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The Puzzle of the BJP's Muslim Supporters in Gujarat

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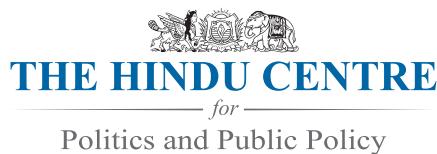
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THE PUZZLE OF THE BJP's MUSLIM SUPPORTERS IN GUJARAT

RAHEEL DHATTIWALA

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ABSTRACT

This report examines an extant political phenomenon in the State of Gujarat: the support of Muslims for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that many Muslims perceive as responsible for the brutal violence in the State in 2002 when at least a thousand Muslims were killed. Findings and implications presented in this report are based on 23 months of ethnographic fieldwork—in periods spanning three elections in 2010, 2012 and 2014—and an analysis of 101 polling booths in Ahmedabad city. Public support of Muslims for the BJP surged in the period 2010 to 2012. However, ecological inferences drawn from polling booth analysis raise the strong possibility that the public support did not translate into electoral support for the party in the 2012 State elections. A plausible explanation of such contradictory behaviour lies in the dependence of voters on state patronage of incumbent governments and in the expressive dissonance produced in absence of a space for dissent. In the period prior to the 2014 elections, public support for the BJP among Muslims had marginally reduced, perceived by Muslims as a sign of the BJP reneging on prior promises. By implication, remedial measures should aim to deepen the democratic system through transparent mechanisms of voter-politician interface that reduce dependence on state patronage and provide greater autonomy to legal institutions, strengthening trustworthiness.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The municipal corporation elections for Ahmedabad city in December 2010 had instilled enthusiasm into the life of Jamal Mohammed, a muezzin at a mosque in Ahmedabad's Behrampura municipal ward.¹ He was busier than usual, his wife told me, when he missed his meeting with me by half an hour. Having met Jamal a day earlier at the local Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) office I assumed he would be engaged in campaign work for the party apart from his usual occupation of calling out the *azaan* (call to prayer) in the mosque. Jamal was a Sunni Muslim, a sect that forms the majority of the 9.1 per cent (Census 2001) Muslims in Gujarat.² Until 2009, Sunni Muslims had shunned the BJP electorally as many among them held the party responsible for orchestrating the anti-Muslim pogrom in 2002. It was, therefore, unexpected to see Jamal fervently supporting the BJP. "No I don't see them responsible for 2002. Everyone falsely blamed them. It was just a period of misfortune. I am tired of the Congress and its fake promises to give us sewage facilities," he said upon his return. Jamal was not affected in the violence when his neighbourhood was attacked twice in 2002. He also denied having witnessed any of the attacks.

In this report I examine extant political and social conditions in Gujarat, more specifically in Ahmedabad, a decade after brutal violence in 2002 claimed at least a thousand Muslim lives. The example indicated above illustrates the main puzzle: Why do Muslims of Gujarat in western India support the Hindu nationalist BJP, a political party widely acknowledged to have orchestrated an anti-Muslim pogrom in 2002? 'Support' implies either through active campaigning or contesting, voting or publicly demonstrating a liking for the BJP and/or the incumbent Chief Minister, Narendra Modi.

This report bases its findings and implications partly on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2010 and 2012, during municipal corporation elections and state assembly elections respectively and polling booth analysis for the 2012 Gujarat assembly elections.³ Of the 66 Muslims I interviewed in seven neighbourhoods of Ahmedabad during 2010 and 2012, 43 voiced their support for the BJP. However, a preliminary analysis of 11 polling booths for the 2012 elections revealed the possibility of lower electoral support for the BJP in comparison with the high public

¹ Respondent names have been given pseudonyms.

² In the 2001 Census for Gujarat, Muslims not categorised as "Muslims/Islam" comprise 0.24 per cent of the total population (0.11 per cent in Ahmedabad district). Sub-categories include Shia sects such as "Agakhanī" and "Bohra". A separate sub-category "Shia" also exists. Although a small proportion of Bohras are Sunnis the census does not distinguish between the two.

³ Much of this research was conducted during my Ph.D. at Oxford University.

support. To further explore this contradictory behaviour, I undertook analysis of 101 booths for the same elections as part my work at The Hindu Centre. Earlier findings were vindicated, as the maximum support for the BJP was 10 per cent—not very different from previous records of Muslim voting behaviour for the BJP. Notably, upon interviewing 16 of the 43 prior supporters of the BJP again in 2014, a few months ahead of the Parliamentary elections, not all proclaimed the same enthusiasm for the party. Four respondents expressed regret at their previous choice. This report attempts to understand, firstly, the contradictory behaviour of high public vs. low electoral support and, secondly, the (possible) decline in public support of Muslims for the BJP in subsequent years.

The report is structured as follows. I first introduce the context of the research question. Fieldwork methodology is discussed thereafter followed by ethnographic findings. I then explicate the necessity and methods of conducting polling booth analysis. Inferences drawn from booth analysis are presented followed by findings of interviews conducted in 2014, just a few months prior to the Lok Sabha elections. Policy-based implications of the findings and inferences from the booth analysis are finally discussed.

2. CONTEXT

The Gujarat phenomenon finds rare precedence in conflict-ridden democracies.

In a minimalist sense, a democracy is a political system in which the positions of power are filled “through a competitive struggle for people’s vote” (Schumpeter, 1947). However, the substantive test for a democracy lies in the civil and political freedoms necessary for political debate and electoral campaigning (Diamond, 2002). I, therefore, focus only on those democracies which demonstrate a certain degree of freedom, fairness, transparency and accountability in the electoral process and political debate. Larry Diamond’s (2002) typology of ‘hybrid regimes’—combining democratic and authoritarian elements—is useful in this regard wherein India is classified as an ‘electoral democracy’ (distinct from a ‘liberal democracy’), on account of state-supported political violence that mars the electoral process. This does not imply a complete lack of transparency or freedom in the electoral process—indeed, anonymous referendum in India provides the voter with the electoral freedom to exercise their preference without coercion.⁴ Electoral (and liberal) democracies are, therefore, distinct from authoritarian democracies, where electoral fraud undermines electoral freedom. Crucial to this discussion is that in democracies where substantive electoral freedoms exist, why would minority voters support parties that are perceived to profess an anti-minority agenda?

It is within the sub-class of such liberal and electoral democracies that the Gujarat phenomenon stands out. For example, Sri Lankan Tamils persecuted by the Sinhalese in years of ethnic conflict continued to support self-rule in elections in September 2012.⁵ Even within India, following the 1992-93 Mumbai riots which claimed 557 lives (Varshney and Wilkinson, 2006), mostly of Muslims, the Muslim electorate in Mumbai has displayed antagonism towards the local Hindu nationalist Shiv Sena, voting intermittently either for the Congress or the socialist Samajwadi Party (SP).

A recent comparable example in a liberal democracy is that of far-right French activist and comedian, Dieudonné M'bala M'bala, known for his anti-Semitism and support of the far-right National Front (NF) (BBC Radio 4, January 30, 2014). Many of his French supporters are Blacks and Muslims, despite the party’s alienation of both these

⁴ Electoral reforms in 1994 considerably reduced the manner by which political parties could undermine voter anonymity by emptying boxes and counting voter returns (Chandra, 2004).

⁵ On the basis of electoral freedoms, I exclude Uganda where the recent electoral support of Acholiland (northern Uganda) for president Yoweri Museveni is comparable to Gujarat’s Muslims supporting Modi and BJP. Despite Museveni’s grim record of human rights violations against the Acholi people under his National Resistance Army (NRA), Acholiland began voting for Museveni since the presidential election of 2011 (e.g. Conroy-Krutz & Logan, 2012). However, Uganda being a ‘hegemonic electoral authoritarian’ – a system wherein elections are largely an authoritarian façade – the existence of electoral freedom is dubitable.

ethnic groups. What makes it different from the Gujarat case is, firstly, that the NF is not the party in power. Therefore the support of the Blacks and Muslims is plausibly driven by their alienation from established parties. Secondly, the history of brutal violence faced by Muslims in Gujarat under the ruling BJP is unlike the overarching anti-minority discrimination by the NF, albeit without violence.

There are, nonetheless, two cases in India comparable to Gujarat. The first is of Muslims of Bhagalpur in Bihar, the second of Sikhs of Punjab and Delhi. I briefly discuss both cases. In 1989 in Bhagalpur district, 396 persons were killed (Varshney and Wilkinson, 2006). The Congress was defeated and the socialist Janata Dal (JD) came to power under the leadership of Lalu Prasad Yadav, who later split from the JD to form the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in 1997. The party was not known for its economic reforms yet the 16.5 per cent Muslim electorate of Bihar supported it for its secular stand against the Ayodhya temple campaign in neighbouring Uttar Pradesh. However, from 2010, Muslim support moved towards a coalition that another faction of the Janata Dal—the Janata Dal (United) (JDU) under the leadership of Nitish Kumar—had formed with the BJP. Among the reasons that influenced the Muslim voters in favour of the BJP coalition, were measures taken by Chief Minister Kumar to rehabilitate Muslim victims of the violence: 29 Bhagalpur riot cases were reopened; speedy prosecution leading to conviction of the accused was ensured; compensation was provided to riot affected families and life-long pension to 900 Muslim families (*The Hindu*, February 27, 2006; *The Hindu*, August 29, 2007; *Times of India*, October 31, 2010). Most of all, the government continued to publicly display antipathy towards Mr. Modi and his role in the 2002 violence.

In the other comparable case, Sikhs of Delhi and Punjab who blamed the Congress for the 1984 anti-Sikh pogrom began to vote for the party from the 1990s. Like the Bihar BJP-JDU coalition, the Congress had taken remedial measures of reaching out to Sikh electors. In March 1985, the central government under Rajiv Gandhi announced plans to rejuvenate the Punjab State's economy and also released eight leaders of the Akali Dal—an ethnic Sikh political party—detained in the context of rapidly increasing Sikh militancy (Major, 1985). The Rajiv-Longowal Accord of July 1985 furthered a democratic solution to the Punjab militancy problem (Singh, 1991). In Delhi, Sonia Gandhi—widow and successor of the late Rajiv Gandhi—went around Sikh gurudwaras in Delhi in 1998 apologising for the riots. In a symbolic measure the Congress appointed a Sikh Prime Minister in the 2004 general elections who also apologised to co-religionists on behalf of his party.

In Gujarat, a similar demand of an apology from Chief Minister Modi has never been realised. There have also been few State-supported reconciliatory measures for Muslim victims of the violence—prosecutions and convictions in the 2002 massacres,

including the life term awarded to BJP MLA Maya Kodnani for conspiring with attackers in the murder of 97 Muslims in Ahmedabad, were an outcome of the Indian Supreme Court's intervention and not the State government's. Compensation amounts paid to victims of the violence became a matter of dispute; witnesses turned hostile as a result of the State's subversive methods to adjudicate legal proceedings and witness testimonies in the aftermath of the violence (*Times of India*, June 27, 2003). In 2003, 300 Muslims were detained, of which half were later arrested, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (POTA) for "conspiracies against the state" (*The Hindu*, November 7, 2003).⁶ The Gujarat government's poor record of convictions in the post-Godhra violence compelled the Supreme Court to order the reopening and reviewing of 2,000 cases that had been closed citing lack of evidence (BBC News, February 8, 2006). As of September 2010, 19,000 refugees of the 2002 violence remained displaced in relief colonies with inadequate infrastructure (US Freedom of Religion Report, 2011). Outside the context of the violence, the State continued to take measures deemed unconstitutional by civil rights groups. In 2003, the State authorised extra-judicial killings of Muslim petty criminals and civilians, adjudging them as "Islamic terrorists". Legal investigations led to the incarceration of at least 32 senior police officers and BJP State minister Amit Shah for the killings. Shah, however, was released on bail, and successfully contested the 2012 State elections. Cities like Ahmedabad and Vadodara continue to remain highly segregated with housing loans denied to most Muslims, for their ghettos are 'red-lined' as poor investment prospects (Rajagopal, 2010: 107). To illustrate, the first municipal school to be built in Ahmedabad's Juhapura—a settlement established in 1973 to rehabilitate flood victims which became a refuge for Muslim riot evacuees after the 1985 violence (Jaffrelot and Thomas, 2012)—was in February 2013 (*Hindustan Times*, February 21, 2013).

Given that Narendra Modi was consecutively voted to power in three State elections after the violence, it can be construed that his credibility within the Hindu majority of the State had increased. However, there is no tangible reason why Muslims would support the BJP. Unlike the Sikhs who had intermittently voted for the Congress before 1984 (Major, 1985), a majority of Muslims of Gujarat had always perceived the BJP as an ideologically non-pluralist party, particularly antagonistic towards Muslims. The exception was a section of Shia Muslim sects in the State. Although survey data on State-level voting behaviour is scarce, political commentators suggest that traditionally 6-8 per cent Muslims in Gujarat had always voted for the BJP before and in immediate years after 2002. These voters largely came from Shia Muslim sects engaged in mercantile occupations, such as Dawoodi Bohras who "try to buy their peace by generally supporting (the) ruling party" (Engineer, 2007). In

⁶ POTA was repealed in 2004 in the Parliament by the Congress coalition government in the centre.

view of their interest in seeking favourable state patronage in economic policies the Dawoodi Bohra high priest donated to the BJP's campaign fund in 2007 despite extensive damage to life and property of Bohras in the violence.⁷ The BJP had partially reciprocated by offering superior government positions to Dawoodi Bohras, e.g. the appointment of a Dawoodi Bohra police chief in 2009 ahead of the general elections. On the other hand, Sunni Muslims had always rejected the party. Prominent Sunni cleric, Mufti Shabbir Sidiqqui, called the police appointment a foil to display a secular ideology, "like appointing Muslims as Presidents of India in the past to keep the community happy" (*Times of India*, February 22, 2009). Sunni Muslims had viewed a Muslim BJP supporter in their community as a defector. To illustrate, in 2006, a Sunni Muslim college student and her circle of friends in Ahmedabad city had decided to begin wearing a burqa covering her face. Their decision was a "mark of protest" against the ruling BJP whom they viewed as the "architect" of the 2002 violence. "All of us friends felt cowed down by a constant anti-Muslim rhetoric since 2002. Then we thought whether it made any sense to be scared. We said, okay so you want to hate us? Here are our *burqas* so we know that you know we are Muslims. Now come, get us."⁸ Support of Sunni Muslims for the BJP, if at all, was tacit. This changed tangibly in 2010. Salim, a follower of Tablighi⁹, told me a few weeks before the elections in 2010: "There is no shame today in supporting Modi. BJP is Allah. *Allah ke sivay aur kaun hai?* (Who else do we have other than Allah?)"¹⁰ During elections there were many more like Salim. Dressed in Islamic attire and also wearing saffron bandanas and carrying saffron flags—signifying the official colour of the Sangh Parivar—they professed their hope in the BJP, especially in Modi "the *badshaah*" (emperor).

The sudden and visible upsurge in Muslim support for the BJP coincided with the party's own political strategy to bridge divides with the State's Sunni Muslim electorate through *Sadbhavana* (compassion) campaigns—a series of fasts and public addresses to signify inter-ethnic harmony —nine years after the violence. *Sadbhavana* was perceived as a symbolic measure to project the BJP's rapprochement with Muslims, though not as a solid apology. Yet, the question arose: why would the BJP tone down Hindutva that had provided them with overwhelming power and credibility in the State? The Muslim vote at 9.1 per cent continued to remain inconsequential for the Gujarat BJP. Therefore, the most cogent explanation was

⁷ Like the Druz of Lebanon and the Agakhani Khojas, the Dawoodi Bohras follow priestly hierarchy (Engineer, 2007; *Times of India Crest*, 2 January 2010).

⁸ This interview was conducted during my work as a journalist at *The Times of India* in 2006. Also see Dhattiwala, "The Muslim as BJP Supporter in Gujarat", *The Hindu*, 24 February 2011.

⁹ The Tabligh or Tablighi Jamaat is a sectarian religious movement, derived from the Deobandi revivalist movement that originated in Uttar Pradesh state in the 1920s. In Gujarat it began its missionary activities during the 1940s (Chakrabarti, 2010).

¹⁰ I discuss ethnographic methods in section 3.

Narendra Modi's aspiration of an elevated position in the 2014 general election, which could not be achieved without the support of Muslim electors in States outside Gujarat. This became much more evident with each subsequent election. Since the BJP first gained power in Gujarat in 1995, it was only in 2009 that the State BJP sought to offer candidature to Muslims (Table 1). In 2010, 12 Muslim candidates contested from the BJP when a Sunni Muslim candidate from the BJP won against a Hindu rival from the Congress in Rajkot. Chief Minister Modi claimed that "over 30 per cent Muslims have voted for us" in Gujarat (*Times of India*, October 12, 2010). In local body elections in the same year, the BJP declared 117 out of 256 Muslim candidates from the BJP as victorious. The BJP announced its readiness to welcome "nationalist Muslims" calling themselves a "pro-Hindu but not anti-Muslim party" (*Tehelka*, October 16, 2010). Departing from this trend, in 2012, none of the 182 seats were offered to Muslim candidates prompting Muslim respondent Shaukat to call it "*dhokha*" (betrayal) of their new-found hope in the party. Yet, political commentators noted that in 11 of 18 Muslim-majority constituencies in the 2012 elections BJP Hindu candidates were victorious; the BJP itself claimed to have won in 24 constituencies where Muslim electorate was 15 per cent or higher (*Times of India*, December 26, 2012). These figures provided by the BJP can be considered uncertain because there is no publicly available constituency-level information about religious distribution of electors. This is most relevant given that delimitation of constituency boundaries changed the demographic structure of constituencies in the 2012 elections. However, the fact remained that the impression of the BJP's acceptance among Muslims was successfully projected by the party and in the national media. For example, in 2009, Maulana Vastanvi, the rector of India's leading seminary in Deoband (north India) was ousted by colleagues for his public support of Narendra Modi's economic policies. In 2013, Maulana Mahmood Madani, a prominent cleric of the *Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind*, known to have been instrumental in ousting Maulana Vastanvi, publicly praised the Modi government and endorsed Muslims having voted for Mr. Modi in the 2012 elections.

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

The period between 2010 -2012 was the peak of Muslim support for the BJP. Upon

interviewing 16 of the 43 respondents who had voiced their support for the BJP two years later, there was a marginal decrease in BJP support. Shaukat believed the BJP's promises to Muslims were "superficial". In section 6, I discuss the implications of the differences in testimonies of BJP supporters then and now.

3. ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

The larger chunk of my fieldwork was in the period of my Ph.D. thesis, between August 2010 and February 2012 and intermittently for two months in December 2012. Additionally, I conducted fieldwork in January and February 2014 as part of my project at The Hindu Centre. In this section I will briefly discuss two aspects: choice of city and neighbourhoods; and fieldwork methods and challenges.

I chose Ahmedabad as the city for research because of the paradox it presents in terms of its high levels of economic prosperity coupled with high incidence of Hindu-Muslim violence. Since Partition, Ahmedabad has jostled with some of the most horrific episodes of Hindu-Muslim violence: major riots occurred in 1969, 1985, 1992 and 2002. In the period 1950 to 1995 Ahmedabad and its neighbour Vadodara accounted for nearly 80 per cent of the total deaths in Gujarat (Varshney 2002). In 2002, 279 people were killed in Ahmedabad city—the highest (37 per cent) in proportion to the total killings in the State.¹¹ Ahmedabad also bore the brunt of one of the worst industrial breakdowns in the 1980s. The once-booming textile mill industry which had led to an influx of inter-State migrants to Ahmedabad in the 1960s collapsed in the 1980s as a result of domestic restructuring of the textile industry in India. This created a bulk of unemployed, skilled workmen—factors that contributed to the disintegration of inter-ethnic associational ties formed in the mill industry between Hindu and Muslim workmen and a spurt in Hindu-Muslim rioting (Varshney, 2002; Breman, 2004). The industrial collapse did not halt the urbanisation and economic growth of Ahmedabad which, by 2001, was seventh in the country in terms of economic growth. What also continued to increase was the extent of spatial segregation with every riot in the city. The influx of migrants in the 1960s had started the process of segregation. As the city grew on the outskirts, affluent and upper-caste Hindus moved out of the original nucleus of Ahmedabad—the walled city—to form an almost exclusive Hindu-dominated western suburbia. This was unlike the relatively higher intermixing in the walled city neighbourhoods and the industrial eastern areas comprising migrant labourers. Among the main exceptions to the Hindu-dominated western suburbs was the Juhapura neighbourhood, mentioned earlier. By 2001, its population was around 200,000 (Spodek, 2011; Jaffrelot and Thomas, 2012).¹² Government laws, such as the Gujarat Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provision for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from Premises in

¹¹ This figure is part of my original dataset of killings in Gujarat in 2002. For details about the dataset, see Dhattiwala, R. & Biggs, M. (2012) The Political Logic of Ethnic Violence: The Anti-Muslim Pogrom in Gujarat, 2002. *Politics & Society*. 40 (4). 483-516.

¹² Only an estimate can be reached about Juhapura's population because 'Juhapura' as a neighbourhood officially did not exist in 2001. It was a conglomerate of local villages whose total population in the census was around 100,000.

Disturbed Areas Act, 1991 (also known as Disturbed Areas Act), which sought to prevent distress sale of properties, and subsequent religious segregation, could be circumvented using the power of attorney (PRS Legislative Research, 1986). One consequence of spatial segregation was the economic segregation of Muslims because Muslim ghettos were 'red-lined' as unsound investment prospects. Muslims, therefore, were denied housing loans driving rents further upwards (Rajagopal, 2010).

Respondents I interviewed during my research as a Ph.D. student were based in two municipal wards of Ahmedabad: Behrampura and Danilimda. The choice of wards was largely dictated for methodological reasons that fit the research question of my Ph.D. thesis—explaining spatial variation in the 2002 violence. Those reasons are of little significance for this discussion. What is of importance is that these wards were intermixed; they were slum neighbourhoods; had experienced lethal and non-lethal violence in 2002; and were inhabited by a large population of former textile mill workers, thus providing scope to test several hypotheses relevant to this report. As my research question addresses a question specifically related to Muslims, I additionally interviewed Muslims in two exclusively Muslim neighbourhoods comprising riot evacuees, namely Juhapura and Bombay Hotel and a third Muslim-majority neighbourhood, Shah Alam.¹³ Their testimonies opened up a separate analytical window to differentiate preferences of Muslims living in intermixed areas from areas dominated by their own ethnic group. Previous studies such as by Massey, Hodson and Sekulic (1999) demonstrate the ways in which the level of ethnic intolerance between a majority and minority group varies with the variation in proportion of each group in an enclave. For example, minorities in neighbourhoods when numerically dominant will be more intolerant than when living outside such enclaves because localised majorities experience contesting intolerance, a distrust of the external majority, which encourages them to emphasise ethnic solidarity as a way to subvert the political and cultural influence of the external majority. It could subsequently be implied that Muslims living in exclusive ghetto neighbourhoods would be more conscious of their ethnicity and perceive the BJP with antagonism.¹⁴

3.1. Data-gathering

My primary method of data-gathering follows from what ethnographers working on sensitive issues use: unstructured, free-flowing conversations that are memorised and later reproduced as field notes (Varese, 2001; Wood, 2006; Hamill, 2011). Although eight years had passed since the 2002 violence, antagonism between the Hindus and

¹³ Shah Alam and Bombay Hotel are located in Danilimda ward and Juhapura in Vejalpur ward. The estimated population of Juhapura, Shah Alam and Bombay Hotel in 2010 respectively was 200,000, 3,000 and 100,000.

¹⁴ I distinguish 'enclaves' from 'ghettos' as being Muslim-dominated but not formed exclusively of riot evacuees.

the Muslims was pervasive even in 2014. The violence continued to remain in public memory on account of legal prosecutions and convictions constantly highlighted in the media. Any direct questions of the violence (I tried 'direct questioning' in the first week of fieldwork during my Ph.D.) were either met with, "Why do you want to rake up old wounds?" or "Which political party are you with?" As Hamill and Varese suggest, unstructured conversations work best in sensitive research where direct questioning, impersonal surveys and tape-recorded (sometimes even pen and paper) interviews can be perceived as a threat by the respondent. They make the respondents uncomfortable, therefore, evasive. This approach would also allow me to refine or change the initial problem focus, and to adapt the data gathering process to ideas that occur during later stages (Whyte and Whyte, 1984). However, in using the strategy of 'memorising', there is certainly a danger of introducing bias in the data for memory can fail you, but given that any other alternative would be likely to generate superficial communication from a guarded respondent this is the best approach (Hamill, 2011; Densley, 2012). My previous experience of six years as a journalist helped. It was not uncommon to memorise conversations of a sensitive nature and meticulously reproduce them in the newspaper, where the consequences of erroneous factual reporting could be very serious. Like Hamill (2011), much of the data was gathered during hundreds of spontaneous conversations over cups of *chai*. Indeed, liquor prohibition in Gujarat had made roadside tea-stalls the perfect recourse for formal and informal conversations, especially for the working class population who, almost entirely, vended the tea shacks. After speaking with respondents on a given day my practice was to sit either at a place designated by my informant as 'safe' (e.g. informant's autorickshaw) or at one of the newly constructed Janmarg bus-stops in the city, which had a convenient seating space, to reproduce the events of the day from memory in my notebook. Once trustworthiness with the respondent was established I would be permitted to take notes during conversations and, in some cases, even allowed pen and paper interviews.

4. ETHNOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

A majority of Muslims—BJP and Congress supporters—acknowledged their “inability” to bring about a change in the incumbent government through their vote. They believed they could not significantly alter the final result of an election “even if all of us vote for the same party”. More importantly, many Muslims (incorrectly) believed that both upper and lower caste Hindus voted collectively for the BJP. This assumption was an important factor that contributed to their decision to support either of the parties. For example, Muslims in Hindu-majority constituencies publicly supported the BJP assuming that Hindus would not vote for the Congress. For them, being viewed as a supporter of the incumbent government meant greater opportunity for access to state resources and finding social approval of the majority Hindu constituents.

In my interviews with respondents in 2010 and 2012, I found no perceptible difference between testimonies of Muslim BJP supporters from poorer neighbourhoods and those from middle and upper-class neighbourhoods. What differed was the motivation of a BJP Muslim candidate/party member from that of a BJP Muslim voter/campaigner, irrespective of class. All Muslim BJP party members and candidates I spoke with were motivated by individual reward, e.g. career advancement through patronage with incumbent political leaders and future political front-runners whereas Muslim BJP voters/campaigners were guided by both material benefits and value-rational approaches.

4.1. The BJP Muslim candidate/party member

In 2002, Suraiyya had opted to live in the dismal Bombay Hotel slum following more than one attack in her old neighbourhood of Bapunagar. In 2012 her reasons to fear for her life were no longer riots but the civic conditions of her infamous neighbourhood, situated contiguous to the city’s official municipal sewage farm in eastern Ahmedabad. A mountain of garbage visible from the slum had become an ironic landmark of the neighbourhood – this was the first feature of the slum I was taken to view from atop the terrace of a shanty. Along with her ordeals her political preference had also changed. She had recently joined the BJP as a party member. “Do we have a choice? We have knocked on the Congress corporators’ doors so many times but they shoo us away. How long do we keep drinking yellow water and die of dengue?” Why did she opt to become a member when she could have voted for the BJP? “I wish to be the women’s representative... like Aslambhai is for the men.” Aslam was a former Communist Party of India (Marxist) representative from Behrampura, a “people’s worker” as many had referred to him when he contested municipal elections in 2010 representing the CPI (M). Aslam’s allegiance to the CPI (M) was not entirely

motivated by individual reward for the CPI(M) had no political presence in Gujarat's bipolar polity. Aslam had decided to work for the party for he had considered it to be the next best option to the Congress which, he believed, had an equally poor record of security of Muslims as the BJP. When he lost the 2010 elections, Aslam decided to shift allegiance to the BJP. "BJP is in power and will continue to remain in power for the next 15 years ... I cannot work with a dead party like the Congress or the CPM. Both Congress and BJP have killed Muslims but the Congress has given nothing in return. At least the BJP intends to do something now for Muslims too. I can only be able to work with a party that can do something." A Congress party member, Rasool Azam, in a middle-class locality in Juhapura provided more evidence of individual career advancement when he lamented: "I have given all my life's work to the Congress. But now I am depressed. For 15 years, I worked with potential Members of Parliament (MP) but none would get elected. Where does that leave my future? What about my career?"¹⁵

Here a brief theoretical framework of clientelistic politics, specifically patronage politics, is in order. A clientelistic political linkage between the voter and the politician/government is characterised by "*the direct exchange of a citizen's vote in return for direct payments or continuing access to employment, goods, and services*" (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007: 2; emphasis in original). Patronage is a narrow subclass of clientelism, specifically the proffering of public resources (most typically public employment) by office holders in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution is the clientelist one: did you – will you – vote for me? (Stokes, 2007: 606). Patronage and clientelism tend to be used interchangeably (e.g. Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007) because the point to critically note is the distributive criterion that distinguishes clientelism and its subclasses from other materially oriented political strategies, such as pork barrel politics. Whereas benefits involved in pork barrel politics have a public good quality, those involved in a clientelistic or patronage exchange are either private goods or club goods—goods whose benefits can be denied to non-participants in the production or exchange of the good (Ostrom and Ostrom, 1978). Clientelistic exchanges involve discretionary access to scarce or highly subsidised private goods—such as land, healthcare, jobs and promotions, money, and as Scott (1972) importantly adds—protection and security.

The patron-client form of resource access can dictate political preferences, especially for the extremely poor whose daily survival is a never-ending ordeal and for whom direct access to state resources is nearly impossible. In such an event of constrained access, the role of the intermediary—a broker between citizens and the state—assumes crucial importance (Berenschot, 2010). Indeed, political intermediaries, mediating between bureaucrats, citizens and service providers, are a constitutive part

¹⁵ Verbatim words from respondent testimonies are italicised.

of the state in Gujarat.

Prior to becoming a BJP member, Suraiyya was an activist with a local NGO rehabilitating victims of the 2002 violence and had witnessed the difficulties of acquiring official sanction for compensation and rehabilitation from the ruling government. When she paid the fee of Rs. 5 and signed the BJP membership form, her aspiration was to become one such intermediary and gain financial and political success, "like Aslambhai". As she asked me one day: "Can you tell me how I can earn money by being a BJP member and helping the women here?" A successful intermediary also gains an elevated social status and positive social identity on account of their capacity to manipulate the implementation of state policies (Michelutti, 2007; Berenschot, 2011). Aslam had inched closer towards gaining that status unlike Suraiyya, who told me, "he even gets to speaks directly to the BJP corporator and people think he can do a lot". Both were aware their aspirations to becoming a successful intermediary were possible only within the ambit of an incumbent party with the potential to remain in power for a long period of time. But this also raises the question whether voting for the BJP was at all essential if supporters, especially party members, were already being rewarded beforehand – monetarily or by elevation of social status. Shazia, a Congress campaigner, illustrated the difficulty of distinguishing between public support and electoral voting. Until 2010 Shazia was a CPI (M) member but campaigned for the Congress in 2012 "because my husband is close to the Congress intermediary Zulekha *aapain* Behrampura". On voting day, she told me discreetly: "I am representing the Congress but voted for the CPI (M) ... how would anyone know?" I discuss the implications of distinguishing between public support and electoral voting shortly.

4.2. The BJP Muslim voter/campaigner

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

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

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

Respondents Maqsood and his mother had decided to support the BJP following official delimitation of constituency boundaries that changed the electoral salience of their vote. Mother and son were certain of the BJP’s role in the looting of his house near Parikshitlalnagar, where they lived in 2002. In 2010 his mother told me: “*Allah jhooth na bulvaye* (I would dare not lie in the eyes of Allah), I always voted for the Congress but this time in the civic elections I voted for the BJP! No one listens to the Congress so what’s the point of casting them our vote?” Indicating the importance of voting for the most likely contender to win the election, Maqsood said: “We are no longer in a Muslim ward. This is Kankaria... Hindu ward. Muslims are merely 5,000. Nobody among Hindus votes for the Congress so why should we?” Aijaz Sufi, a rich businessman in Juhapura, expressed identical views: “I always voted for the Congress knowing that BJP will continue to be anti-Muslim. But as long as they are in power and offer us the opportunity to represent our community politically I don’t mind supporting the party. At least we have someone of our own to be held responsible if benefits are not given.” Juhapura, which was an agglomeration with no administrative status, had been given official recognition following delimitation of boundaries wherein it was included in the Hindu-majority Vejalpur municipal ward. It is noteworthy that none of the respondents claimed to have benefited from state resources although they praised the BJP for its economic policies. Shaukat conceded that “benefits have only reached the Hindus but one day they will also reach the Muslims I am sure of that”. Aslam spoke of “indirect” benefits – housing developed

to rehabilitate all slum dwellers displaced by a city development project had also benefited Muslims. Zahir Shaikh, a BJP candidate from Juhapura, also indicated that Muslims of Juhapura became indirect beneficiaries of civic facilities following delimitation and inclusion in Vejalpur ward; “the government was compelled to provide for the Hindus”. In a related example, an under-construction water pumping station near Danilimda had become an interesting point of contention. Muslim BJP supporters believed it to be a BJP-sponsored project unlike the Congress Muslim supporters. It was not possible to know whether their electoral preference had been shaped by the event (construction of the pump) or whether the event was information that affirmed their choice of political party. These testimonies further enhance the ambiguity of what BJP support actually means.

4.3. Effect of charisma

A section of respondents neither attributed economic benefits nor a value-rational reason for their support of the BJP. They supported the BJP solely on account of its leader, Chief Minister Modi. Respondent Salman had witnessed his friend dying in his arms by a police bullet. He also claimed to have secretly viewed a CD containing images of the Naroda Patiya massacre of nearly 100 Muslims in 2002.¹⁶ “What a horrible way to kill... wombs being slit open... yes, everyone says Modi had a hand in those killings. So what! The man is powerful. *Uski dahshat hai!* (He incites fear!) Who else is capable of that?” Salman campaigned for the BJP though claimed to vote for the Congress “because my family does”. He vowed to vote for the BJP “only after I get to see Modi *kaka* (term of respect for the elderly)!”. I heard the “fascination” of Salman for Narendra Modi repeated by respondent Noorbanu, “He is the future Prime Minister!” she said, proudly showing off a laminated photograph of herself with Modi taken during a BJP campaign tour in Delhi, as we met at her house in Behrampura. Neither Salman nor Noorbanu said they were direct beneficiaries of rewards, whether monetary or state resources, from the BJP.

Narendra Modi displayed a charismatic authority that evoked deference. Weber defines charisma as a manifestation of the extraordinary, outside the realm of everyday routine, which rejects external order and breaks traditional and rational norms (Weber, 1968). A charismatic authority is one who is acknowledged to have the ability to exercise intense influence over the beliefs, values, preferences and aspirations of others by proving his powers in practice (Weber, 1968; House, Spangler and Woycke, 1991). Persons perceived to have a great power over creation, maintenance or even destruction of order (including a great capacity for violence) generate awe and deference (Shils, 1965). Narendra Modi’s propensity to evoke deference among

¹⁶ There is no such existing documentary available. A documentary in Gujarati comprising interviews with victims and accused in Behrampura and other areas of Ahmedabad titled *Chet'ta Rejo* (“Be Warned”) is privately available but does not document the massacres.

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

4.4. Effect of religiosity

It is reasonable to believe that a large number of Muslims began to publicly support the BJP exactly nine years after the violence on account of the BJP's own admission to provide political representation to Muslims and the subsequent patronage of material resources and physical protection that Muslims would derive from the incumbent party by having a co-ethnic intermediary. It is less obvious why pious Muslims would display unexpected flexibility by compromising with sacred values. In supporting the BJP they were almost rejecting the party's anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies and, most importantly, Modi's refusal to apologise for the violence. Compromising a sacred value in exchange for some material outcome is a taboo trade off that finds little acceptance (Ginges and Atran, 2009). Orthodox Sunni Muslims attributed their support to Modi's skilled governance and the rapid economic progress in Gujarat. As discussed earlier, respondents denied having received any benefits when explicitly questioned. Nonetheless, even if a section of them had been beneficiaries, adding material incentives to compromise over sacred values would increase the saliency of the taboo. It would result in mingling the sacred with the profane and lead to greater opposition to compromise (Ginges and Atran, 2009). Would this imply the presence of a national identity overlapping a gradually subsiding religious identity among Muslims?

Respondents distinguished between the two very clearly. BJP party member in Juhapura, Junaid, said: "*Vatan imaan hai, Islam to hai hi*" (My country is my honour;

Islam of course exists indisputably). Respondents like Aslam, Mohammed Umar and Jamal Mohammed had not altered their traditional Islamic attire or subdued their religiosity although they supported the BJP. The ‘compromise’ of religious Muslims can possibly be explained from a characteristic found in many of their testimonies: self-blame. Shaukat believed that “Hindus hate us because we behave uncouthly and are illiterate”; Zahir similarly attributed “our own illiteracy and jahalat (darkness or ignorance)” to anti-Muslim sentiment. Janoff-Bulman’s (1979) distinction between behavioural and characterological self-blame is useful in context of past trauma. Self-blame associated with a modifiable source (one’s behaviour)—apparent in the testimonies by Muslims—as opposed to a relatively non-modifiable source (one’s character) indicates the respondent’s desire to maintain a belief in control and in their ability to avoid a negative outcome in the future. It is possible that BJP Muslim supporters believed their action as a step towards amending what they perceived to be unworthy behaviour, not a compromise of sacred values.

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

4.5. Personal experience of violence

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

Zahir is also a traitor!" he said referring to the BJP Muslim candidate from Juhapura. In Behrampura's Kabadi Market no. 2, a scrap market where two Muslim watchmen were killed in 2002 and shops looted and burned, I was more likely to come across Congress supporters than in the less-affected Kabadi Market no. 3. Respondent Amjad of Market no. 2 said he will "never vote for the BJP which is responsible for our losses" unlike Mahmud of Market no. 3 who blamed the Congress for not preventing the 1993 violence. "Did Narsimha Rao (former Prime Minister) do anything to prevent the demolition of the Babri mosque or the riots thereafter? No he did not! Then why blame only the BJP?"

Under the 'medium' category, BJP supporters were motivated by either material benefits or value-rational reasons such as nationalism. Congress supporters were not necessarily enthusiastic about supporting the Congress and attributed "lack of trust" for the BJP. "Do we change our parents just because we have stopped liking them?" a respondent whose house was looted asked indignantly. His words implied his disenchantment with the Congress yet he emphasised his "mistrust" of the BJP. This, of course, cannot be generalised because the effect of the memory of past trauma depends on how the actor positions it in the current time. It can be positive if the actor positions it to enhance the value of the present: "the contrast effect". Or it could be negative for the memory itself recreates a bad experience in the present: "the endowment effect" (Elster, 2007). This, of course, showcases a pattern and no definite predictions can be made. Abdullah, an elderly businessman of Juhapura, did not witness violence or losses unlike Zahir who had a narrow escape in his car when a crowd recognised his name tag on his government uniform. Whereas Zahir would be expected to support the Congress, it was Abdullah who supported it. "The BJP can never be trusted. Today Modi aspires to be the Prime Minister and is trying to appease us, what about tomorrow?" Alternatively, it is also reasonable to expect the extremely poor to outweigh past trauma with daily survival, irrespective of personal experience of violence. A discrepancy like Zahir—an affluent Muslim who had a close shave with death and yet supports the BJP—could mean that the absence of politicised tensions reduce the mistrust between antagonistic groups (Frøystad, 2009), shifting the focus from demonisation of the other to co-operation with the other for daily survival. However, given the political atmosphere in Gujarat that continued to vilify Muslims through state-supported legislation it is more plausible that the existence of a repressive political environment created a social pressure to conform to the majority. Public concealment of misgivings would be a better option than social disapproval. This is discussed shortly.

Data also indicated that a traumatic or discriminatory experience occurring at the present time, even if not of a violent nature, did alter preferences. Shaukat staunchly supported the BJP when I met him a month before the State elections in December

2012: "I admit people like me have no right to vote for the BJP as we had selected the Congress ... But we gave the Congress 35 years to provide us development, they did nothing. BJP, in 15 years, has given so much. Yes, I agree that the benefits have only reached the Hindus but one day they will also reach the Muslims I am sure of that. Riots happen... and they will happen again in future. When we are in minority the majority will certainly dominate us. We have to tolerate that." In April 2013 I met him again. He did not sound as certain about the BJP as he did earlier. "I find it difficult to trust the BJP," he said, revealing to me two experiences of a discriminatory nature that he faced during this period. One, he was refused a bank loan possibly because he lived in a red-lined area, although he was financially solvent and had not defaulted. Second, the BJP-governed municipal corporation razed a newly constructed office complex he had built in Danilimda "because it was in the way of their road widening project". The first experience had angered him. "They refused me a loan though I was not a defaulter. Is there any reason why except that I am Muslim?!" By 2014, Shaukat had completed changed his preferences (section 6) and lost faith in the BJP.

5. POLLING BOOTH ANALYSIS

Findings suggest several possible explanations for BJP Muslim support. But in the absence of localised analysis of polling booth data it cannot be inferred with certainty that Muslims publicly declaring support for the BJP were also voting for it. Surveys would be the alternative, though not very useful in drawing accurate inferences as I argue below. Most studies (and, indeed, data provided by political parties) make inferences about voting behaviour based on constituencies with high Muslim concentration or low Muslim concentration. These aggregate units are likely to yield spurious inferences about localised voting behaviour. A better unit of making localised inferences is the polling booth. I explain this further in section 5.2.

To disentangle public support from electoral support I conducted a preliminary analysis of 11 polling booths in two assembly constituencies of Ahmedabad. This was a suitable election to analyse given the surge in Muslim support for the BJP in the weeks and days prior to it. The findings described in section 5.2 provided ample reason to conduct an extended analysis of booths. In total I proceeded to analyse 101 polling booths, in seven assembly constituencies of Ahmedabad.

5.1. Estimation of religion

First I matched each polling booth within a constituency to the corresponding block in the electoral rolls of 2012, then estimated the religious population for each booth by meticulously counting Hindu and Muslim surnames for each block on the electoral roll. In absence of booth-level religion data that the government does not publicly release, this was the best method of estimation. The Nam Pehchan algorithm used to identify South-Asian groups in the UK (Field et al, 2008; Cuttset al, 2007) gave underestimates for the Ahmedabad data when I had first used it in 2010. This is most likely because the objective of the algorithm is to classify ethnicity; religion is output only as a by-product (Susewind, forthcoming). In fact, Susewind's own probabilistic algorithm that he uses to sift religion data from electoral rolls is an excellent new resource that should be used for larger datasets once perfected.¹⁷ For this report, I manually classified the electoral rolls for religion using my local knowledge. For example, Gujarati Muslim sects, such as the Dawoodi Bohras and Khojas, often bear surnames and names similar to those of Hindus. A 'Jamila Lakhani' is more likely to be Muslim than Hindu as would be an 'Azam Patel'. Of course, there is possibly no logical method to accurately code a 'Ranjit Gohil'—a Muslim convert from Hindu Rajputs of Saurashtra—unless one knows the person. At the aggregate level, therefore,

¹⁷ I thank Raphael Susewind for his help in analysing a sample of the Gujarat election data using the algorithm. Accuracy was slightly compromised because the algorithm was originally designed to sift through Devanagari script. While the algorithm is perfected—which it should be in the coming weeks—for the purpose of this report I proceeded to using manual methods.

manual coding was the best available method. On the flip side, time constraints meant that only a sample of booths could be analysed because manual coding is a time-intensive process.

5.2. Methods and findings

Table 2 shows the distribution by religion of registered voters in the preliminary sample of 11 booths corresponding to the votes cast for the BJP, Congress and others (independent candidates and smaller parties). Crucially, one has to take account of the ecological fallacy: making incorrect inferences about individual effects from aggregate data. This is especially true for heterogeneous booths where the bounds on patterns of voting for a certain party can be very wide. For example, for a booth with 40 per cent Muslims and a BJP voting percentage of 50 per cent, it is hypothetically possible that all Muslims voted for the BJP. But it is also possible that none voted for it. One solution offered by the Duncan-David method (King et al, 2004; Voss, 2004) is to obtain tighter upper and lower bounds on voting patterns from booths that are either almost entirely Muslim or Hindu (homogeneous). Inferences about Muslim voting pattern for the BJP could therefore be made for only two booths which had a relatively homogeneous Muslim electorate (96 per cent to 99 per cent). For the booth with 96 per cent Muslim electorate, between 2 per cent and 6 per cent Muslims had voted for the BJP; for the booth with 99 per cent Muslim electorate, the Muslim voting for the BJP was between 8 per cent and 9 per cent (Table 2.1). This is much less than the surge of public support witnessed in the same period, thus raising the strong possibility of higher Muslim support for the BJP in public and lower in terms of actual voting.

Indeed, this method has its share of caveats: first, definitive conclusions about voting behaviour can only be made from the (small) sample of Muslim-majority booths and, therefore, it is unwise to generalise the results to the aggregated state level. Further, it could be countered that Muslim-majority booths would be unusually resistant to penetration by the BJP and, surely, a survey would be better in that case. But not if there are chances of respondents lying to surveyors. This possibility cannot be ignored in case of Gujarat given the extant political environment where dissent is discouraged. Interviewer bias also gets pronounced, as was possibly the case in my own conversations with respondents. Within these (few) options, the best measure to generate definitive inferences—albeit for a small sample—is through homogeneous polling booth data.

I conducted a further analysis of 101 booths (including the previous 11) in seven assembly constituencies of Ahmedabad.¹⁸ Definitive inferences about voting

¹⁸ These are Vejalpur, Danilimda, Jamalpur-Khadia, Naroda, Asarwa, Ellisbridge and Dariapur. Following delimitation of constituency boundaries, these were declared as assembly constituencies for the first time.

behaviour could be drawn from 79 booths which had a sufficiently homogeneous Muslim population (96 per cent to 100 per cent). The maximum Muslim voting percentage for the BJP across all 79 booths was 10 per cent. Indeed, 10 per cent voting is not very different from Muslim voting percentages recorded in previous elections, contrary to political claims of Muslim voting being as high as 30 per cent in 2012.

By implication, the booth analysis pointed towards contradictory behaviour among Muslims. One theoretical reason to expect such behaviour would be the absence of a ‘hidden transcript’ (Scott 1990) among the Muslims leading to a type of expressive dissonance that limits the articulation of true feelings (Kuran 1998). Cognitive dissonance suggests that individuals tend to experience dissonance or inconsistencies between the cognition of action taken and opinions of their beliefs or values which tend to point to a different direction. The dissonance is often unavoidable and, indeed, discomforting. The discomfort prompts its alleviation through some kind of mental adjustment which will usually choose a path of least resistance (Festinger 1962; Kuran 1998; Elster 2007). For a Muslim who believed that the BJP is an anti-Muslim party, the new knowledge of the BJP’s inclusive measure to represent Muslims in the party could be dissonant with the cognition that the BJP is anti-Muslim. If this Muslim individual chooses to support the BJP for potential economic gains expressing his original private belief might now invite social disapproval from the majority Hindus for opposing an inclusive government and from his own community for opposing a government that seeks to make amends and provide benefits. This expressive dissonance—the inability to express oneself truthfully—leads to preference falsification in order to reduce the dissonance i.e. alteration of private preferences to avoid a negative reaction or tarnishing of social standing and, thus, concealment of misgivings (Kuran 1998). Thus a Muslim would overtly express his nationalism or mute any contrary views (e.g. denial of segregation). This is more likely for religious Muslims—especially those with visible religious signs which increase their vulnerability to being identified as orthodox Muslims.

The Muslim who personally believes that the BJP is anti-Muslim might even experience moral dissonance—value-based judgement of preferences—after having decided to support the party for economic benefits i.e. guilt for supporting a party that was responsible for anti-Muslim violence earlier and might organise future violence. He would want to reduce the dissonance through rationalisation: “We live in segregated areas by choice.” This is contrary to interviews I conducted as a journalist in 2005 in Juhapura and other neighbourhoods when Muslims resented segregation for economic reasons (e.g. higher rents of housing) as well as the subjugation it signified. Many Muslims would also express a perception of futility in expecting basic civic facilities, such as educational aid, from the ruling government. This disenchantment had propelled a campaign among Muslim citizens for private

Muslim schools at the time (*Times of India*, September 8, 2005). However, in 2010, a resident of Juhapura I met at the Muslim real estate fair said, “We know there is no other option but to live here, so why not make our lives better within our ghettos.” This was endorsed by respondent Amjad, who also rationalised the BJP’s involvement in the 2002 violence by citing the Congress’ inability to protect Muslims in the past. Salman believed that the anti-Muslim violence was “expected” because Muslims had killed Modi’s father earlier. This was a rumour that he had taken to be true, yet it justified the BJP’s perpetration of the violence in his mind.

The increase in number of individuals resorting to preference falsification would lead to a rise in social pressures on others to choose what preferences to communicate, thereby creating equilibrium where private opinion is at odds with public opinion. Thus a rise in Muslims publicly supporting the BJP would increase the overall pressure among other Muslims to find social approval, thereby leading them to support the BJP. Therefore, it is possible that expressive dissonance is greater among BJP Muslim supporters residing in non-homogeneous neighbourhoods where the pressure to conform to the public discourse would be very high, e.g. Juhapura. We could subsequently suspect more heterogeneous populations to have higher percentage of Muslims voting BJP (compared to almost entirely Muslim). So the upper bound of Muslims supporting BJP in all-Muslim areas cannot necessarily be extrapolated to more mixed areas. Conversely, it is also possible that Muslims publicly professing their support for the Congress are also experiencing expressive dissonance at the fear of being called a defector within their own community if they display their genuine feelings (that is, BJP support). For example, Salman’s public support of the BJP and discreet confession of voting for the Congress: “I’m the only one to support the BJP. My family will reprimand me if they find out... my neighbours don’t know that I like BJP.” This is possibly more likely in an intermixed neighbourhood, where Salman lived.

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

aggregate dissonance.

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

5.3. Hypothesis testing

Although the overall bounds on voting behaviour of Muslims for the BJP suggests low electoral voting for the party, given the above theoretical premises it was worthwhile to test certain hypothesis as follows. Table 3 summarises the results.

1. Effect of class

This identifies the effect of economic status on voting for the BJP. One might expect a rich Muslim to be more likely to vote BJP than a poor Muslim bearing limited resources to insulate future anti-Muslim violence. Contrarily, a poor Muslim would be more likely to vote BJP because of their higher dependence on state resources acquired through local political intermediaries (patronage).

To bring out the effect of class, for example, I do a comparison of booths located in upper middle-class to affluent neighbourhoods with those located in lower middle class/working class to slum neighbourhoods, by holding constant other variables of significance e.g. whether they are located in a Muslim-majority, intermixed or Hindu-majority neighbourhood and the level of violence they faced in 2002. Of course, given the caveat of homogenous booths, it was not possible to draw inferences of Muslim voting behaviour in an intermixed booth. What was possible to infer was Muslim voting behaviour in a homogeneous polling booth located in an intermixed neighbourhood (microlevel) or intermixed constituency (aggregate). The former was useful to test the microspatial hypothesis of interethnic contact.

In an intermixed constituency, between 1 per cent and 3 per cent affluent Muslims

had voted for the BJP.¹⁹

For a poor Muslim the bounds on voting ranged from a minimum 0 to 6 per cent and a maximum 1 per cent to 6 per cent (1A in Table 3).²⁰ It is plausible that the (marginally) higher likelihood of the poor to vote for the incumbent government is because of their higher dependence on patronage-based resources. Results are similar when booths located in an intermixed neighbourhood are compared. Poor Muslims are likely to have voted for the BJP from a minimum of 0 to 8 per cent and a maximum of 2 per cent to 9 per cent—higher than rich Muslims at 0 to 2 per cent and 1 per cent to 4 per cent respectively (1C in Table 3). However, this is at most modest evidence of the poor more likely than the rich to have voted in favour of the BJP given that the ranges of both groups overlap.

In a ghetto neighbourhood (1B, Table 3) affluent Muslims are more likely to vote BJP than poor Muslims. The bounds on voting for the affluent range from 1 per cent minimum to 10 per cent maximum and for the poor the range is 1 per cent to 4 per cent. Note that the bounds on affluent voting behaviour in this case are dominated by an outlier i.e. booth no. 270 which has Muslim BJP voting at 10 per cent²¹, for the mean values are not dissimilar: 2.7 per cent to 2.9 per cent for the affluent and 2.6 per cent to 2.7 per cent for the poor.

2. Effect of violence

In view of respondent testimonies, polling booth data would be expected to show that Muslims who faced fewer losses in 2002 would be more likely to show greater electoral support for the BJP. I compare polling booths located in neighbourhoods that faced medium to high level of violence in 2002 with those that were completely peaceful or experienced low levels of rioting.²² Keeping class and composition constant, I find that Muslims were, marginally, more likely to vote BJP in booths where violence was higher. Hypothesis 2B in Table 3 shows that the Naroda Patiya neighbourhood where 97 Muslims were killed in 2002—between 4 per cent and 8 per cent Muslims had voted for the BJP. Similarly, bounds on voting on one polling booth in Parikshitlalnagar, an intermixed working class neighbourhood which experienced

19 Three booths with 100 per cent Muslim population are compared. Muslims in these booths can be categorised from upper middle class to rich.

20 For booths with less than 100 per cent Muslim population (and ≥ 96 per cent), I provide the range of minimum and maximum voting bounds. In this case, I compare six booths inhabited by lower middle class to poor Muslims.

21 Relying upon local knowledge of name recognition based on religion, I find that Shia Muslims predominantly reside in this booth.

22 Estimate of the level of violence is based on my original dataset of killings as well as police records of 708 arrests made during the violence of 2002.

intermittent rioting for six months, was 8 per cent to 9 per cent (2A). In comparison, less violent Muslim-majority booths witnessed less electoral support for the BJP (1 per cent minimum to 2 per cent maximum). Of course, ranges again overlap indicating weak evidence of higher Muslim voting for the BJP in violent neighbourhoods. However, this does indicate that experience of direct violence does not necessarily translate into reduced voting for the BJP – a good illustration of interview evidence not matching behavioural evidence, providing ample reason for conducting booth level analysis.

But what can plausibly explain such behaviour – intuitively, voters affected by traumatic incidents would be unlikely to vote for a party they see as their perpetrator. Parikshitalnagar is perhaps easier to explain in the logic provided by Maqsood and his mother: “We are no longer in a Hindu-majority constituency so why vote for the Congress? At least the BJP should know that there are a few Muslims like us who voted for them and then reward us.” Evidence from the literature on clientelism suggests despite anonymity of vote, giving voters the impression that one has violated the secrecy of the ballot (Chandra 2007) can also motivate the voter in favour of one party or another. In 2014, ahead of the Parliamentary elections, Maqsood had changed his preference. “Now I don’t need to vote for BJP. The constituency limits in the Lok Sabha elections are very different from the municipal elections.” For Muslims of Naroda Patiya who experienced among the most brutal massacres, it is possible that the present anxiety of daily living outweighs the effect of past trauma. Alternatively, it could be that the anxiety of future violence triggers a security mechanism of allying with the government that the voters view as their perpetrators. Hypothesis 3 is useful in this case.

3. Contact hypothesis

Mixed neighbourhoods tend to have a moderating effect on intolerance (Massey, Hodson and Sekulic, 1999; Biggs and Knauss, 2006). One would expect then that Muslims in an intermixed neighbourhood would be more likely to vote BJP because of the alleviation of threat perception from Hindus due to contact or, by contrast, to seek higher social approval from the overall dominant Hindu majority. Keeping the level of violence and class variables constant, the hypothesis is supported.

In an intermixed neighbourhood like Parikshitalnagar, the bounds on voting range from 8 per cent to 9 per cent unlike the lower bounds for the Sanklitnagar neighbourhood in the Muslim ghetto of Juhapura from 2.6 per cent to 2.7 per cent (mean values for 10 booths).²³ Interestingly, within Juhapura, the more intermixed neighbourhood of Makarbahad voting bounds ranging from 3 per cent to 3.8 per

23 Although rioting did not permeate the border within Juhapura, rioting was extensive along its borders contiguous with Hindu neighbourhoods of Hindu-majority Vejalpur constituency.

cent (mean values for five booths; full range in 1C), marginally higher than its less intermixed neighbourhood. Following from hypothesis 3, it is possible, therefore, that Parikshitlalnagar's high BJP voting could be an outcome of intermixing overlaying the level of violence. As Heitmeyer (2009) notes, attempts at reconciliation in violence-affected places are not a form of pretence or ideology but a necessary coping mechanism to maintain stability in a precarious environment.

Unlike ghettos, Muslim enclaves in Hindu-dominated neighbourhoods show higher levels of BJP voting. One is Naroda Patiya, as seen in hypothesis 2. The other is Paldi, a Muslim enclave (100 per cent homogeneous) in a Hindu-dominated neighbourhood, voted 5 per cent in favour of the BJP (1E). It is possible that the sense of ethnic pride is more likely to overlay the social pressure of majority approval in a Muslim ghetto neighbourhood than in a Muslim enclave located in a Hindu-dominated place.

6. INTERVIEWS IN 2014

I interviewed 16 of the 43 Muslims who had voiced support for the BJP in 2010 and 2012, again in 2014. Four expressed their “disappointment” with the party and conceded their “mistake”. It was interesting to note Shaukat’s rationalisation of his new preference. “I no longer support the BJP. Why should I? The BJP has never shown reciprocal behaviour. If 500 of us Muslims turned up in their support in 2010 and again in 2012 why have they not even given us identity cards to prove we are party members?”

Shaukat also changed his views about segregation in the city to rationalise his new preference for the Congress. “Segregation is total now under the BJP. There was a time when Hindus used to live in my neighbourhood. But now there is no chance of that. Tell me, if the Congress was so bad as it is made out to be, why was there no *hijrat* (exodus) of Hindus from our area during the 1970s and early 80s?”

Evidently, Shaukat’s motivation to support the BJP earlier was his disappointment in the Congress for failing to provide individual material benefits – he believed that he would yet again shift from the Congress to the new reformist Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) if the latter were to provide him with civic benefits. Shaukat was among those voters who believed political parties are adept at knowing who voted for whom despite the secrecy of the ballot, as discussed previously. Although it is not feasible for each candidate to verify if every individual voter has voted (Gambetta 1993), Stokes (2005, 2007) has argued in her seminal work on clientelistic politics that the survival of patron-client electoral mobilisation depends crucially on the ability of the parties to monitor constituents’ votes, reward them for their support and punish them for defection – a phenomenon she terms “perverse accountability” (Stokes, 2005: 1) wherein *voters* are held accountable for their actions by *parties* (Stokes, 2007: 613, emphasis in original). One of the ways by which monitoring of voters becomes possible is through embedded social networks of actors, mostly political, who possess excellent local knowledge of constituents. The extent of their knowledge increases over time with increased interpersonal relations. Monitoring also becomes feasible, as mentioned earlier, when intermediaries or politicians give the impression that the vote is not anonymous. I witnessed an appropriate example during fieldwork in Jamalpur-Khadia assembly constituency of Ahmedabad in 2012. Voting had begun at 8 am and ended at 5pm. Around 4pm, I accompanied Zulekha, a political intermediary, with her ‘team’ of 8-10 women and one man, respondent Salman. Salman and the intermediary would furiously knock on doors and ask if the residents had voted. If they said yes, she would order them to show as proof their index finger for the electoral ink stain and ask them curtly to tell her the number of the button they pressed on the voting machine (3 was for Congress). “Three *aapa!* We have been

voting for the Congress forever you know that,” one of the residents said. Shazia, a former Communist Party member discretely told me that many residents believed that Ms. Zulekha had the ability to violate the secrecy of the ballot. Yet, as the polling booth analysis shows, this belief did not persist on a substantive scale.

Of the Muslims who continued to support the BJP, were Suraiyya and her team of Muslim women in Bombay Hotel. Nothing seemed to have changed in the civic amenities in the impoverished Muslim ghetto since I’d last visited it around elections in 2012. “We have hope in the BJP because the Congress has yet again failed to fulfil its promises although voters of this constituency brought it back to power in 2012.” It startled me, however, when they added: “But we also hope inshallah that Modi does not become the prime minister! He will create more riots...” When I questioned them about the paradoxical nature of their answer, they did not associate Modi’s return to power with local-level benefits. Zahir, the Muslim BJP senior party member conceded that the higher public support for the BJP than electoral voting “could be because people are afraid of future riots yet cannot avoid the bargaining process of Indian elections – I say you vote for me and I give you benefits, they say you give us benefits and we vote for you. It’s an endless process”.

7. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report investigates why Muslims of Gujarat would support the BJP, a party acknowledged to have perpetrated the anti-Muslim pogrom in the state less than a decade before. Ethnographic evidence from the period 2010 to 2012 suggests several possible explanations: patronage-based material benefits from the incumbent government; charismatic authority of chief minister Modi; and the effect of personal experience of the violence. Whereas interview evidence provides a multilayered view of the Muslim-BJP puzzle it cannot, on its own, distinguish between public and electoral support without systematic booth-level analysis. This is because anonymous referendum implies the possibility of public behaviour being distinct from electoral behaviour. Indeed, a polling booth analysis of 101 booths in Ahmedabad city for the 2012 assembly elections suggests more Muslims supporting the BJP in public but not voting for it. Contradicting the BJP's own claim of "over 30 per cent Muslims" having voted for them in Gujarat in 2012, likely to be based on constituency-level data, booth analysis shows the maximum voting for the BJP by Muslims was 10 per cent. This figure is not very different from Muslim voting for the BJP in Gujarat in the years prior to the violence. Of course, making ecological inferences from booth-level data has its own set of caveats, as I emphasise in section 5.2, which further highlights the uncertainty of claims made by the BJP about aggregate-level voting of Muslims.

One theoretical reason to expect contradictory behaviour—support in public and not at the ballot—would be the absence of a 'hidden transcript' (Scott 1990) among the Muslims leading to a type of expressive dissonance that limits the articulation of true feelings (Kuran 1998). I test a list of hypotheses at the booth level, holding other variables constant, to further explicate the voting behaviour of Muslims given their class, neighbourhood composition and effect of previous violence. Findings suggest that poor Muslims are more likely to vote for the BJP than affluent Muslims, a possible outcome of the greater vulnerability and dependence of the poor on state support. Departing from interview evidence, polling booth analysis suggests there being no evidence that Muslims in areas without violence were more likely to vote BJP than were those from areas with violence. Note that the evidence for each of these hypotheses tests is weak for the sample is restricted to homogenous booths and the range on the bounds of voting overlaps. What it does illustrate is that interview evidence may not necessarily match behavioural evidence, thus providing good reason to conduct systematic booth-level analysis that enables localised inferences. I also find the contact hypothesis operational: Muslims voters living in intermixed neighbourhoods were more likely to vote for the BJP than those living in Muslim-majority enclaves and ghettos. Notably, within ghettos, Muslim neighbourhoods sharing space with Hindu neighbourhoods showed higher BJP voting than tightly

homogeneous neighbourhoods. Contact with a majority group can alleviate the perception of threat from the group due to contact, which explains the high BJP voting by Muslims in intermixed neighbourhoods. By contrast, it is equally possible that the need for higher social approval from the overall dominant Hindu majority might be leading to the BJP voting. In ghettos, expressive dissonance is less likely because when subordinates (Muslims) assemble together autonomously expressive utility can be maximised. A hidden transcript becomes more distinct in such a case.

Public support for the BJP among Muslims had decreased by 2014 supporting the pattern indicated by the booth-level findings. In absence of the BJP's own inclusive politics to represent Muslims in the 2012 elections and with no tangible material benefits the social pressure to conceal misgivings about the BJP is likely to have reduced.

8. IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

a) Reducing information constraints: Clientelistic or patronage politics limits voters to being dependent on political intermediaries who can broker between the voter and the state for resources. The political, social and financial success of intermediaries, on the other hand, depends on their capacity to manipulate the implementation of these state resources (Berenschot, 2010, 2011). Dependence on political intermediaries is enhanced with the lack of a proper information channel between voter and politician. This is likely to compel voters to either embed themselves into the political system as intermediaries between voter and state (e.g. respondent Suraiyya) or vote for a candidate with a reputation for providing state-based resources in the past or a promise of providing such benefits in the future. The lack of information about incumbents tends voters to favour co-ethnics on the basis of trustworthiness (Chandra, 2004). Then, can a more transparent interface between politician and voter reduce the information constraint and, subsequently, in patronage systems? Experimental evidence finds this to be true. For example, Banerjee, Kumar, Pande and Su (2011) find that a campaign to educate slum dwellers about incumbent performance and qualification greatly reduced ethnicised voting as well as cash-based vote-buying. The poor are indeed more vulnerable to be targets of patronage-based politics for their greater dependence on the state and their limited access to information about the state. Greater voter education programmes in slums, through bodies such as the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR), can be put into practice.

b) Encouraging institutional autonomy: I specifically refer to institutions for the sustenance of law and order. Ethnic rioting between Hindus and Muslims in India (as also between other ethnic groups) crucially differs from insurgencies against the state. There is much evidence to suggest that political leaders act in complicity with rioters taking into account voting patterns of the rioters, the opposing ethnic group and the rival political parties. It is state intent and not state capacity (or state ‘weakness’) that is a key determinant of violence (Brass, 2003; Engineer, 2002; Wilkinson, 2004; Desai, 2009; Dhattiwala and Biggs, 2012). A similar connection has been made in journalistic accounts of the recent Muzaffarnagar riots (e.g. *Tehelka*, September 8, 2013).

Electorally motivated violence questions the legitimacy of entrusting political institutions with excessive power especially within a patronage democracy. Electors in a democracy should bear confidence in political leaders, not fear them. The basis of the fear is the political leadership’s control over law and order. State control over electorally-motivated violence becomes easier if the livelihood and professional

careers of the police are able to be manipulated by the political leadership.²⁴ During 2002, the BJP actively demoted police officers who attempted to prevent violence (Dhattiwala and Biggs, 2012). In 2006, the Indian Supreme Court enlisted directives for functional autonomy of the police (Singh and Others, 2006). An important directive was to constitute a State Security Commission, comprising both political and non-political members, to shield the police from political interference. As of August 2013, Gujarat was among 15 States that were yet to implement the most vital of the measures which would provide functional autonomy to the police, namely constituting the SSC and ensuring separation between law and order and crime investigation. The laidback response to the directives is one indication that the usual explanation given by ruling governments of their inability to control violence because of inadequate police strength or “state weakness” is a pretext to maintain control over law and order.

c) Ensuring legal provisions: A concrete measure was proposed in 2005 to hold the state accountable for future episodes of violence. This was the Prevention of Communal and Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparations) Bill, 2011. It was first drafted in 2005 by the National Advisory Council, an interface of civil society intellectuals and the central government. The Bill recognises the vulnerability of minorities (including Hindu Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) in ethnic riots, an aspect that has met with sustained contestation from the Hindu right. What is more relevant in terms of scholarly debate is its emphasis on making civil servants in charge of law and order in a state legally liable and guilty of “dereliction of duty” if riots are not controlled. In what could be called a step towards consociationalism or proportional representation of ethnic groups in the political system, the Bill vests the authority of punishing civil servants in the hands of a National Authority comprising incumbent and opposition political leaders besides membership from civil society. Its future success in maintaining peace during politically-motivated violence would be conjectural at this point, given that consociationalism has not guaranteed peace in deeply divided societies.²⁵ Or, as Varshney points out elsewhere, the Bill would be futile in controlling violence because violence is not necessarily an outcome of poor policing at the ground level (*Indian Express*, July 16, 2011). Despite real concerns and also the fact that micro-level factors for violence are multiple, it cannot be denied that law and order is a state-level responsibility in India and requires deterrents at the macro level. I would therefore argue in favour of measures such as the Communal Violence Bill. Rule of the law is an intrinsic feature of a vibrant democratic polity

24 Interview with RB Sreekumar, former Director General of Police (Gujarat State), 11 November 2011.

25 In colonial India, the consociational practice of giving separate electorates to ethnic minorities generated ethnic rioting (Varshney, 2002) and also interethnic competition between Hindus and Muslims than interethnic cooperation (Bhagat, 2012).

and instrumental in its elevation to a ‘liberal’ than merely an ‘electoral democracy’. For example, even though the Right to Information Act (RTI) of 2005 is often circumvented by politicians and bureaucrats in India and RTI activists continue to face lethal attacks, its main success lies in the recognition that a transparent interface needs to exist between leaders and electors. In absence of legal provisions, ethnic minorities who are not electorally rewarding will continue to face the dilemma of the Muslim voter of Gujarat today caught between the need for State resources and their own moral dissonance.

9. TABLES

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

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

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION BY RELIGION OF VOTERS AND VOTES CAST FOR BJP AND CONGRESS PER ELECTORAL BOOTH								
Assembly Constituency	Booth no.	Registered voters ^c				BJP vote in booth	Cong vote in booth	Other vote in booth
		Hindu in site	Muslim in site	Other Hindu	Other Muslim			
Jamalpur	170	74	135	218	830	136	506	102
Jamalpur	174	115	1252	0	0	64	481	256
Jamalpur	175	739	362	0	0	352	221	172
Jamalpur	176	191	850	7	184	106	488	192
Jamalpur	179	4	942	214	0	166	506	159
Jamalpur	51	3	10	27	1011	42	498	156
Jamalpur	180	1029	377	42	52	684	238	150
Jamalpur	158	1157	11	0	0	402	300	61
Jamalpur	164	57	9	560	2	340	72	15
Danilimda	96	12	419	0	437	51	503	14
Danilimda	98	262	721	0	0	146	486	25

^cThe total number of Christian voters in all field sites is 6; in other areas 31.

TABLE 2.1: MUSLIM VOTING PATTERN FOR THE BJP BY POLLING BOOTH [#]								
Assembly Constituency	Booth no.	Registered voters					Muslim vote to BJP	
		Hindu in field site %	Muslim in field site %	Other Hindu %	Other Muslim %	Total Muslim %	Min %	Max %
Jamalpur	170	6	11	17	66	76	0	24
Jamalpur	174	8	92	0	0	92	0	9
Jamalpur	175	67	33	0	0	33	0	100
Jamalpur	176	15	69	1	15	84	0	16
Jamalpur	179	0	81	18	0	81	1	25
Jamalpur	51	0	1	3	95	96	2	6
Jamalpur	180	69	25	3	3	29	0	100
Jamalpur	158	99	1	0	0	1	0	100
Jamalpur	164	9	1	89	0	2	0	100
Danilimda	96	1	48	0	50	99	8	9
Danilimda	98	27	73	0	0	73	0	30

[#]This is a sample table for 11 booths.

Table 3: Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Const code	Neighbourhood	Booth no.	Muslim electors per cent	BJP vote range		Characteristics	Control	
					Min per cent	Max per cent			
1. Effect of class									
A	52	Saudagar ni pol	47	100	2	2	Affluent	Intermixed constituency; enclave; Low violence	
	52	Moti Saudagar ni pol	49	100	3	3			
	51	Panchpatti	127	100	1	1			
	52	Kanch ki masjid	83	100	1	1	Working class		
	51	Shahpur Vankarvas	57	100	6	6			
	51	Dabgarwad	129	100	1	1			
	51	Nr Vanmali Vanka ni pol	71	98	2	4			
	52	Allahnagar	172	97	0	3			
	52	Allahnagar	177	99	1	2			
B	42	Juhapura Maktampura	259	100	2	2	Affluent	Hindu-dominated constituency; ghetto; Low to medium violence	
			260	100	1	2			
			261	100	2	2			
			265	100	2	2			
			267	100	1	1			
			268	100	2	2			
			269	100	2	2			
			270	100	10	10			
			271	100	3	3			
			266	99	2	3			
C	42	Juhapura Sanklitnagar	212	100	3	3	Working class	Intermixed neighbourhood; enclave; low violence	
			213	100	3	3			
			215	100	4	4			
			216	100	2	2			
			217	100	2	2			
			218	100	2	2			
			262	100	3	3			
			263	100	1	1			
			264	100	4	4			
			214	99	2	3			
D	54	Parikshitlalnagar	96	99	8	9	Working class	Intermixed neighbourhood; enclave; high violence	
E	44	Paldi	102	99	5	5	Affluent	Hindu-majority constituency; enclave; low violence	
2. Effect of violence									
A	54	Parikshitlalnagar	96	99	8	9	Medium	Working class; intermixed neighbourhood; enclave	
	51	Dabgarwad	129	100	1	1	Low		
	52	Allahnagar	177	99	1	2	None		
B	47	Naroda Patiya	196	96	4	8	High	Working class; Hindu-majority constituency; enclave	
3. Effect of Interethnic Contact									
A	54	Parikshitlalnagar	96	99	8	9	Intermixed neighbourhood	Working class; Muslim-majority constituency; medium to high violence	
B	42	Juhapura Sanklitnagar	See 1B	99-100	2.6 [†]	2.7 [†]	Ghetto (working class)	Hindu-majority constituency; medium to high violence	
		Juhapura Maktampura	See 1B	99-100	2.7 [†]	2.9 [†]	Ghetto (affluent)		
		Juhapura Makarba	See 1C	98-100	3 [†]	3.8 [†]	Ghetto (intermixed)		

† Mean value

* Makarba neighbourhood within Juhapura ghetto was intermixed, sharing borders with Hindu neighbours

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