-Hindu divisions. There are actors who promote Hindu unity in Rajasthan as in Gujarat, but they have not been able to mend intra-Hindu cleavages. BJP in Rajasthan has co-opted to the diverse nature of Rajasthan and frequently play on categories, such as caste, to mobilise voters.

In post-Ayodhya Rajasthan there have been no major riots. There have been minor incidents and it is clear that there exist actors who promote the use of violence and seek to legitimise

violent mobilisation. There are districts where violence is frequent, particularly in the tribal belt in southern Rajasthan. Sangh Parivar actors such as the Vishva Hindu Parishad has employed resources among Tribals and the increased degree of communal conflict in these areas imply that the presence of such actors increase conflict intensity. In Rajasthan there are examples of police who have failed to protect minorities, but biased police and other authorities is not as present at higher levels in state institutions. Whenever events that potentially would have led to violent mobilisation the Government has rapidly imposed curfew and put the police and central army forces on alert in order to prevent violent mobilisation. Actors involved in these kinds of mobilisation, both preparation and enactment of violence, have met consequences for these activities. However, several of my informants expressed worry over an increasing communalisation in Rajasthan, through textbooks, and the increased presence of the Sangh Parivar. Still, intense Hindu-Muslim conflicts remain localised and at the state level conflict is moderate. The empirical findings of the empirical analysis can be summarised as follows:

- 1) Structural developments and deliberate actors can mend intra-Hindu cleavages and construct a more homogenous Hindu identity. A homogenous Hindu majority increase the degree of polarisation on the Hindu-Muslim cleavage, while intra-Hindu cleavages decrease the Hindu-Muslim divide.
- 2) Actors increase conflict intensity through the promotion of an ideology that supports the use of violence and through the direct preparation, enactment or explanation of communal violence. Violence happens more frequently where the Sangh Parivar has a strong foothold.
- 3) The degree to which police and government prevent or condones violent mobilisation has a stronger impact on the gravity and the duration of violent mobilisation than the role of actors within the civil society.
- 4) Government incentives for complicity in violence are partly related to electoral incentives.
- 5) Furthermore support for and participation in and moral defence of violence is also related to ideological objectives. Similarly police, judicial and policy bias is rooted in ideological conviction.

However, there is no single cause and consequence relationship. Violence increases the Hindu-Muslim divide and animosity between groups and thereby increases the probability of future mobilisation. But the example of Rajasthan illustrate that this does not necessarily follow a trajectory of violence and that the state can prevent large-scale riots.

Theoretical Implications

The analysis of religious conflict intensity in Gujarat and Rajasthan shows that cleavage theory can be utilised in the Indian context. The exploration confirms that crosscutting cleavages decrease polarisation along one dimension and is conducive to stability. One-dimensional politics related to ethnic cleavages, on the other hand, increase polarisation. Ethnic identity can be multi-layered related to caste, region and religion. Religion is the only of these cleavages that can produce a clear minority and majority in Gujarat and Rajasthan, and therefore political mobilisation related to caste and region is more conducive to moderate state-level conflicts. Regional conflicts can also bridge the Hindu-Muslim divide, as can urban-rural conflicts.

Ethnic identities and cleavages are not stable. Structural changes can transform political identities and cleavage structures. This is widely explored within cleavage theory. Rokkan and Lipset explains political mobilisation with reference to historical events and developments (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). However this perspective can benefit from including an actor-oriented approach to the study of religious cleavages. Actors and ideology promoted by these actors can change the content and the boundaries of an ethnic category (Fearon and Laitin 2000). But, exploring the presence and activities of actors who seek to shape the content of an ethnic category alone is unsatisfactory because the degree to which such activities are successful varies between different contexts, as the cases Rajasthan and Gujarat exemplifies. By exploring these activities within the framework of other sources of political mobilisation, cleavages, the successes and failures of such movements can more easily be understood. In the case of Hindu-Muslim conflict, high levels of for instance caste conflict diminish the probability of successful construction of a perceived Hindu homogeneity.

High levels of Hindu-Muslim polarisation are naturally related to conflict intensity, but it does not account for the utilisation of violent means of political mobilisation. A necessary condition for intensified conflict through the utilisation of unconventional mobilisation is that these forms of mobilisation are accepted by large segments of the population. This acceptance can also be influenced by the role of actors and their promotion of ideology that favours these means of mobilisation (Fearon and Laitin 2000). However, the internalisation of the ideology is likely to be related to the degree of polarisation, and the amount of freedom these actors are given to promote their views.

Through the utilisation of Paul Brass' classification of riots I have shown that Hindu-Muslim violence is deliberate and involves preparation, enactment and explanations (Brass 1997). But, these phases are not separate in long-term violence as explanations and justification during violence can activate more violence. Explanation and preparation can therefore take place simultaneously.

The presence of actors who are willing to mobilise violently does not alone account for variation in the scale and the scope of the conflict. The complicit role of actors within the state and their unwillingness to prevent violence has the strongest impact on the scope and duration of violence. The analysis supports Wilkinson's view that high levels of violence take place when the state government is not determined to prevent riots. The analysis also supports that their choice not to do so is related to electoral incentives. But, electoral incentives have more value in explaining within-case variation than between cases. The reason why Gujarat experienced violence at such a level as it did in 2002 is because the government expected to benefit from the conflict. However, despite periods of violent mobilisation where the government did not rely on minority votes large-scale violence has been prevented in Rajasthan through arrests, curfews, police and army intervention.

Still, more resources have been utilised to prevent violence in the aftermath of 2002. But, the conflict levels are high as small-scale violence continues to take place. The government, judiciary and the police have shown a clear bias. The violation of minority rights is also an expression of conflict intensity and cannot be accounted for by electoral incentives alone. Furthermore, it does not account for why the policies and performance wins popular support. The analysis support that a wide interpretation of rational action can explain the behaviour of masses and elites with reference to ideology, norms and values can explain these aspects of conflict intensity (Opp 1999). Systematic discrimination and the reduction of Muslims to second-rate citizens do confirm with the ideal Hindu Rashtra within a hard-line interpretation of Hindutva ideology and violence is accepted as a means of creating this nation. The actions of authorities, violent mobs and voters are rational within this perspective. Furthermore, variation in the ideological positions in Gujarat and Rajasthan can explain the variation in the behaviour of elites and the mainstream society.

Conventional and unconventional forms of political mobilisation are therefore interrelated. Perceived Hindu homogeneity due to the absence of cleavages that crosscut Hindu identity makes the Hindu majority more susceptible to the promotion of a hard-line Hindu national ideology. Similarly economic cleavages that overlap with religious division reinforce the Hindu-Muslim divide which may lead to a greater acceptance of hard-line ideology. Exploring violent conflict in the context of political polarisation reveals conditions that favour the development of violent conflict.

8. Postscript. Terror in Jaipur

May 15 2008 Rajasthan experienced a terror attack that killed more than 80 people. These events provided a chilling reminder to the train coach fire in Godhra, Gujarat. The terror targeted Hanuman temples Rajasthan The State Government feared that the blasts would spark communal mobilisation (Times of India 2008c). Given the similarities between these events and Godhra 2002 what happened provides test some of the conclusions of this thesis. Elections are due next year and the events can highlight the degree to which electoral incentives contributes to government support or failure to prevent violent mobilisation. Contrary to what would be predicted in terms of electoral incentives, the state took precautionary measures and imposed curfew in 15 areas of the city and had acquired army assistance in case of communal violence (Times of India 2008b). The Chief Minister of Rajasthan also expressed that “Rajasthan cannot be allowed – and would not – go the Gujarat way” (Times of India 2008c). The behaviour of the government supports the argument of this thesis, that the success of Rajasthan’s government to prevent violence is partly related to ideological norms and values, and that this government have a softer ideology than the Modi-led government in Gujarat had in 2002.

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Appendix 1: List of Interviews

Arvind Kumar Agrawal Arvind Agrawal is Associate Professor of Sociology at University of Rajasthan. (Jaipur, April 10, 2007)

Iftikhar Ahmad was an activist with Aman Biradari, a NGO that is working to reopen cases in Gujarat. Ahmad is law-educated in law and was a volunteer coordinator from April 2005 to May 2006 in Aligarh. He conducted socio-eco-legal research during three relief camps. (Delhi, March 28 and April 2, 2007)

Sumitra Chopra is President of the Rajasthan unit of AIDWA, All India's Democratic Women's Alliance. The organisation is the women's wing of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Alliance promotes women's rights and seeks to combat communalism and 'casteism'. (Jaipur, April 12 2007)

Raheel Dhattiwala was Senior News Correspondent with *The Times of India*, Ahmedabad. She was awarded the Chief Minister's Gold Medal and *The Times of India* Silver Medal for academic excellence in a postgraduate diploma in journalism. She given a Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP) *Scholar of Peace* Fellowship for her proposed study on 'Social Changes in the Muslims of Ahmedabad post riots of 1992-1993 to date', with a focus the riots of 2002. (Ahmedabad April 17, 2007)

Sheba George, is the Director of Sahr Waru Women's Action and Resource Centre. She is also the co-author of *Survivals Speak* a report on violence against women during the 2002 pogrom in Gujarat. (Ahmedabad April 19, 2007)

Shabnam Hashmi is Trustee and Executive Secretary of the NGO, Act Now for Harmony and Democracy (Anhad). She is also a member of the National Integration Council and Founder of the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust (SAHMAT) (Ahmedabad April 18 2007)

Dr. Sharada Jain is Director of the the Society for Study of Education and Development (Sandhan) in Rajasthan. (Jaipur, April 11, 2007)

Dr. Pralay Kanungo is Professor at the School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University. (Delhi, April 4, 2007)

Dr. Manoj Kumar Jha is Profassor at the Department of Social Work, University of Delhi (Delhi, April 5, 2007)

Sabir Khan is an activist working with Action Aid India, Rajasthan. (Jaipur, April 10 and 13, 2007)

Dr. Avinash Kumar is an activist in the development sector in the NGO, Oxfam. He has a Ph.D. in Modern History from Jawaharlal Nehru Univesity, and previously worked as an academic at the university and at the Centre for the Study of Developing Society. He took

part in a Conflict and Peace Building Programme in Gujarat and Rajasthan, in the wake of the mass violence in 2002. He has also been associated with the development of Peace Studies curriculum in collaboration with various academic and activist organisations (Ahmedabad April 19 2007)

Hanif Lakdawala is the director of the NGO Sanchetna in Ahmedabad and also the vice-president of PUHR (People's Union for Human Rights) (Ahmedabad April 20, 2007)

Reverend Vinodkumar Mathushellah Malaviya Bishop of Gujarat. (Ahmedabad April 21, 2007)

Fr. Cedric Prakash is the Director of PRASHANT, the Jesuit Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace. Fr. Prakash has received several rewards for his work including Knight of the Legion of Honour (the highest French civilian awards), the Minority Rights Award 2006 by the National Commission of Minorities, the Government of India, and the Kabir Puraskar for his promotion of Communal Harmony and Peace. (Ahmedabad April 18 2007)

Dr. S. Mohammad Sajid is Professor at the Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia University. (Delhi, March 28, 2007)

Reverend Father Packiam Samuel is Secretary of Interfaith Coalition for Peace. Has a PhD from Oxford University in Islamic studies. (Delhi, April 3, 2007)

Gagan Sethi is the Managing Trustee of the NGO Janvikas. He has initiated and coordinated programmes that provide training, organisational development, project planning and evaluation support towards institution building to various NGOs, government programs and funding agencies in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India. (Ahmedabad, April 20, 2007)

Harsh Sethi is Consultant Editor of the monthly journal, Seminar. He is an economist and originally from Rajasthan. (Delhi, April 5, 2007)

Sawai Singh is an activist with Jan Sangharsh Samiti, a Gandhian NGO working in Rajasthan. (Jaipur, April 9 2007)

Sweta Singh is lecturer in Political Science at the Lady Shri Ram College in Delhi. She teaches a diploma course in Conflict Transformation and Peace Building at the college. (Delhi, April 3, 2007)

Kavita Srivastava is sociologist and the General Secretary of the Rajasthan People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) (Jaipur, April 12, 2007)

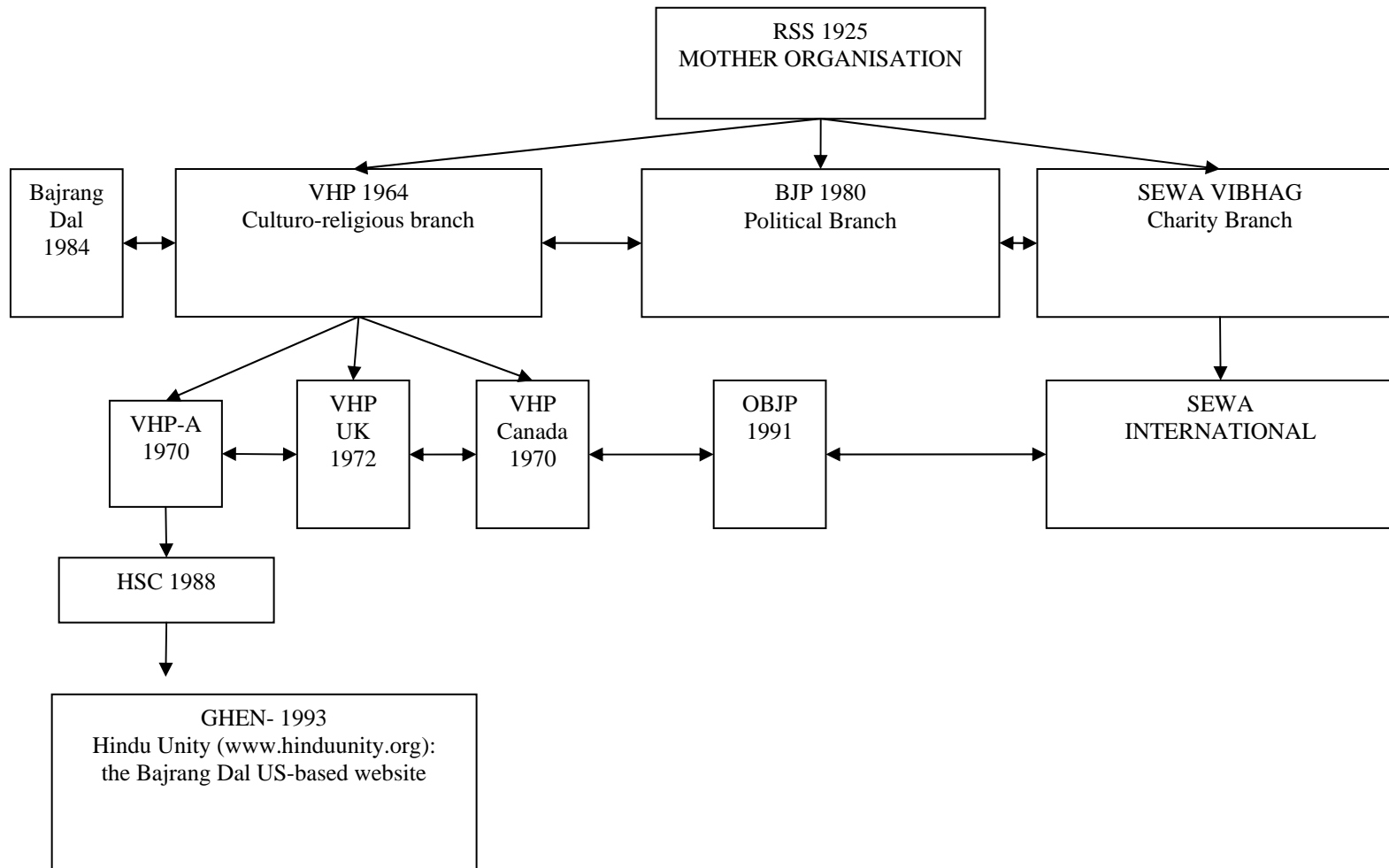
Mahadev Vidrohi heads the NGO ABICHRAM, a Gandhian secular organisation situated in Gandhi's ashram in Ahmedabad. (Ahmedabad April 16, 2007)

Achyut Yagnik, is a senior academic and Coordinator, Centre of Social Knowledge and Action (SETU). (Ahmedabad, April 17 2007)

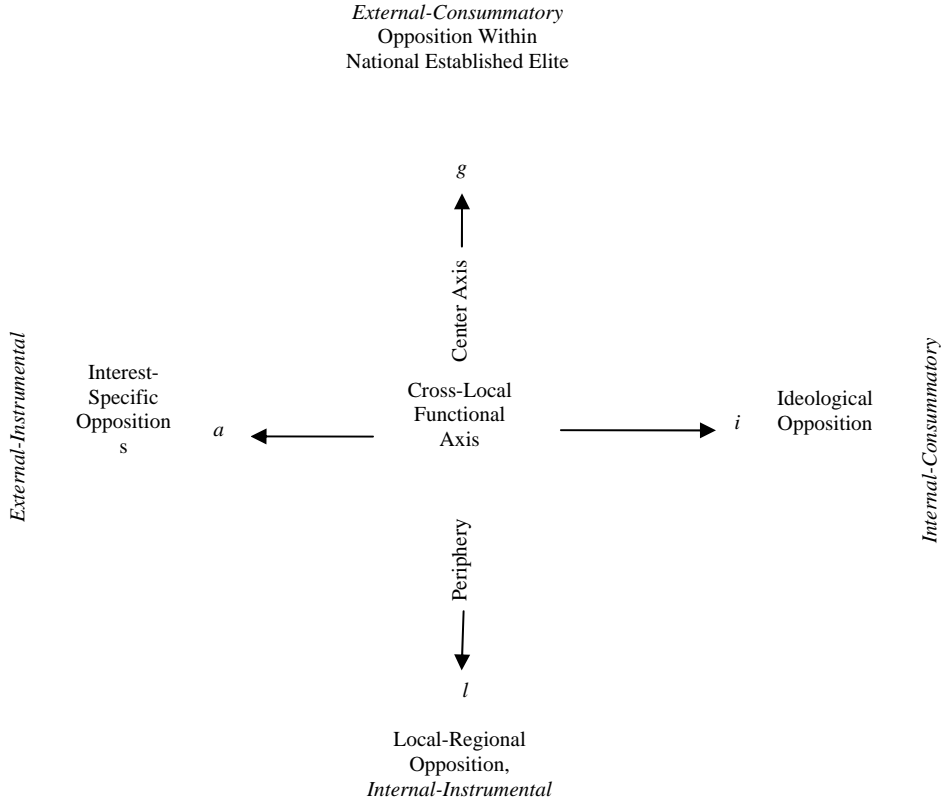
Appendix 2: Interview Guide

- 1) How would you characterize communal conflict in the two states?
- 2) Does the ruling party represent the same ideology in both states?
- 3) How would you interpret variation in the degree of conflict in the two states?
- 4) What makes Gujarat more violent than Rajasthan?
- 5) Are there any other conflicts in Rajasthan/Gujarat? (Caste, urban-rural, tribe) And in so how do these conflicts influence communal conflict?
- 6) How do socio-economic characteristics relate to communal conflicts in Gujarat/Rajasthan?
- 7) How would you define Hindu nationalism?
- 8) Which actors are promotes this ideology in Gujarat/Rajasthan and how do they work?
- 9) Who is responsible for communal violence and how does it start?
- 10) What is the role of authorities, Police/Government/Judiciary, in religious conflict?
And what was their role in 2002?
- 11) How does religious conflict affect everyday life

Appendix 3: An overview of Sangh Parivar Organsiation (Therwath 2005, 420)



Appendix 4: The Cleavage Model



Source: (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 10)