

**COMMUNAL RIOTS AND WOMEN IN GUJARAT:
A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**

*DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE*

AWARD OF DEGREE

OF

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

By

PUSHPANJALI



**CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SOCIAL SYSTEMS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067**

2004

WITH THE BLESSINGS OF SHIVJI

AND

MY PARENTS

TABLE OF CONTENT

CERTIFICATE	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	
PREFACE	
CHAPTER-I	1-25
Introduction	
CHAPTER-II	26-47
Gujarat Communal Riots 2002	
CHAPTER-III	48-70
Muslim Women as Victims	
CHAPTER-IV	71-89
Hindu Women as Agents	
CHAPTER-V	90-96
Conclusion	
REFERENCES	97-105



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI 110 067


Centre for the Study of Social Systems
School of Social Sciences

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that dissertation entitled "*COMMUNAL RIOTS AND WOMEN IN GUJARAT: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY*" submitted by **PUSHPANJALI** is in partial fulfillment of eight credits out of a total requirement of twenty four credits for the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** of this university. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of the university and is her own work.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.


(PROF. ANAND KUMAR)
(CHAIRPERSON)


(DR. NILIKA MEHROTRA)
(SUPERVISOR)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

If this dissertation owes some commend, it is the result of my dear supervisor Dr. Nilika Mehrotra, whose constant support, sincere supervision, shcolarly suggestions and constructive criticism showed me the proper direction of this work. Without her encouragement, patience and forbearance with which she dealt my shortcomings, this dissertation would never had been complete. She has also helped me in evolving as a student as well as a person.

I am extremely grateful to Dr. Susan Vishwanathan, Dr. Nalini Sundar Rajan and Dr. Arvinder Kaur Bagga for their courtesy, cordiality and encouragement, which provided me impetus in completing this work. I would also like to thank my Center's Chairperson Prof. Anand Kumar for his help in the completion of this work.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my dear friends Anand Mohan, Veronica and Anuja for their their constant support throughout the course of my present work.

I should record my irredeemable debt to my parents and sisters who have been a constant source of inspiration and without whose love, affection, encouragement and unflinching support, the submission of this dissertation could not have been possible.

Finally I want to thank everyone, who has in some way or the other, helped me in completing my work.

Place: New Delhi

Pushpanjali
(PUSHPANJALI)

PREFACE

'Communalism/ethnic conflict' is seen as a chauvinistic and often violent – expression of hostility displayed by one religion on ethnic group towards another, with secularism being its antithesis and antidote. This is seen particularly in relation to the tragic events of partition of India. This communal disharmony and violence is again seen in the recent Gujarat riots, in its all horrific and brutal manifestation. The brutal violence against Muslim community in Gujarat has again shown that communal riots are not only a pathology in the society created by politicians but it is also a major stumbling block on the way of nation building in India.

We have seen the victimization of Muslim women at a large scale in Gujarat as never seen in independent India. In the process of inflicting violence against Muslim community, they were subjected to heinous forms of sexual, psychological abuses by majority community.

We have also seen the participation of Hindu women in the violence against Muslim community, including women. Given the notion of peace loving women and universal sisterhood among women ,it really baffles one's mind.

I undertook this study in pursuit to explore that why and how some women become victims and other became agent in a communal riot like Gujarat 2002.

The study is divided into four chapters. The first chapter introduces the problem and explores why and how women become victims and agents in communal riot in the light of available literature. It deals with different sociological views about communal riots (communalism), theories of gender construction and the relation of communalism to gender construction, particularly women.

The second chapter explores various factors, which initiated Gujarat riots, nature of the violence, major participants, the role played by state and the victimization of Muslim community.

The third chapter deals with why and how Muslim women were victimized in Gujarat riots, what were economic problems faced by them and what was the role of the state regarding these victimized minority women.

The fourth chapter deals with the role of Hindu women as agents in Gujarat riots and explores why and how they participated in the violence against Muslims.

Following the literature survey, I have presented my understanding and critical inferences as concluding remark in the last chapter.

**“ Gujarat ke firaq se hai khaar-khaar dil,
Betaab hai seenay mane atish bahar dil;
Marham nahi hai iske jakhm ka yahan mane,
Shamshir e hijr se jo hai figaar dil”.**

---- Vali Gujarati, Sufi saint poet,
(born in Ahmedabad, Circa 1650, died in Ahmedabad 1707.)

**{“My heart throng filled with longing for Gujarat,
Restless, frantic, flame, wrapped in the spring;
On earth their exists no balm for its wounds,
My heart split asunder by the dagger of separation”}**

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER-I

Introduction

“.....society is impossible without conflict. But society is worse than impossible without control of conflict.”

- Bohannan (1967).

We, as humans, may search for harmony because the reality of conflict affects the societal structure and the lives of social actors in it, but conflict/violence is increasingly occupying a certain space in our everyday lives.

Ongoing violence has blurred the boundaries between violence, conflict and peace. Whatever the reasons may be at the root of such increasing violence, but the striking feature of it, is that it has occurred between the actors who have occupied the same social space, who are staying together, who know each other. People inhabit the world even after knowing that the perpetrators and the victims, come from the same social space, and they continue to live, to survive and to cope.

Communal and ethnic conflicts have also become a part of plural societies especially South Asian region. Since 1980s, South Asian region has been witnessing a tremendous escalation of communal/ethnic violence accompanied by the emergence and growth of religious fundamentalism for e.g. India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh.

Women have a special place in this kind of communal violence. From the mass rape of Bosnian women as part of ethnic cleansing to the brutalization of

women in Gujarat, ethnic and religious conflicts are suffused with sexual violence against women. There is a political significance of this violence which enacted in the domestic sphere and its corollary, the rape of women as an instrument of warfare.

But over the years we have also seen that women are not only the victims of communal violence, but they are also sometimes support and take part in the violence against the 'other' communities. These two locations of women in the communal riots form the rationale of my study against which I am trying to explore the victimization and the agential trajectories of women in recent Gujarat riots in India 2002.

Objectives

The objectives of my study are, to explore the available literature on the nature of riots in Gujarat and what was the role of state therein? Secondly how gender identity is informed by communalism/ethnicity and why women become the focus point of such identity formation? The study attempts to explore how women became the victims in a communal riot and tries to find out the social-psychological-economic problems faced by women as victims/survivors. The other important question is on the nature of participation of women in the riot i.e. how and why some women became agents in a communal riot like Gujarat? And how communal ideology uses some women against the other women?

Methodology

The study is based on secondary literature-books, magazines, journals, newspapers, reports- which are used literally as well as interpretatively. I have taken

Gujarat riots 2002 as a case study because it is the most recent case of communal violence in its horrifying manifestation. The collection of literature was not a problem because lot of work has been done by different fact finding teams. But not much sociological literature exists on this theme. Ascertaining the validity/ideological bias of the available literature was also not possible. The literature is basically focused on the plight of Muslim community and women as victims, but it does not talk about the specific caste, class and occupation etc. of these women. There is also a non-availability of proper structured material on the participation of the Hindu women in Gujarat riot, the literature was in scattered form. Going through the literature was not an easy task for me as a researcher because of its emotionally touching overtones. Many a times, tears rolled in my eyes while reading the traumatic experiences of the victims.

This chapter is broadly divided into three parts i.e. different sociological views about communal riots (communalism), theories of gender construction and the relation of communalism to gender construction, particularly women.

Communal/Ethnic Violence

We can define communal/ethnic violence as the organized or sporadic effort of a community to destroy other communities. It can be described as violence of confrontation emerging from wrath of one community against the other due to injured status, interest, identity or feelings. It can also be described as a release of volatile catharsis of masses.

Varshney (2002) does not differentiate communal from ethnic. As Horowitz (1990) argues that all conflicts based on ascriptive group identities- race, language,

religion, tribe or caste-can be called ethnic.¹ This definition of ethnicity incorporates communal also.

Yogendra Singh (1996) locates the genesis of communal violence in the change and maladjustment between transcendental and instrumental values. As change in the instrumental values exposes the system to rapid transformation and social change, the complexities of tensions generated by it, increases and the strategy for the ideological management of the situation is required. Otherwise the structural dimension of this social transformation, itself generates tensions and communal riot is one manifestation of this tension.

Dumont (1980) also finds the roots of communalism in values and ideologies. Dumont says that Hindus and Muslims lived together for centuries, generally peacefully, yet, there was little fusion of their values; together they did not come to 'constitute a society'.²

Communalism has been also discussed as manipulation of identities along religious lines, as Bipan Chandra(1984) argues that communal riots occur because there is a development of communal ideology in society and it becomes the basis for the organization of political and economic interests along religious lines. Mohanty (1987:58) also perceives communalism as an ideology. He emphasizes the aspect of exclusiveness as a characteristic of communalism, which ordinarily sees an antagonistic relation between groups. But neither addresses how communal ideology gets transformed in violent conflict.

¹ For an analysis of how ethnicity on the basis of a myth of common ancestry can take so many forms, see Horowitz, Donald (1990):41-54.

² Also see Dumont (1970):93-94.

Economic factors have also been discussed at the root of communal riots. Randhir Singh (1988) analyses the problem of communalism within the wider parameters of social, moral and political crisis and the reaction of ruling classes in this crises. This definition takes notes of two dimensions of communalism economic and historical.

Desai (1984:32) locates the causes of communal violence by viewing them as manifestation and symptoms of a larger milieu that is created by rulers after independence. Obviously he is referring to the capitalist path of development and its inherent contradiction.

Engineer (1995) also provides an economic explanation as being the leading macro cause of Hindu Muslim riots. He argues that riots are an inevitable concomitant of the development process currently in progress in the country and it is the underdeveloped nature of Indian capitalism that facilitates the bourgeoisie to divert a class struggle into a caste / communal conflict.

But the economic explanation is not adequate. As a matter of fact, interested individuals and groups often seize the opportunity to derive economic gains after riots have begun. This is not the same as economic interests causing riots.

Socio-psychological variables have also been discussed as causing the communal riots. Naidu observes, "an economic or a political issue is simply the excuse for the pleasurable regression into a world of fantasy where the drama of historical antagonisms find pathological release"(1980:1).³

³ Smelsor also says that hostile intergroup outbursts may be generated not only by conflict of interest but may also arise out of normative mal-integration, differences in values as well as other kinds of strain, see Smelsor, Neil J.(1962).

State has also been discussed as the source of communal violence. Nandy (1990) locates the increase in violence in the nature of the state in the societies of South-Asian region. Communal ideology may reflect the hatred of the other groups, but in Nandy's reckoning, it may also be an expression of a group's attempt to create a legitimate space for itself in public domain- especially in view of the homogenising pressures of the modern state.

Pandey (1990) makes a similar argument when he perceives communal riots as the result of colonial construction. In the hands of British, a primordial antagonism between Hindus and Muslims dating back centuries became the master narrative even though there was evidence of their coexistence. He further argues with respect to partition riots that "one might suggest that violence and community are constitutive of each other. Violence marks the limit of the community....." (1977:2037)

Communal riots is not only the question of hatred towards the other but it is also the question of one's own identity precedence. Gupta (1996) says communal identity is an ascriptive identity that becomes the basis for collective mobilization. As these identities are prior to one's full range of socialization, they arouse the passion, where one is ready to die for the irreducible essence of one's being.⁴

Kakkar (1995:189) makes a similar point when he says that identities like Hindus and Muslims are preferred rather than class, profession or other because the latter lack an encompassing world view. They are devoid of that essential corpus of

⁴ He is talking along the primordial line of identity formation. See Gupta, Dipankar (1996).

myths in which people have traditionally sought meaning, especially at a time their world appears to have become meaningless.⁵

While focusing on the missing variable of civil society in the discussion on communal riots, Varshney (2002:3) seeks to establish an integral link between the structure of civil society on one hand and ethnic or communal violence on the other. The focus is on the inter communal not intra communal networks of civic life which bring different communities together. These networks are associational and quotidian. Business associations, professional organizations, reading clubs, sports clubs, trade unions and cadre based political parties are some of the examples of former. Everyday forms of engagement consists of such simple, routine interactions of life as Hindu and Muslim families visiting each other , eating together often enough, jointly participating in festivals and allowing their children to play together in neighbourhood. Both forms of engagement, if robust, promote peace; contrariwise, their absence or weakness opens up space for communal violence.

Communal conflicts between Hindus and Muslims must be seen at several levels, because this is not a unitary or homogenous phenomena. It is useful to consider the frameworks of interests separately from, as well as in relation to the realm of ideas, which appear in this case as religious traditions. While taking into account the political manipulation of religious identities, we should not ignore the historical, social and economic causes promoting the phenomena of communalism. In its ever changing manifestation, it is the combination of interests, with inherited,

⁵ Neo-Marxist thinker Hebermas argues that conflict in today's world is moving away from issues of economy and political distribution towards a focus on the 'grammar of forms of lives' see Hebermas, J. (1987).

antagonistic, social separation, which become the basis for the social organization of communal identities.

Another consideration is that all riots are not alike. In some riots political factors dominate, in others economic rivalry and disparity plays a role and in some others religious considerations are paramount. Many a time, a configuration of two or three factors trigger of a communal violence.

We see that the problem of communal violence has been approached by social scientists with varying emphasis, but there is a general tendency to treat it as gender neutral. Recently Feminists from different streams like Das (1990), Butalia(1998), Menon and Bhasin(1998), Sarkar(1995), Bachchheta, Basu, Agnes and Kishwar(1998)⁶ have questioned the earlier studies and analysed and documented the location of women in communal riots.

The first major attempt came from Veena Das(1990), who worked on the women victims of 1984 Delhi riots. She makes a strong case for privileging the voice of the survivor in our understanding of violence. She has also analysed the experience of women during the partition of India and the role of patriarchal state in this.

Feminists working in the area of partition history⁷ have now begun to deconstruct the seemingly 'gender neutral' meta narratives of this history. The impulse behind this dismantling of a homogenized partition history is to foreground

⁶ see Kishwar, Madhu(1998). For Sarkar, Bachchheta and Basu see Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars(1993).

⁷ See Menon, Ritu and Kamala Bhasin (1998). Also Butalia, Urvashi (1998).

the pain, suffering, loss and dislocation of the people, particularly women. Butalia (1998) has documented at large how women were doubly victimized in the partition riots, first by the rioters and then by the state in the process of reclaiming these women.

From the work of these scholars, several explanatory factors emerge as to why women's sexuality was linked with the 'honour' of the family, the community and the identity of nation. They argue that it had to do with twin discourses of patriarchy and religion.

After post Babri-Masjid demolition riots the agency of women came to occupy some focus. With respect to partition riots, Butalia observes that it is very difficult to determine in some situations whether the women were victims or agents of patriarchy. She informs us that often women's interests got tied up 'with those of their men and their class' and this was a self-defeating notion of women's agency.

Sarkar(1999) draws attention to the emergence of women activists in Hindu right. She says that the induction of women into Hindutva politics has given many women a sense of agency and warns us of the real dangers of such agency since it demands submission to patriarchy and is essentially tied to a political agenda.⁸

Thus we see a common tendency to see women's agency as working under the guidelines of the patriarchal system, but this is not always the case. This is an aspect which needs a serious sociological endeavour.

⁸ Also see articles in Sarkar, Tanika and Butalia, Urvashi (eds.)(1995).

To understand why women become the special victims and agents of communal riots, we need to understand how gender is constructed and men and women come to occupy different social positions.

The Social Construction of Gender Identity

Gender is the binary division of people into male and female, a categorization which becomes fundamental to people's sense of their identity and carries with it associated expectations of patterns of behaviour (Candace and Zimmerman, 1991:14).

Gender becomes an omni-represent identity which can not be reduced to sexual differences. It has to be understood as an interrelated set of social structure that define men and women in terms of their reproductive roles & organizes social life around sex and sexuality (Connell, 1987).

Our identities as subjects in the world are dependent on our understandings of those identities; Humanity is male and man defines women not in herself but as relative to him. He is the subject she is the 'other' (Johnson, 1991:102).

The power to define a group or person goes hand in hand with the power to control that person or group. Gender is an ongoing effect of meanings and definitions culturally produced and circulated and crucially these definitions have very real natural consequences in our lives (Tripp, 2002).

There are some major approaches to gendered identity in sociological analysis. One of the important approaches is Psychoanalysis which takes a more

complex view of identity and allows us to explore the psychological as well as social dimensions of our gendered identity.⁹

According to Lacan (1982), we come to understand the meaning of the phallus as the first sign of (sexual) difference of exclusion (from our parents relationship) and of absence (our separation from the mothers), we gradually come to grasp binary divisions of meanings in language also based on difference, exclusion and absence. The phallus is therefore a kind of pilot boat signifier leading into language.

This lays the ground for Lacan's view that rational thinking and the subjectivity it creates through language are effectively phallic (because grounded on the phallus as first sign of difference) and therefore masculine.

Women enter culture in a different way as an absence or double lack, those who do not have the phallus and are therefore without an autonomous subject position. The women lacking a phallus can gain subjectivity only through being the phallus, that is confirming the status of the phallus through her desire for men.¹⁰ So we see that woman occupies the second place in the social order of meanings.

Social constructionist theories of gender can be divided into two types- Materialist and Discursive. They recognize that the biological division into sexes is socially mediated, 'in the sense that the hierarchical division of humanity into two transforms an anatomical difference into a relevant distinction for social

⁹ See Freud, Sigmund (1905), also see, Freud (1933). For a feminist interpretation see Minsky, R. (ed.) 1996.

¹⁰ Lacan is also a psychoanalyst. See Alsop, Rachel, Annette Fitzsimons and Kathleen Lennon (2002):51-54. Also see Lacan, Jacques (1982).

practice'(Delphy cf.Jackson,1996:121) .The study of social construction of gender helps us to understand how gender is shaped and given meaning by the structure of a society.

There are two feminist versions of materialistic standpoint. The first attempts to utilize an explicitly Marxist framework for analyzing the structure of social relations. The second makes central use of the concept of patriarchy(Alsop et. al.,2002).

The term patriarchy appeared in the work of Kate Millet's 'Sexual Politics' (1970). Within radical and revolutionary feminists thought patriarchy emphasizes that women as a group are subordinated and oppressed by men. They look in particular to men's control over women's bodies, in terms of their fertility and sexuality and in their exercise of control over them through violence both domestic and sexual(Daly,1978).

In Marxist and Socialist feminist thought the status attributed to patriarchy in explaining women's position in society and their understanding vis-à-vis men is also varied. One of the most influential and interesting attempts comes from France, in the work of Christine Delphy. In her essay 'The Main Enemy' (1977:16) she develops a theory of gender which locates women and men in opposing classes. Her Argument is that the appropriation and exploitation of their labour within marriage constitutes the oppression common to all women.

Morgan(1984:4) says that there is a common condition, which is experienced by all human beings who are born female, highlighted as the institution

of marriage, control of reproductive freedom the war on women's sexuality, pornography, prostitution, and sex tourism.

But what is required is a calling into question of the term 'woman' as a basis for unity(Mohanty,1992). What it means to be a 'woman' or a 'man' varies according to other different identity features, of positionality, historical time, class, ethnicity and bodily differences. This crisis has led many feminists to see the importance of what has been termed as postmodernism. Although it is impossible to generalize across very different thinkers, there are some common elements within postmodernist thought(Nicholson,1990).¹¹

Post modernist theorist reject notion of a coherent unified self, capable of rational reflection and agency, in favour of a model of a self which is fragmented, constantly in a process of formation, The theorizing of gender in response to these strands of thought comes to emphasize the process whereby subjects become gendered, as a process in which subjectivities are formed in relation to the meanings that people have available to them. In this process, becoming gendered cannot be separated from other aspects of becoming. Discourse theories are inspired by this Postmodern trend(Alsop et.al.,2002:81).

For Foucault, the emergence of subjectivity is a process of subjectification. The subjectification concerned is the making of ourselves by becoming subject to the norms which are implicit in the discourses which provide our self understanding. We mould our bodies and bend our behaviour in accordance with the 'men' and 'women' – people we take ourselves to be – but are, infact turning ourselves into.

¹¹ Also see Weedon C. (1987).

There are always many and contradictory discourses, which are linked with power in different ways, for e.g. alongside discourses of women as passive and technophobic are emerging images of women as assertive, competent and in control of technology(Sawicki,1988). This allows us recognition that gender becomes interarticulated with other aspects of subjectivities.¹²

Attention to the working of discourses also reveals how differences between women are constructed and put to the service of communalism. Hindu women become the symbol of the higher moral and civil standards. Muslim women seen of uncivilized practices from which they need rescuing by Hindus.

Feminist theorists have focused on the question of embodiment which is crucial for analyzing how the effects of dominant, sexualized notions of 'woman' upon the dispositions and practices of women may be oppressive but are not completely determining(Bartky,1988). In Grosz's (1994) words 'the body is a transitional entity'.

In this contemporary gender theory the work of Judith Butler is central. Butler(1990:viii) has developed performative theory of gender.¹³ For Butler, it is the 'epistemic regime of presumptive heterosexuality', which drives our division into male and female, and which itself structures our understanding of biology'.

Butler argues that 'No doer behind the deed'. We become subjects from our performances and the performances of others towards us. Although, there are variety

¹² Gender loses the foundational place as Anne McClintock says, 'race, gender and class are not distinct realms of experience..... Rather they come into existence in and through relation to each other,' see McClintock, Anne (1995).

¹³ For her sex could not qualify as a prediscursive anatomical facticity because every recourse to body has been interpreted by cultural meanings, see Butler (1990):8.

of ways in which gender can be performed there remain certain dominant ideals which reinforce the power of certain groups, e.g. men, heterosexuals over others.

The action of gender requires a performance that is repeated. This repetition is at once a reenactment and re-experiencing of a set of meanings already socially established (Ibid:140). In different contexts and times a repetition can take on a different meaning, undermining or subverting the dominant norms (1993:226). Butler shares with Foucault that power is not only prohibitive but also enabling. Without such performativity we would have no way of becoming subjects, no way of exercising agency (Alsop et. al., 2002:99).

Bourdieu has conceptualized the subject in habitus. His understanding of habitus as a generative rather than a determining structure is expressed in a dialogical temporality denoting both the ways in which norms are inculcated upon the body and also the moment of praxis or living through of these norms (MacNay, 2002:36).

Bourdieu (1992) claims that large scale social inequalities are established, not at the level of direct institutional discrimination, but through the subtle inculcation of power relations upon the bodies and disposition of individuals. This process of corporeal inculcation is an instance of what Bourdieu calls 'symbolic violence' or a form of domination which is 'exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity'.¹⁴

¹⁴ Bourdieu says that gender as a primary symbolic distinction is used to play out other social tensions, thereby entrenching them further, see Bourdieu (1979):382.

Bourdieu argues that the principle of isotimie – equality in honour that governs men's games excludes the feminine entirely. However, their subordinate position means that women remain complicit with these men's games of self assertion and thus participate by proxy (par procreation) in their own subordination and serve as 'flattering mirrors' to the games of men(1990).

He employs the terms 'regulated liberties' to denote a more complex relation between the dominant and its subjects. The idea of 'regulated liberties' thinks of political agency and change within gender norms in non-oppositional terms(1991:102).¹⁵

Agency

From the above discussion we see that an investigation of identity introduces the related concept of agency and resistance. To 'be' an agent or to have an agency denotes the ability to negotiate power. It requires a certain self image as active and participatory, entailing the subject's capacity to make meanings in her interaction with others(Mohanty and Ynguesson cf. Bosworth,1999). When the formation of subjectivity is understood as a result of lived relation between embodied potentiality and material relations, then an active concept of agency emerges(MacNay,2000:16).

She is an individual who can only be understood in terms of the community in which she is located, she is a 'concrete' rather than a 'generalized' other(Benhabib,1987). The theorization of 'gender' as a constitutive element of identity has facilitated an appreciation of the role of social variables such as race,

¹⁵ These show how feminine subject is synchronically produced as the object of regulatory norms by phallogocentric symbolic systems and formed as a subject or agent who may resist these norms.

class in the construction of gender identity(Williams,1993:256). Once gender is understood to be both 'in process' and 'performance' it becomes possible to appreciate the women's ability to act within the confines of tradition(Bosworth,1999:103).

The forms and distribution of agency are always culturally and politically constructed. At the same time, we must assume that agency – defined minimally as a sense that 'the self is an authorized social being' is part of simply being human and thus its denial or absence is as much of a problem as its construction(Ortner,1996:10).

There is a tendency to see women as identified with male games, or as pawns in male games, or as otherwise having no autonomous point of view or intentionality. At the very least, it appears that even if women have their own projects, these do not significantly organize the cultural order of gender representations and practices, which largely embody a male point of view. But there is a necessity for retaining an active intentional subject without falling into some form of free agency and voluntarism.

Now in the light of above analysis we will see that how community/ethnicity constructs gender, in general and women in particular.

Community/Ethnicity and Women

According to Cohen (1985:12), community is a group within which members have something in common amongst themselves and who also share a similar difference to other groups. The kind of presence of similarities and differences in

social organization lies at the heart of questions of identity. Defining community in terms of ethnicity relates to the politics of collective boundaries dividing the world into 'us' and 'them'.¹⁶

Gender divisions often play a central organizing role in specific constructions of ethnicity, marking ethnic boundaries and reproducing ethnic difference (Yuval,1980). The 'proper' behavior of women is often used to signify the difference between those who belong to the collectivity and those who do not. Different categories of women within the collectivity may participate in ethnic processes in different ways, according to their class position, age, marital status and sexuality. They develop their own 'patriarchal bargains'(Kandiyoti,1988) although the notion of 'womanhood' tends to have a unified ideological connotation within ethnic, as well as within feminist discourses.

In the introduction to their volume, Anthias and Yuval-Davis(1989) suggest that there are five major ways in which women are involved in ethnic and national processes:

1. as biological reproducers of members of ethnic collectivities;
2. as reproducers of the boundaries of ethnic/national groups;
3. as participating centrally in the ideological reproduction of the collectivity and as transmitters of its culture;
4. as signifiers of ethnic/national differences – as a focus and symbol in ideological discourses used in the construction, reproduction and transformation of ethnic/national categories;

¹⁶ Ethnic phenomena in all their diversity, are various forms of ideological constructs which divide people into different collectivities and communities 'imagined ones' to use Anderson's terminology. See Anthias, Floya and Yuval Davis, Nira (1983), also see Anderson, Benedict (1983).

5. as participants in national, economic, political and military struggles.

Gender identity is usually translated in terms of the domains of public and private spheres for men and women. Private sphere is what Sherry Ortner would regard as nature symbolizing reproduction, nurturing capacities, survival and something which is assumed to be 'basic', Nature represents the women whereas culture represents the men. Nature is tender, physically and intellectually inferior to her counter part and weak in character. So, the nature has to be controlled by culture Man transcends the nature for his own use.(Ortner,1996) The underlying fact of the private sphere for women is the control of the community over their sexuality and reproductive power.

Identity of a community is constructed on the bodies of women. Proprietary rights over women are defined by placing them within the family and community or challenged by removing them from the realm of family and community. Both these processes are integral to identity formation which is defined by and through the aggression on women. This aggression is mediated by caste and community especially in situations where there is a precipitation of caste and community interests. In an atmosphere charged with polarized interests, women of particular communities are targeted for attack (Kannabiran,1996:33).

Public/political discourse on women first classifies them by caste and community, creating hierarchies so that different classifications co-exist and separate the 'normal' from the 'abnormal' within and between levels. Those who are perceived as being outside the normal cannot assert a legitimate claim to protections from the State, not just the women, but the communities they belong to as well.¹⁷

¹⁷ To extend this argument, women of minority communities are located outside the Indian State. Constructing their 'otherness' then is the beginning and the end of constructing the 'otherness' of their community vis-à-vis the Indian community.

An issue which needs further exploration is the question of why women become the symbols and repositories of communal/group/national identity. Anderson has pointed out that nationalism describes its object in the language of kinship or the home, both of which denote something which is natural and given(1983:131).The synonymity of the nation, community or other imagined communities with these natural and given identities makes it possible to die in defense of them. The merging of the nation/community with the selfless mother/devout wife evokes the obvious and necessary response to come to her defence and protection.

In addition, women represent the domain of authenticity, precisely because of their restriction to the private sphere (Chhachhi,1991). “Discourses of ethnic distinctiveness, ‘race’ and nation call upon metaphoric of blood, kith and kin, heritage and sexuality. Women occupy a central place in the processes of signification embedded in racism and nationalism(Davis and Anthias,1989) .

With this logic of ‘Honour’, women become victims in the communal/ethnic violence. Communalism today means the advocacy of violence notes Pandey (1993:2). This raises the question how communalism operating within patriarchal structures of power, implies advocacy of violence often sexual violence, towards women.

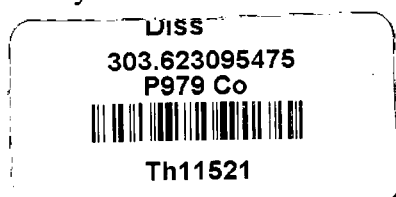
Communal violence frequently resorts to violation of the others’ women, for as Kamala Visweswaran (1990:68) reminds us that a woman’s modesty signifies the masculinity of her community. ‘She becomes, the symbol of violence as the shame and subjection of her community, is represented in her’.

As several feminists have noted that patriarchal discourses on the modesty of women are really about sexuality, sexuality which Michel Foucault posits as 'a dense transfer point for relations of power... one of those endowed with the greatest instrumentality'(Foucault,1981), is even more boldly defined as a vector of oppression by feminist Gayle Rubin (1984:293) who asserts that much of the oppression of women is 'borne by, mediated through and constricted within sexuality'.

Rape of the other man's woman is a way of humiliating him and showing access to his property. Rape serves the double purpose violate the women and humiliate the men of her family and community by occupying her body(Butalia,1999). "Rape even in an individual context is an affirmation of women as objects of pleasure and an underlining of power of men. In a collective context rape becomes, an explicitly political act and in the context of organized aggression, it becomes a spectacular ritual, a ritual of victory – the defilement of the autonomous symbol of honour of the enemy community"(Agarwal,1995).

But rape in communal violence should also be seen in the context of general hatred against women. Otherwise how can one explain the specific kind of violence directed against women as – cutting of breasts, insertion of objects in vagina, slashing open of stomach and others. According to Pohl "war also becomes an adventure where fantasies of destruction unconsciously directed against women are encouraged and acted out"(Pohl cf. Seifert,1999).

Moreover the social construction of the feminine implies, what (Adam cf. Seifert, 1999) calls a 'vulnerability to assault', something that the construction of masculinity does not include.



Diss
303.623095475
A756
L0

Following the above discussed arguments, I argue that by this same logic women participate in communal violence against others. It has become clear over the past few years that caste and religious community are much stronger in women's lives than gender issues at least in the situations of communal strife. All over the South Asia we have witnessed the phenomena of right wing fanaticism highlighting women leaders and giving them roles to propagate religious and social messages. They are the new mothers in the fatherland, and it would be unrealistic to discount the appeal of such right wing charismatic movements for women (Chhachhi cf. Bagga, 1997).

Women can be simultaneously actor and hostage to nationalism communalism. Those who govern us use identity process to do so.¹⁸ Sylvia Walby (1996) says there are two main forms of patriarchy can be private and public, Private, patriarchy is characterized by the domination of the patriarchal relations in the household. Public patriarchy is dominated by employment and the state. In private patriarchy the mode of expropriation of the women is individual, by the woman's husband or father. In public sphere, patriarchy is collective, by men acting in common whereas in the private, the dominant strategy can be characterized as exclusionary, as women are excluded from activities in the public domain, and thereby constrained to the domestic. In public patriarchy the dominant strategy is segregationist whereby women are allowed to enter all spheres, but segregated and subordinated there.

¹⁸ As Sylvia Walby says that ethnic/national projects benefits the interests of different groups and genders differentially, see Walby, Sylvia (1996).

The sexualisation of race, caste, etc, more than anything brings home the fact that identities, more often than not, are about questions of power, and gender exists as a signifier or as what Patricia Uberoi(cf. Sethi,2002) calls a 'trope' in these power relations.

Women are thought as the carriers of authenticity; this puts them in a difficult position vis-à-vis their gender and religious identities. This dilemma needs to be recognized to understand why some women accept their 'construction' in order to defend their culture. One's gender identify loses its appeal if it is located within a struggle for one's ethnic identity (Bagga,1997:36). But this does not mean that women only work at the behest of the community they are related with.

Women and Agency

Like most other concepts, agency is also a gendered concept. Discourses about sexuality and gender frequently construct men and women – as inhabiting different domains of agential capacities. In many cultures there are explicit associations between men, virility, activity and aggressiveness on the one hand and identification of women with utter passivity, servility and receptivity (Sethi,2002).

Sherry Ortner (1974:72) attributes women's supposed lack of agency to the prevalence of the notion, widespread across the cultures that women are closer to nature while men reside in the realm of culture. So women are associated with the 'domestic' or 'private' rather than the 'public' domain of social, political and economic life, which only men animate and transform.¹⁹

¹⁹ Michele Rosaldo also claimed the salience of this distinction, which provided "a universal framework for conceptualising the activities of sexes". See M. Rosaldo. (1974):23.

However, Women should not be seen as passive receptacles of these discourses. It is possible to retrieve the agential capacities of women that may sometimes defy neat categorizations in terms of conventional typologies of social and political action. In that women's public roles are characterized by a politicization of their private roles (Sethi,2002). Agency is usually visible in 'specific articulations of consent and resistance' (Sangari cf.Sethi,2002). Which enables as well as constrains women from making their own history.

The recognition of consent and internalization of ideological domination should not however be reduced to the crude formulation of 'false consciousness' or 'misrecognition' of one's interests (Barrett,1980:110), what is required instead is a shift towards an understanding of the larger social processes, which impinge upon patriarchy and which have the power to generate in their specific permutations of ideologies and material practices – actions ranging from active collusion to passive, even indifferent acquiescence – which sustain and reproduce patriarchal systems(Sethi,2002).

The forging of this consent may be explained through the related concepts of 'investment' (Holloway,1992) and 'compensation'(Perrot et.al.,1990). Women act in certain ways or choose certain subject positions, such as that of a good mother or a faithful wife, because what Wendy Holloway says they have an 'investment' in doing so or as Perrot et al argues, they are able to extract 'compensations' from the system in doing so. Quite obviously, the benefits women are able to seize from the system vary greatly across time and space as well as across classes and it involves tacit or overt acceptance of other grids of inequality. It is in this light that women's

complicity with projects such as that of Hindu nationalism must be understood (Sethi,2002).²⁰

Amrita Basu suggest that the prying loose of sex from gender roles during moments of upheaval may enable Hindu women to engage in certain forms of activism, including violent ones, which are normally precluded. Riots may enable activism on the part of women from majority communities by freeing them from the restrictions which middle-class women generally face (1994).

How useful is feminist theory when the perpetrators of violence are self-consciously masculine and the victims are feminized, but men figure among the victims and women among the agents? Indispensable, Basu would argue, but only if it emphasizes the centrality of gender, or the social organization of sexual difference rather than sexual difference itself. She follows Joan Scott's (1988) lead when she argues that 'gender is one of the recurrent references by which political power is conceived, legitimized and criticized' (Scott,1988:45). These references may have little to do with biological sex. Maurice Godelier (cf. Basu,2000) notes, 'It is not sexuality which haunts society, but society which haunts the body's sexuality. Sex related differences between bodies are continually summoned as testimony to social relations and phenomenon that have nothing to do with sexuality'.

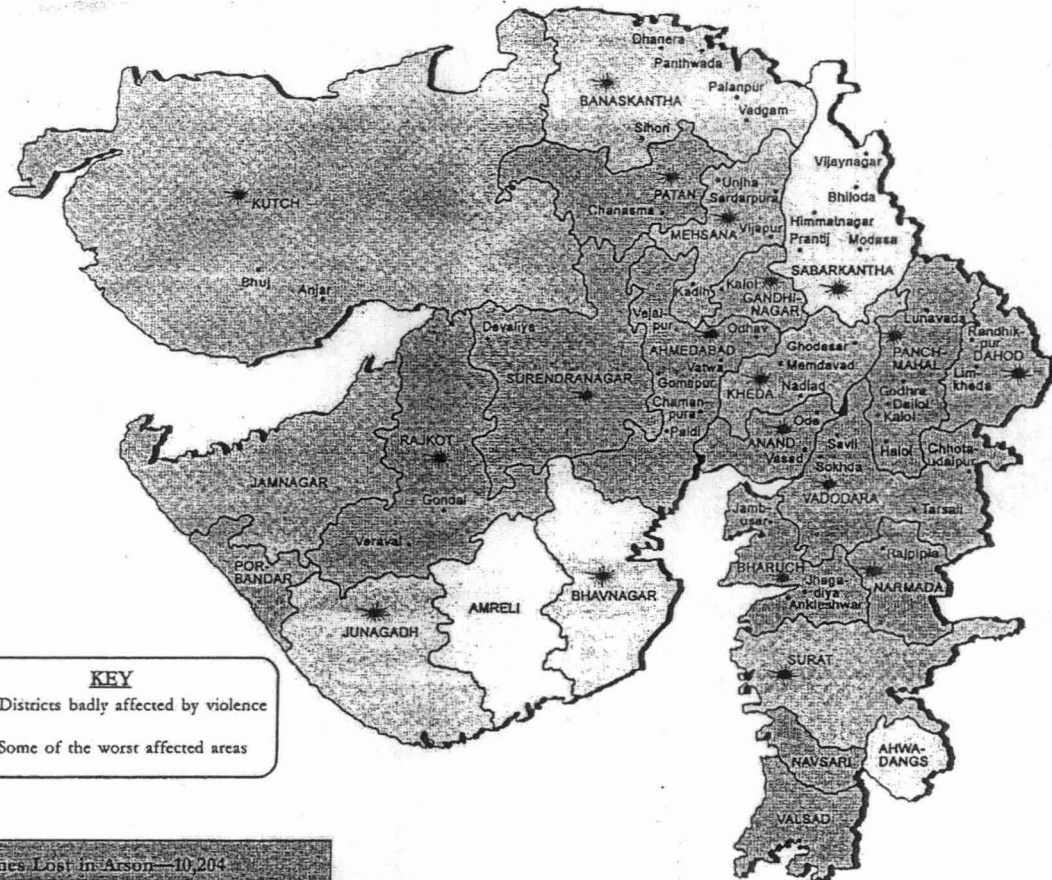
This existing patriarchal/communal structures form the background against which we can analyse how women become victims and agents of communal violence. In the next chapter we will discuss the factors, process and participants of Gujarat riots.

²⁰ The concept of 'gender strategy' given by Hochschild also explains this. Gender strategy is a plan of action through which a person tries to solve problem at hand, given the cultural notions of gender at play. See Hochschild (1989):15.

CHAPTER-II

GUJARAT COMMUNAL RIOTS 2002

GUJARAT



KEY
 * Districts badly affected by violence
 • Some of the worst affected areas

Homes Lost in Arson—10,204
 Reconstruction assistance—1,300
 Shops Burnt—10,429
 Shops Ransacked—1,278
 (Few if any have recd. compensation)
 Latt-galas lost due to arson—2,623
 Rs. 10,000 paid to start livelihood—1,022
 (Officials Figures and Claims)

Relief and Rehabilitation figures
 Official Number of Deaths—762 (including Godhra 822)
 Unofficial Estimates of Deaths—2,000
 Unofficial Figures of Missing Persons—2,500
 Compensation Paid—439 cases
 Cash Dole—7,428 families (Official claims)

Statistics on Relief Camps
 Number of People officially declared taking shelter
 103 Relief Camps: Number of Persons—1,13,697
 District wise break up:
 Ahmedabad—66,292 in 44 camps, Vadodara—12,753,
 Sabarkantha—8,547, Panchmahal—8,271, Anand—5,200,
 Dahod—4,536, in Mehsana—2,637, Kheda—1,267
 (These are figures given to the Gujarat governor, Sundersinh Bhandari
 by the governor headed all party committee on relief camps
 A week ago the figure was 1,09,503 in 102 relief camps.
 Within three days, the number went up by more than 4,000.)
 On March 21, 97,517 persons were taking shelter in 98 relief camps.
 The numbers went up on March 26 to 97,998 in 101 relief camps.
 Several new camps came up in Ahmedabad and Sabarkantha districts
 officials said.

Insurance Claims—4,564 applications
 Total Amount Claimed—Rs. 158.57 crores
 Only three cases worth Rs. 21,000 cleared
 (one for a small industrial unit, the second for a vehicle
 and the third of an engineering establishment)

CHAPTER-II

Gujarat Communal Riots 2002

This chapter explores various factors which initiated Gujarat riots, nature of the violence, major participants, the role played by the state and the victimization of the Muslim community.

Communal riots are not new to India, but Gurajat carnage that began on February 28, 2002 after the burning of two train cars of Sabarmati Express in Godhra has shaken the whole world, not just India. There has been a widespread feeling of shock and disbelief out side Gujarat that the cruel and barbaric acts of violence that began on the morning of February 27 at Godhra and have since engulfed a large part of the state, could have taken place in Gandhi's Gujarat. Gujarat did not face the intensity of communal conflicts and violence of the kind and degree that took place in many other parts of the country preceding or during the partition also (Sheth, 2002:15).

As for Gandhi's Gujarat and the Gujaratis' unique proclivity for peace, this blighted state has been the site of recurrent riots since 1969. The process of communal polarization in Gujarat really began with the 1969 riots in Ahmedabad. And since then, riots of one kind or the other have been recurring in some sort of a pattern every few years in one or the other city in Gujarat (Ibid:17). The years 1969, 1981, 1985, 1990 and 1992-93 were each marked by major communal bloodletting. Varshney (2002:97) has argued that Gujarat has the highest per capita rate of deaths in communal violence. But the recent riots have appeared to be unparalleled in the

history of the state since partition. So it becomes necessary to understand the background situations or reasons, which led to an exhibition of unbridled hate and violence against Muslim in Gujarat.

Background reasons

Sheth (2002:17) has argued that riots in Gujarat were often engineered by interested parties for short-term political gains. But in the process they created long-term consequences in the form of communal polarization.

He has pointed out some factors, which indirectly contributed to the growth of communal polarization i.e. (1) Rapid urbanization, (2) Transformation of Hinduism, (3) KHAM alliance,²¹ (4) Resentment of outsiders, (5) Politics of *Hindu Ekta*.

He says that Gujarat has undergone rapid urbanisation in the last 50 years. But more important than the rate of urbanization is the pattern of urban growth and spread. A large part of rural Gujarat could in fact, be described as urban hinterland. Urban-Rural transactions of all kinds – not just economic but social, cultural and political – are close and frequent. Both the print and the visual media have created overtime a vertically and closely linked system of cultural and political communications which is overly marked by a majoritarian Hindu ethos.

All this among other things have transformed the local and rural character of Hindu practices in some sort of folk Hinduism, giving it a strong urban print of

²¹ It was a political alliance comprising the Kshatriyas(OBCs), Harijans, Adivasis(tribals)and Muslims working in Gujarat.

anonymity and marketised entertainment. This has yielded participative spaces to the tribals and dalits. It has also been appropriated by political Hinduism.

In the process of urbanisation, the character of a Gujarati village has also changed significantly. Many large settlements often designated as 'villages' are more like 'towns', both in terms of size and occupational structure, and manifest many other urban characteristics. So, it is no longer possible to view the political culture of rural Gujarat as significantly different from that of urban Gujarat.

In the course of the last 30 years the demographic composition of urban Gujarat has changed. There has been a massive influx of OBCS'. Dalits and Tribals into the cities of Gujarat. Second, a sizeable number of non-Gujaratis have migrated and settled in all urban centres of Gujarat. The massive influx of subaltern communities into a politics provided a basis to the Gujarati elite fear of political instability. The influx of educated non-Gujaratis, who have found significant positions in the corporate sector and higher level Government jobs (because of their proficient English) generated deep anxiety in the Gujarati middle class. Labourers from different parts of the country have also entered in the significant numbers in the urban labour market of Gujarat.

All these factors together form a kind of under current of resentment running in Gujarati society, but this did not result in ethnic conflict among Hindus. Politically dominant Hindutva has removed such a possibility by co-opting the non-Gujarati leadership in the BJP and directing the Gujarati ethnic passions towards the religious minorities. BJP has also created a socio-cultural infrastructure in support of this politics. It has set up special wings of Dalit and Tribal Youth, even as they were

being directly recruited in large numbers, along with the OBCs, in the VHP and Bajrang Dal. The party's cadres occupied large spaces in civil society including: Co-operatives, educational trusts, trade unions, youths and women clubs, of what Varshney (2002) calls as associational forms of intercommunal engagement.

Even after, doing all this BJP and other Hindu organisations did not find a secure place in the politics of Gujarat. It was loosing elections in some states as well in Gujarat, and it planned to make Muslims a scapegoat and Godhra came as the excellent opportunity.

Engineer (2002) has analysed four major reasons behind Gujarat violence. These are Politicization of crime, rise of Hindu nationalism, liberal financing to VHP from NRI Gujaratis and elections.

He says that the old city of Gujarat is the centre of criminal activities because illicit liquor business is conducted from there and both Hindus and Muslims are involved. But crime by itself does not explain everything. Organized crime needs political patronage and politicians use these criminals for their own interests. These criminal gangs are often working on communal lines further aggravating the situation, particularly in cities like Surat, Ahmedabad and Baroda, which are communally already sensitive.

Communal violence against Muslims in Gujarat is also intimately connected to a rise of Hindu nationalism in the country and the state. Infact Gujarat has earned the dubious reputation of being a laboratory for the Hindutva agenda. Paul Brass (2002:476) points out insightfully: "In the pursuit of that goal, the Muslims of India came to be seen, particularly by Hindu nationalists, as an obstruction, along with

Pakistan". The Sangh Parivar (an umbrella organization of parties pursuing Hindutva agenda) had worked on Gujarat systematically since the early 1960s, to make it its fortress (Engineer, 2002).

Since BJP ultimately seized power in Gujarat, the VHP and Bajrang Dal, the most militant outfits of the Sangh Parivar, became very bold and began attacking minorities openly. The first systematic attack began on Christians in 1998.²²

The attacks on Muslims also became vigorous. Muslims were forced to flee from certain villages of South Gujarat just because some boy had married a Hindu girl (Ibid).²³

A 1999 Human Rights Watch Report documented the August 1998 distribution of fliers by RSS and Hindu Jagran Manch. A flier by the VHP in Bardoli, Gujarat warned, "Caution Hindus! Beware of inhuman deeds of Muslims Muslims are destroying Hindu community by slaughter houses, slaughtering cows and making Hindu Girls elope. Crime, drugs, terrorism are Muslim's empire" (CPDR & APCLC, 1998:7) Thus a climate of hatred against minorities was systematically created since the BJP came to power in Gujarat.

The state has stacked its inner ranks with RSS and VHP members and others, that shared and would actively promote Sangh Parivar's policies and programmes. The EX Chief Minister Keshu Bhai Patel, according to press reports, 'disbanded most of the advisory committees in the districts and talukas, as well as the state

²² For a detailed report see Report of the citizens' commission(1999).

²³ The Government of Gujarat has also announced that it would "Probe into all such marriages, that too, only when the bridegrooms are Muslim". See A Report by the Combined fact finding team of CPDR and APCLC(1998):7.

owned boards and corporations and packed the bodies with people from the Sangh Parivar.²⁴ Patel's return to power in 1998, revived in full swing what has been termed the state's 'saffronisation process'.²⁵

The Sangh Parivar politically thrived only through hate politics, opposing everything that went in favour of minorities. And the regional media, which is read by a large number of middle and lower middle class people carries news and articles about this anti-minority campaign by the Sangh Parivar. Over the years, it has created a mind set among the Hindus who question the loyalty of minorities towards India (Engineer, 2002).

There is one more phenomenon that ought to be taken into account, which had an impact on the communal situation in Gujarat. There is the large scale migration of upper caste Gujaratis to U.K and U.S.A. These non-resident Indians suffer from an identity crisis, feel rootless in these countries and compensate for it by being ultra Hindus and chauvinistically Indian. The VHP has been thriving financially more because of these NRIs, especially in Gujarat, who are liberally financing the VHP (Ibid).

As one villager in Sokhada village near Vadodara, headquarters of one of the Swaminarayan sects (especially popular with Gujarati NRIs), overheard a NRI saying that he was prepared to spend a crore on this (attacking Muslims). He is also

²⁴ In 2000 the state government of Gujarat lifted a ban on civil servants joining the RSS. Severely criticised by opposition parties and secular groups, the decision was later reversed, see Mishra, Ravish (2002).

²⁵ The recruitment of teachers at the village level launched by the Vaghela administration was used by the Patel government to "infiltrate" the villages. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad encouraged opening schools in remote villages. The syllabus in the schools was often subtly changed to suit the saffron ideology. See Dasgupta, Manas (2002).

reported to have told the mobs to go ahead and make a good job of it (PUCL, 2002: 105).

Engineer has also emphasized the politics as a major factor behind Gujarat riots. He says that the defeat of the BJP in U.P., Punjab (where it was in coalition with the Akalis), and Uttaranchal and also in by elections for two assembly seats in Gujarat had created a great political crisis for its leaders. The elections were also due in Gujarat in March 2003 and there were clear prospects of the BJP losing the elections. The only trick up its sleeve was polarization of Hindus and Muslim and thus to consolidate the Hindutva forces. The easiest way to do it was to organize communal riots (Engineer, 2002). As Engineer has pointed out that the core issues behind a communal riot, more often than not, happen to be of either an economic or political nature whereas the spark is provided by some trivial incident (Engineer, 1984 :272). The required spark was provided by the burning of coaches at Godhra.

So the result, thousands of lumpenised youth's willingness to indulge in collective violence, simultaneous authoritarianism and communalization of state in Gujarat along with a general communalization of Gujarati society, all converged to produce the atrocious violence being witnessed in Gujarat (Ahmed,R., 2002)²⁶.

The Spark

The violence in Gujarat was triggered by a Muslim mob's torching of two train cars of Sabarmati Express, carrying Hindu activists on February 27, 2002. 58 people were killed, many of them women and children. The activists were returning

²⁶ In the process of understanding the causes of recent communal riots in Gujarat, we should look at the Muslim community as well. Orthodox Muslim movements like Tablghi are working in the communalisation of Muslim community, and this has contributed in the communalisation of Gujarat society as a whole.

from Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, where they supported a campaign led by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad to construct Ram Mandir at the site of destroyed Babri Masjid (Report of Human Rights Watch, 2002, henceforth RHRW).

Godhra, a city of 150,000 is evenly split between Hindus and Muslims, most of whom live in separate neighbourhoods. The Godhra railway station is situated in an overwhelmingly Muslim section of the city (Kakodkar, 2002).

The attack followed an altercation between Hindu activists and the Muslim vendors at the train station in Godhra that morning around 8a.m., but the sequence of events is still disputed. As the train tried to pull out of the station, the emergency brake was pulled and a Muslim mob attacked the train and set it on fire (Chandrashekharan, 2002).

To add gravity to the incident it was projected as a planned act. Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi claimed that the killings were an 'organized terrorist attack' (Sharma, 2002). In such a sensitive situation, we really wonder that should such a kind of statement be given, that too by the Chief Minister of the State.

That same day VHP called for a statewide bandh for February 28, a call that according to press reports, its cadres interpreted as call to action. The state's endorsement of the bandh announced through a press note at 8 p.m. on February 27, was taken by the VHP/Bajrang Dal as an endorsement of its stand (Dutta, S. 2002).

State support of the bandh also sent a message to the police. In such a situation the police would always be hesitant to act lest it hurts the interests of the political bosses. And the saffronised police also found a common cause with the criminals to 'punish' the minorities (Dasgupta, 2002). Most often in cases of ethnic

or communal conflict, the sympathy of the police is often with the members of the majority community, and this is partly a result of recruitment policies (Tambiah, 1986: 15).

The public display of the bodies of the Godhra victims, also aroused the passions of mob. In 1984 anti-Sikh riots also, the public display of the slain body of Mr. Gandhi was a central symbol around which themes of vengeance were articulated (Das, 1990; 25).

The process and Pattern of Violence

On February 28, violence on a large scale began unleashing a coordinated attack against Muslims in many of Gujarat's towns and cities. Twenty six major towns and talukas in Gujarat were affected in the first week of violence. Attacks had also spread to rural areas. A three day retaliatory killing spree by Hindus left hundreds dead and tens of thousand homeless and dispossessed, marking the country's worst religious violence in a decade. The looting and burning of Muslim homes, shops, restaurants and places of worship was also widespread. Tragically consistent with the longstanding pattern of attacks on minorities and dalits, and with previous episodes of large scale communal violence in India scores of Muslim girls and women were brutally raped in Gujarat before being mutilated and burnt to death (RHRW,2002).

A noticeable feature of the Gujarat carnage is the distinct and similar patterns that have emerged from different parts all over the state. Human Rights watch visited the city of Ahmedabad, three weeks after the attacks began. It has documented the patterns of violence in Ahmedabad which echo throughout the

state. "Between February 28 and March 2, the attackers descended with militia like precision on Ahmedabad, by the thousands, arriving in trucks and clad in saffron scarves and khaki shorts, Chanting slogans of incitement to kill, they came armed with swords, trishuls, sophisticated explosives and gas cylinders. They were guided by the computer print outs listing the addresses of Muslim families and their properties, information obtained from the Ahmedabad municipal corporation among other sources, and embarked on a murderous rampage, confident that the police was with them" (Ibid).

Muslims from all social strata, rich and poor, were the prime targets for the state sponsored pogrom, unleashed all over the state of Gujarat from cities, towns to villages. While the targeting of economically better off Muslims was mostly limited to their property, the lower classes faced attacks on their life, property and dignity (Concerned Citizens Tribunal Report, 2002:16, henceforth CCTR).What has also suffered in the process is the space of everyday interaction between communities.

Evidence before the tribunal shows that the burning alive of victims was widespread. This was not accidental. Perhaps it was seen as an 'appropriate' reaction to the burning of the passengers in the Sabarmati Express (Rajan, 2002:94). And for the victim community Muslim, who bury their dead, the killing by burning was meant to annihilate, as also to terrorize and establish dominance over the entire community (CCTR,2002:21). It is also the best way of destroying evidence.

While there have been also some attacks on Hindus by mobs of Muslims, the recent carnage was marked by selective targeting of Muslims. Most of the Hindus who died were shot dead by the police, while many Hindus were also killed by

Hindutva mobs that either mistook them for Muslims or punished them for working for, or being friends with, Muslims (Ahmed K., 2002). Other targets of violence were couples who had entered into inter-community marriages. Violence against mixed couples has become common all over Gujarat (CCTR, 2002:20).

Naroda Patia and Naroda Gaon: Two Sites of Deadliest Massacre

Naroda Patia and Gulmarg society were the site of two of the deadliest massacres in Ahmedabad. Naroda Patia was a mixed community of Hindus and Muslims. Nearly one thousand Muslims were in a minority and lived in a slum facing the state transport workshop (Sharma & Pandey, 2002).

On February 28, at least 65 people were killed by a 5000 strong mob that torched the entire locality within minutes. Countless others sustained severe burns and other injuries. Women and girls were gang raped in public view before being hacked and burnt to death. Homes were looted and burnt (Bose, Chenoy et al, 2002).

Another shocking incident was the burning alive of 39 persons along with Ehsan Jaffrey, an ex-MP of Congress Party in his bungalow in Chamanpura, Ahmedabad city. Over 250 people took refuge on the morning of February 28, in the home of Ehsan, Jaffrey. An ordeal that began at 10.30 a.m., ended 7 hours later killing most of the people. Jaffrey kept phoning various authorities, including the police commissioner and politicians, but no help came. The closest police station was less than a kilometer away. Two guards standing with lathis, provided no protection and “were watching and laughing as the attacks took place” (RHRW,2002). In the case of the carnage following Mrs. Gandhi’s assassination, several citizens’ commission noted that the police were simply not available to

protect ordinary citizens. But here an ex-MP of a party was also not given any protection by the communalised police.

Role of State and Police

Even Muslim police officials of Gujarat were not safe. Some of them were transferred from field duties. One Muslim Inspector General of Police was threatened by his own Hindu subordinates and had to remove his police uniform to save himself. A high court judge was not safe in his official residence and had to shift because he was a Muslim. This speaks volumes about the role of the police and the nature of violence. Even conscientious police officers, who actively intervened in the situation and did not allow violence to spread were transferred from field duties (Engineer, 2002).

Evidence collected from the media, Indian Human Rights Groups and Human Rights watch all point to state sponsorship of the attack. One of the characteristics of modern state is its vastly increased reach in terms of surveillance, enumeration and categorization of the population. In Gujarat case, this modern technology of governance was put to painfully medieval uses (Rajan, 2002:95). The Gujarat government and in particular its chief minister, responded to severe Criticism regarding its posture during the violence by either tacitly justifying the attacks or asserting that they were quickly brought under control. On March 1, 2002, chief minister Narendra Modi confidently declared that he would control "the riots resulting from the natural and justified anger of people" (Gujarat Used as Hindutva Laboratory, 2002).

In almost all of the incidents, the police were directly implicated in the attacks. At best they were passive observers, and at worst they acted in concert with murderous mobs and participated directly in the burning, looting of Muslim shops, homes and the killing and mutilation of Muslims. In many cases, under the guise of offering resistance, the police led the victims directly into the hands of their killers (RHRW,2002)

According to the preliminary report of SAHMAT, its fact finding team found graffiti, left behind on the charred walls of a burnt Madarasa in Sundarmnagar, Ahmedabad, boasted of police support – “*Yeh Andar ki baat hai, Police hamare saath hai*”.²⁷

Though the army arrived in Gujarat soon after Godhra carnage, the state government refused to deploy soldiers until 24 hours after they arrived and only once the worst violence had ended. (Bedi, 2002). The army’s inability to rapidly intervene was also hindered by the state government’s failure to provide requested transportation support and information regarding areas where violence was occurring (Brown, 2002). The use of the army to discipline the police force which we are repeatedly witnessing in our societies points to the illegitimacy of legal force (Das, 1990:25).

Even after the attacks, the Gujarat state administration was engaged in a massive cover up of the BJP and VHP’s extensive involvement. The state governments claim to have arrested 2,500 people in early March in connection to

²⁷ SAHMAT or the Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust, is a Delhi based NGO which is a collective of artists, intellectuals and others, working to promote the idea of a secular democratic Indian state, cited in Sondhi, M.L. and Mukarji, Apratim (eds.)(2002).

post Godhra violence were undermined by reports claiming that no BJP, VHP or Bajrang Dal activists were among those arrested. Police officials either refused to name them in the police reports/FIRs or under pressure from the state government have booked some under less serious charges. Muslims in the state have been denied equal protection of the law and continue to be arbitrarily detained and booked on false charge following combing operations in Muslim neighborhoods (David & Mishra, 2002).

Composition of the Mob

The groups most directly responsible for violence against Muslims in Gujarat include VHP, the Bajrang Dal, the ruling BJP and the umbrella organization RSS. They all have promoted the argument that because Hindus constitute the majority of Indians, India should be a Hindu state (RHRW,2002)

A report on Rural Dahod by two women's groups notes that the mob could be divided into three groups – the first lot consisted of local Sangh Parivar leaders, who coordinated the attacks on their mobile phones. The second group provided the armed back up. This was the group primarily responsible for the brutal killings, sexual assaults and other abuses. The third group was mainly involved in looting. They did not generally engage in rape and murder. In some of the tribal areas this group consisted of adivasis (Forum Against Oppression of Women, 2002:6, henceforth Forum)

This kind of systematic attack reinforces the argument that crowds are the agents of irrational action (Thompson, 1971). Actually we must understand that mob violence may be highly organised and crowds provided with such instruments as

voter's list, but crowds also draw upon repositories of unconscious images (Das, 1990: 28).

Participation of Adivasis and Dalits

Money in several instances was an added factor in mobilizing mobs. Monetary incentives and liquor were offered to adivasis to kill Muslims (CCTR,2002:23) For the past ten years, VHP and Bajrang Dal have been attempting to mobilize adivasi youth in areas like Panchmahals, Dahod, Sabarkantha and Chhota Udepur. Among the fears they routinely play on is that of adivasi women being abducted by Muslim men, and the exploitation of adivasis by the Muslim moneylenders conveniently ignoring the exploitation by Hindu moneylenders (Peoples' Union for Democratic Rights,2002:32, henceforth PUDR)

Dalits and members of the denotified tribe like waghris and charas were active in the violence in urban areas. The political privileging of the tribals and dalits by the BJP gave them a sense of upward social mobility (Sheth,2002). In the past two years in Gujarat, the Bajrang Dal paid salaries of Rs. 3-5,000 a month to lure unemployed Dalit youth to camps where indoctrination against Muslim and arms training were the main activities (CCTR,2002:25).

Complicity of the Civil Society

Generally we see the phenomena of least involvement of civil society in the communal riots, but Gujarat presents a different case. The success of Hindu organizations in mobilizing people against Muslims in Gujarat is evident from the fact that it were not the lumpens who murdered and raped. Reports say that even

middle class people, the well off and youth, went from bazaar to bazaar to break down television shops and cloth markets to take away things. These are not what they lacked but they wanted to act against Muslims (Dar, 2002:77)

Perhaps one of the most painful aspects of the violence in Gujarat has been the way in which some Hindus betrayed their Muslim neighbours. Muslims in rural areas were shocked that despite generations of face to face interactions their attackers showed no humanity. While communal riots have taken place in rural India right since 1947, but the rural share has always been low (Varshney, 2002:97). But in Gujarat, this time rural areas have also been severely affected. Long term inter communal everyday engagement among neighbours, too did not help to prevent the violence. It seems that the party cadres of BJP occupied large spaces in the civil society to override the inter communal everyday engagements. Varshney (2002) has argued that everyday and associational form of inter communal engagement work as a wall in preventing communal violence. Contrary to it only intra communal engagement promotes what Paul Brass calls an 'institutionalised riot system'.

In most cases there was large scale mobilization from local areas, neighbours attacked neighbours even though outsiders were called in to make up the numbers. Rapes too were committed by known figures to completely shatter the faith in coexistence (CCTR,2002:20).

Unlike in the earlier riots of 1969, 1985, and 1992 which, were largely restricted to 'traditionally riot prone areas. Areas where people have co-existed peacefully for generations have been targets of violence e.g. Pira Mitra & Fatehganj (Ibid) This shows the large scale communalisation of Gujarati society and tells about a kind of new relationship between Hindus and Muslims.

Threats to Hindus Who Helped their Neighbours

There were very few instances of members of the majority community coming out to protect Muslims. Hindus who sheltered and supported affected Muslim families were threatened and abused. In Harniyav village (Ahmedabad rural) the five Muslim families were protected by their Thakore neighbours, when the mob attacked on 2 March. In some places Hindus rescued Muslims directly from the mobs (PUDR,2002) Some of them who gave shelter to Muslims – like a Hindu family in Moti Bandibar (Dahod) also had their houses burnt down (Forum,2002:26) Others live in fear of being attacked by Hindutva gangs to this day.²⁸ Perhaps many more would have helped Muslims had they not been so afraid of the mobs. In several places in Vadodara – Tandeli, Kashmala, Fatehaganj – Hindus and Muslims jointly decided to keep the peace. In these cases we clearly see intercommunal engagements playing a role in preventing violence.

Those who did not take part in the violence were punished or humiliated. In areas where violence had not spread, VHP and BJP activists sent around boxes of bangles to the local leaders – signifying ‘womanly cowardice’. In some places, these people succumbed but in other they did not.²⁹

Role of Gujarati Media

The role of the local media should also be discussed in Gujarat riots, because sectors of the local press have been accused of inciting the violence. ‘*Sandesh*’, a

²⁸ Veersinh Rathod Saved 25 Muslim families in the Naroda Area of Ahmedabad. Apart from Hindutva families, he said the police are also now harassing him. See Tushar Prabhune (2002)

²⁹ See PUCL, p.7, PUDR, p.15, also see Menon, Vinay(2002).

Gujarati newspaper published a front page report on February 28, 2002 “Avenge Blood with Blood”. Another headline during the first week of March, when Gujarati Muslim were returning, from their pilgrimage to Macca, stated, “Hindus Beware: Haj Pilgrims Return with a Deadly Conspiracy” (Peoples Union for Civil Liberties, 2002, henceforth PUCL). Media which is expected to play a neutral role has also been communalised in Gujarat in some cases.

Economic Impact

The economic impact was felt acutely by both Hindus and Muslims but more by Muslims whose property, jobs, economic mobility had been destroyed – leading to their impoverishment. In many villages, Muslims, who returned to their battered homes, were facing a strictly enforced economic boycott by the dominant castes and communities (CCTR, 2002: 50)

Once the Muslim fled from villages, mobs looted and then burnt their houses and shops at leisure. There was s deliberate motive behind driving Muslims out of villages and that was to surreptitiously and illegally take over land holdings held by them (Ibid:22)

Relief and Rehabilitation: Role of the State

According to government of Gujarat some 98,000 people were displaced by the communal violence and living in one hundred make shift relief camps in different parts of the state (Dasgupta, 2002) Independent estimates put the total number of displaced Muslims in Gujarat at not less than 2,50,000 (CCTR, 2002:49)

Security in the camps remained precarious and there had been serious delays in the delivery of assistance, compensation and rehabilitation support. The camps continued to lack sufficient medical report and there were reports of discrimination in the delivery of assistance to Muslims as compared to Hindus affected by violence (RHRW, 2002).

Government aid mainly food rations did not reach the camps until at least a week after the onset of attacks. The amounts received had been inadequate to fulfill the camps' daily food requirements. In the days following the first bout of brutal violence, agents of the state, notably the collectors/district magistrates of Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Mehsana, Himmatnagar, Anand, Sabarkantha, Banaskantha, Bharuch and Ankleshwar districts, as also the officials of some police stations, obstructed truckloads of privately mobilized relief material – milk, food grains, etc. – from reaching the camps (CCTR, 2002: 49)

The onus of providing food, medical support and other supplies for victims of violence rested largely on local NGOs and Muslim voluntary groups (RHRW, 2002: 273).

Surviving family members were facing the trauma of having to fend for themselves in recovering and identifying the bodies of their loved ones under difficult security condition and with little assistance from the state government. Many bodies had been charred beyond recognition and many are still missing (Gujarat: Inching Towards normalcy, 2002).

No police posts had been set up in majority Muslim camps in Ahmedabad and no security had been provided to camp residents, leaving residents unprotected and unable to register formal complaints with police (RHRW, 2002: 274).

Residents of relief camps in Gujarat were in desperate need of medical attention and trauma counseling. In some camps babies had been delivered without any medical support. Diseases were spreading in many camps due to non-availability of sanitation facilities (Bose, P et. al. 2002). Although government agencies had begun setting up medical camps, the infrastructure was reportedly inadequate (Refugees in Gujarat Camp Pray for more Relief Aid, 2002).

The children of Gujarat have been severely affected and traumatized by violence. In addition to the rape and murder of many children, many bore witness to the death of their family members. In the aftermath of violence, their education has been severely disrupted and little counseling is available to them to cope with the trauma of what they experienced (Gujarat Inching Towards Normalcy, 2002).

The attitude of the government showed it had no regard for life well-being and future of students from the minority community. In spite of their requests the examination date was not postponed and examination centres were shifted from minority dominated areas to the majority community dominated areas, without thinking about Muslims students (CCTR, 2002: 39)

There is evidence of discrimination in the distribution of compensation. Initially state government announced that the families of Hindus killed in Godhra, would receive rupees 200,000, while the families of Muslim killed in retaliatory attacks would receive rupees 100,000 – a statement that was later retracted, in part

due to widespread criticism from NGOs and Indian officials outside the state of Gujarat (RHRW, 2002). As regards the injured, the government decided to pay compensation amounts ranging from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 50,000. Regarding the destruction of homes, properties and business, the state government has been perfunctory and callous in announcing compensation. There are no clear guidelines; some have been paid paltry sums ranging from Rs. 500 to a few thousand rupees, without any proper assessment of the loss suffered. The government of Gujarat has been utterly secretive about the disbursement of the Rs. 150 crore promised by the Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee for rehabilitation on April 4 (CCTR, 2002:39).

A Judicial Inquiry Commission – K.G. Shah – Nanavati commission has been appointed to look into the Gujarat carnage by the state government (Ibid:39) But by its behaviour and action, the government has made it clear that it wishes to have nothing to do with the physical and psychological rehabilitation of its own people, the Muslims of Gujarat.³⁰

On one hand in areas where the most brutal incidents of mass killing and quartering (often after sexual crimes against women and girls were committed) took place, there is no question of the victimized section of residents returning to their original place of residence. On the other hand, where people want to return the insecurity and ongoing violence in the state had made it impossible. There were instances in which Muslim families were threatened by Hindu mobs, as they attempted to return their homes (Ibid :50)

³⁰ On September 9, Narendra Modi addressing a rally in Mehsana district, during his Gaurav Yatra said, "Relief camps are actually a child making factories. Those who keep on multiplying the population should be taught a lesson, see the Hindu, September 10.

The state is absolutely central to any discussion what happened in Gujarat. For what happened in Gujarat was not simply a communal conflagration. It lacks two distinctive characteristics that are supposed to characterize communal conflagration, where ever they take place – (i) It is always a result of two communities attacking one another wholly unmediated by the state (ii) A phenomena of civil society that invites the intervention of the state in the form of legitimate use of force. Both these features were conspicuous by their absence in the case of the Gujarat pogrom.³¹ State has been shown to be an impotent structure with its own integrity but an institution that can be wielded to suit partisan needs (Ahmed, R, 2002: 37-38).

Gujarat 2002 looks like a glaring example of a place having, what Paul Brass (1998) calls, an institutionalized riot system'. Nevertheless, it is important to understand that an institutionalized riot system, despite the specialized performance of roles, leaves scope for the role of extras in the drama of a riot. The current violence, therefore also witnessed the people joining in without any special role assigned to them. It was their presence at the scenes of violence that could make it look spontaneous, at least superficially. Ahmed concludes that the current violence is a case of continuation of politics through unconventional means (Ahmed, R., 2002).

³¹Brass, Paul R. says that communal riots which implies two communities locked in violent combat is in truth 'a pogrom' against Muslims raged by a hate group, the RSS, with its offciates the VHP and Bajrang Dal, see Brass, Paul R (2002):476.

CHAPTER-III

MUSLIM WOMEN AS VICTIMS

CHAPTER- III

Muslim Women As Victims

“We have always borne part of the weight of men, and the major part... men have made boomerangs, bows swords or guns with which to destroy one another, we have made the men who destroyed and were destroyed!..... We pay the first cost on all human life”.

(Olive Schreiner – 1855 – 1920)

This chapter deals with why and how Muslim women were victimized in Gujarat riots, what were the socio-psychological and economic problems faced by these women as victims and survivors of the violence and what was the role of state regarding these minority women in Gujarat riots?

Independent India has seen many faces of communal violence and in most of the incidents women have borne the major share of burnt. Women bear the burnt of sexual violence by men from the home and the street to police stations, riots and armed conflicts. Women continue to be raped in caste conflicts, as punishment for defying societal norms and in revenge, when two or more conflicting groups want to attack the honour of the other. Various forms of violence against women derive their sanction from the community and the tradition (Saheli, 2002).³²

Women face violence and humiliation as survivors of the event and then as the objects of shame outcast from their own homes and communities. This stems

³² As many radical feminists have suggested that there is a continuum between ‘normal’ male sexual practices and ‘sexual violence against women’ – see Kelly (1988).

from the patriarchal notion of a woman's body symbolizing the territory or property of the other. In situations of violent conflicts, women have suffered immense violence across the globe for e.g. Burundi, Bangladesh, Bosnia – Herzegovina (Ibid).

This ideology of violence found more horrific manifestation during the genocide in Gujarat. As Harsh Mander (2002) Said, "I have never known a riot which has used sexual subjugation of women so widely as an instrument of violence as the recent mass barbarity in Gujarat...".

In many ways women have been the central characters in the Gujarat carnage, and their bodies the battlefield. Kannabiran (1996:33) has argued that identity of a community is constructed on the bodies of women. There are two ways in which identity formation takes place. The first is through the rape of minority women, which signifies the rape of the community to which the women belongs and is justified by demonstrating its inherent immorality. The second is through allegation, by the dominant group, of rape and aggression against their women by men of minority communities, an allegation which serves to justify dominant caste/community hegemony, by demonstrating the 'lack of character' of minority men who show scant respect for women. This then creates a condition for the total refusal of safeguards – constitutional or otherwise – for women of these minority groups. Since the struggle for hegemony, power is carried out on women's bodies establishing control over women through rape, becomes a legitimate means of carrying out this struggle.

Women's bodies became the leitmotif for the violence in Gujarat also. According to some accounts it was the rumour of molestation of a young girl by Kar Sevaks which infuriated the Muslims to torch the S-6 coach of Sabarmati Express. On the other hand to arouse the passions of Hindu mob, death was not enough. Far worse than death is the rape of Hindu women, for it is in and on the bodies of these women that the "izzat" (honour) of the community is vested. So 'Sandesh' a leading Gujarati newspaper, in addition to reporting Godhra tragedy in provocative language, also ran a front page story of rape and bestiality on Hindu women by Muslim mob.³³ This news, assuming a proportion of folklore, triggered the violence against the Muslims in several parts of Gujarat. The fact that rape is perceived in this manner – as violating the honour of men and not the integrity of women – is problematic in itself.

The murderers Hindu mob it seems, were safeguarding the 'honour' of their 'women'. Hundreds of Muslim women were raped and subjected to ghastly forms of sexual violence.³⁴ Women's bodies have borne the violent expression of patriotism, the arena for Hindutva forces to play out their love for the motherland, where Muslim represents the detasted other to be humiliated, killed and eliminated (Saheli, 2002).

Women regardless of class, caste and community have been significantly affected in Gujarat riots, but lives of Muslim women have changed drastically. I will

³³ Violence and disorder have the capacity to create their own characteristics forms of inter subjectivity which leads to 'rumours'. The crowd usually take these 'rumours' as 'facts' and act upon them. See Spencer, Johanthan (2003).

³⁴ Sexual subjugation of female body as a weapon to humiliate the whole community is seen in almost all cases of collective violence. In all these cases female body becomes a privileged site for the inscription of signs of power through violence.

also say that not all Muslim women were affected in Gujarat violence, rather the most vulnerable were the lower class, working, slum dweller women. I do not intend to say that Muslim men or men in general are not affected by communal violence, but I am focusing on women, as special victims of violence due to their specific location in the social system.

Impact of communal violence on women can be broadly categorized under the following three heads –

1. Physical impact — Rape, physical assault, killing etc.
2. Psychological impact — of physical assault, abusive language, loss of near and dear ones, feeling of insecurity, loss of identity etc.
3. Socio-economic impact — Loss of social status, respect, loss of family, earning members of family, torn between making the two ends meet and keep the left family from disintegrating etc. This categorization can not be separately analysed because each is intertwined with the other.

Many fact finding teams have visited and documented extreme forms of violence against Muslim women both in urban and rural Gujarat.³⁵

According to 'The Survivors Speak' (2002), in every instance of large scale mob violence, against the Muslim community in general, there was a regular pattern of violence against women in particular. Women have been affected physically,

³⁵ A six member team of women from Delhi, Bangalore, Tamilnadu and Ahmedabad undertook a five day fact finding mission from 27th March – 31st March, 2002 to assess the impact of the continuing violence on minority women in Gujarat. See 'How has the Gujarat Massacre Affected Minority Women: The Survivors Speak'(2002).

psychologically as well as socio-economically. Among the women surviving in relief camps, are many who have suffered the most bestial forms of sexual violence, including rape, gang rape, mass rape, stripping, insertion of objects into their body, molestations. A majority of rape victims have been burnt alive. Burning has now become an essential part of the meaning of rape, which was not seen even in the 1947 partition riots.³⁶ The situation is compounded by the apathy of law enforcement agencies and indifference of political representatives. There is evidence of state and police complicity in perpetuating crime against women. Women were denied the right to file FIRs. There is no existing institutional mechanism in Gujarat through which women can seek justice. As the district collector of Panchmahals clearly said that, *“Maintaining law and order is my primary concern. It is not possible for me to look into cases of sexual violence. If something is brought to my notice, I can take action but”* (Survivors Speak,2002)

This statement by a person, who is holding a top post in the district definitely gives a glimpse of the attitude of law and governance agencies in Gujarat. This statement tries to make sexual violence against women, invisible from the scope of law and order.

The severity and spread of victimization of Muslim women in Gujarat can be gauged by looking at the testimonies recorded by various fact finding teams.

³⁶ In 1947 partition riots all kinds of violence were inflicted on the women by the men from the other community which ranged from “stripping; parading naked; mutilating and disfiguring; tattooing or branding their breasts and genitalia with triumphal slogans; amputating breasts; knifing open the womb; raping (and) killing foetuses.” See Menon and Bhasin (1998).

Testimonies of Sexual Violence

Witnessing mass rape (including of minor girls) Naroda Patiya, Ahmedabad, 28th Feb, 2002.

“The mob started chasing us with burning tyres after we were forced to leave Gangotri society. It was then that, they raped many girls. We saw about 8 to 10 rapes. We saw them strip 16 year old Mehrunissa. They were stripping themselves and beckoning to the girls. Then they raped them right there on the road. We saw a girl’s vagina being slit open. Then they were burnt. Now there is no evidence.” (Source: Kulsum Bibi, Survivors speak, 2002: 4)

Sultani, a rape survivor speaks, village Delol, Kalol Taluka, Panchmahal districts, 28 Feb, 2002.

“On the afternoon of 28th Feb, to escape the violent mob, about forty of us got on to a tempo, wanting to escape Kalol. My husband Feroze was driving the tempo. Just outside Kalol, a Maruti car was blocking the road. A mob was lying in wait. Feroze had to swerve the tempo and it overturned. As we got out, they started attacking us. People started running in all directions some of us ran toward the river. I fell behind as I was carrying my son Faizan. The men caught me from behind and threw me on the ground. Faizan fell from my arms and started crying. My clothes were stripped off by the men and I was left stark naked. One by one the men raped me. All the while, I could hear my son crying. I lost count after three. Then they cut my foot with a sharp weapon and left me there in that state.” (Source: Sultani, Ibid: 5).

Such a brutality that her rapists were not satisfied only with her sexual exploitation but, they made her physically handicapped also. She and her sister-in-law, Mumtaz (who was also raped) both were feeling numb and lost even when Sultani was not told that her husband had died in the riots.

A mother's account of her daughter's rape, village Erol, Kalol Taluka, Panchmahal district, 3 March, 2002.

“My father-in-law, a retired school teacher, refused to leave the village with the other Muslim families who fled to Kalol on 28 February On Sunday afternoon (3 March), the hut we were hiding in, was attacked. We ran in different direction and hid in the field. But the mob found some of us and started attacking My daughter screamed, telling the men to get off her and leave her alone. The screams and cries of Ruqaiya (Madina's sister-in-law), Suhana, Shabana (her daughter) begging for their 'izzat' could clearly be heard..... I could do nothing to help my daughter from being assaulted sexually and tortured to death After a while, the mob was saying, 'cut them to pieces, leave no evidence'. I saw, fires being lit. After sometime the mob started leaving.....” (Source: Madina Mustafa Ismail Sheikh, Ibid: 6)³⁷.

In her testimony we clearly see the agony and utter helplessness of a mother who could not help her daughter. The psychological impact, which the loss of the daughter leaves, is unimaginable.

³⁷ In Madina's FIR, Charge of rape has not been included. The FIR uses the colloquial phrase 'bura kaam' rather than the specific term rape.

Naroda Patia and Naroda Gaon has become Meta sites, where inhuman torture of women has been reported. As Saira Bano said “what they did to my sister in law’s sister, Kausar Bano, was horrific and heinous. She was nine months pregnant. They cut open her belly, took out her foetus with a sword and threw it into a blazing fire. Then they burnt her as well”.³⁸ (Source: Saira Banu, Ibid:10)

Kausar’s story had come to embody the numerous experiences of evil, that were felt by the Muslims of Naroda Patia on 28th February 2002. In all instances where extreme violence is experienced collectively, Meta narratives are constructed. Each victim is part of the narrative, their experience, subsumed by collective experience. Kausar is that collective experience — a Meta narrative of bestiality; a Meta narrative of helpless victimhood (Ibid: 10).

Bilkees’s story, Randhikpur Village, Dahod District, 3 March 2002.

“Twenty one year old Bilkees was five months pregnant. When Muslim houses in her village were attacked on 28th February by a mob, comprising upper caste people from her own village and some outsiders, she and several of her family members fled At a mosque near Kuajher, her cousin Shamim delivered a baby They had to leave immediately including Shamim who could barely walk, carrying her new born baby....

She said, on 3 March, we had started moving towards Panivela village, suddenly we heard the sound of a vehicle. A truck came with people from our own village and outsiders too.... They stopped us and then the madness started.

³⁸ Also see Chakravarty, Mukta (2002).

They pulled my baby from my arms and threw her away. The other women and I were taken aside and raped. I was raped by three men..... They beat me and left me for dead. When I regained consciousness, I found I was alone. All around me were the dead bodies.....”(Source: Bilkees, Ibid:9).³⁹

In Fatehpura, Fatehpura Taluka (28February-4 March),Muslim women were verbally and physically harassed during the riots. One house where 100 people were hiding was set on fire. People managed to escape from the roof and somehow managed to reach the police station in the evening. As the women came out, many of them were stripped and harassed and at least one woman was raped. The mob surrounded another house and went in. After taking their money and jewellery, they took all the young women and children out. The children were pulled away from their mothers and the women were then stripped and raped. The police station was almost a kilometer away from that place. These women, raped and brutalized covered this distance naked. The police station was packed with almost 2000 people. So most of them just stood there from Saturday evening to early Monday morning. All through this period, no one got any water or food except for the children. who were once given a little water. The police did not let them out and did not try to help them anyway at all. Infact, the police said that if they went out, they would not be able to stop the mob from killing them (Forum,2002)

In Delol village, Kalol taluka (28 February – 1 March), where at least 24 people were killed, one 13 year old girl Yasmeen, daughter of Mohammad Ibrahim

³⁹ Testimony to AIDWA and Anandi. This case, where many died, several women raped and killed has also been testified by PUDR(2002). The central Bureau of Investigation filed a chargesheet in this case on 19th April 2004. It names 20 persons as accused, including police officials to doctors, See '20 chargesheeted in Bilkees yaqub's gang rape case' (2004).

was gang raped before being killed. Kulsum Ayub was also killed whose two sons were made to go around the pyre and shout 'Jai Shri Ram'. They were also thrown into the fire (PUDR, 2002:71). In this case, we see that the killers were trying to establish a kind of cultural domination as well.

In Vadodara city, Dabhoi road (on 1 March,2002) in Best Bakery at least 13 people was killed including Hindu employees. 18 years old Zahira Sheikh told that when mob lit the fire in the house some people including Zahira's sister and uncle were burnt to death. The whole night Zahira and others were hiding on the terrace and the mob kept pelting stones, abusing and trying to make them come down. In the morning, when they came down, mob attacked them. The mob kept saying '*rape these women*' and were trying to drag 'the women' to the jungle. By that time police arrived. Their property loss was huge but they have got less compensation by the government of Gujarat (PUCL, 2002: 59).⁴⁰

In the attack on Gulmarg Society, Chamanpura, where Ex MP of Congress-I Ehshan Jaffrey was brutally killed by the mob many girls and women were also raped and killed. As with Naroda Patia, even pregnant women were not spared (RHRW, 2002).⁴¹

⁴⁰ Initially the case was closed after witnesses including Zahira turned hostile due to the threatening by killers. But through the intervention of National Human Rights commission, the case has been reopened. Now Gujarat police has made a team to capture the absconding accused, All India Radio(2004).

⁴¹ There was a sequence in killing- First mob took every woman's jewellery, then they raped them, cut them and burnt them. This was a kind of ritual followed. Human Rights Watch Interview, Rashida bhen, March 22, 2002, Ahmedabad.

The Experience of Witnesses

Activists experiences of dealing with rape survivors — Naseem and Mehmooda testified that many women arrived stark naked at the camp. Men took off their shirts to cover the women's nakedness. Some could barely walk because of torn genitals as a result of gang rapes..... We were told about 'N' who was brought to the camp unconscious, her body was covered with bites and nail marks. She was bleeding profusely. Pieces of wood, which had been shoved up her vagina were extricated by the women who dressed her wounds. 'N' herself was too traumatized to recount her own story. She said that she did not remember anything, except being chased by the men from Gangotri Society”⁴²

The cruelty with which pregnant women were treated in recent Gujarat riots, was not a part of earlier riots in independent India. A grave digger at a mass gravesite next to the Dariyakhan Ghummat camp in the Shahibaug area told Human Rights Watch: “There were at least three pregnant women and one of the fetuses was partially hanging out. We had to stick it back in, before burial. If the fetus was completely removed, then we left it out but still buried it with the mother” (RHRW. 2002).

A woman who washed the dead bodies of female victims before burial at the same site told Human Rights Watch about the conditions of the bodies upon arrival: “I washed the ladies' bodies before burial, some bodies had heads missing, some had hands missing, some were like coal. You would touch them and they would

⁴² Source: Naseem and Mehmooda, Millat Nagar, Shah-e-Alam camp, Ahmedabad. They work with Saharwaru, a voluntary organization, see 'The survivors speak(2002): 8.

crumble. Some women's bodies had been split down the middle (Ibid). The conditions of the bodies before burial explicitly shows the gravity of physical violence to which women were subjected. After 1947 partition riots, the Gujarat 2002 was the first communal riot in which women have been sexually subjugated at such a large scale. In spite of the fact that kidnapping, tattooing breasts and genitalia did not happen in Gujarat as in 1947 riots, raping, cutting, killing and burning of women was widespread.

We see that the violence against Muslim women was not spontaneous, unstructured, illogical rather it followed as systematic and stylised way as Davis (1973) and Thompson (1971) say that crowds seem to obey moral imperatives of their own and their violence is often structured in terms of 'legitimate' targets and 'appropriate' punishments. They further say that these targets and punishments were structured according to the values which are widely accepted within the community.

In Delhi in 1984, riots had been motivated by the same ideas of justice and morality, 'legitimate' targets and appropriate punishment. Sikh men and their punishment was not merely death, but death administered in a particular, stylized way. Sikh victims' skull was first cracked and were then burnt (Spencer, 2003: 1570).

Victimisation: the Post Riot Scenario

The position of minority households was horrific, with their life and property under systematic attack. They have to contend with unresponsive, indeed biased police and administrative personnel. This makes the life more difficult for these women as Das (1990) says while talking about women survivors of Anti- Sikh riot,

that after the death of Sikh males, the surviving women found themselves dealing with new, unfamiliar areas of life, lawyers, bureaucrats and civil rights' activists.

Women of minority households were facing a grim situation. Hunger was an acute problem as neither women nor men were in a position to go out to work. The social tensions of living in unsafe times is exacerbated by deep sense of betrayal experienced by the women, especially when they have suffered attacks by neighbours and children, who 'grew up' in front of their eyes (PUCL,2002:2).

Although fear and insecurity has permeated society at large, Muslim women contend with additional fears about sexual assault, abuse as well as fear of safety of family members, particularly children. Insecurity is far more apparent at relief camps and when women have themselves experienced or witnessed violence. Many people who want to go back to their homes are not able to because of insecure environment. We find a state of affairs, where even a basic guarantee of life and property could not be taken for granted (Ibid:13).

After the extreme sexual violence, women were threatened not to name the accused to the police and court. This shows the double victimisation of Muslim women who were first physically assaulted and then pressurised by accused and administration for their total subjugation and submission.

Unlike earlier incidents of communal and caste massacres, where patriarchal notions of family and honour served to invisibilise the sexual violence inflicted upon women of the targeted community, this time sexual abuse had been so public and so widespread, it had taken the form of every woman's narrative. Women and their families have tried to get the police register criminal cases. There are complaints that

the police have grossly underreported sexual crimes against women.⁴³ In many instances, rape has been clubbed with murder. The law's insistence on immediate medical evidence is the other problem because victims were not in a position to get the medical examination done soon after the crime was done to them (Dutt, B., 2002).

Equally systematic has been the destruction of evidence of the widespread sexual violence. According to IPC, the understanding of rape is that the victim should be alive, available to recognize the culprit but in Gujarat, in most of the cases of rape, victims have been killed burnt or mutilated and all the evidence destroyed (Saheli, 2002). On the other hand, in many cases, after the initial media exposure, women were scared. Under threats of further violence, they had retracted their entire statements.

As Flavia Agnes observed that "there is an invisibility of sexual violence in official records.... Women's' voices has been muffled and sexual violence has been glossed over by the state machinery externally and by the constraints of patriarchal norms internally. Within patriarchal scheme of social structure, sexual violence remains hidden through a conscious design – No one – the victim, her family, the community, the state wants to admit the crime. Sanity at the personal level, integrity at the familial level and harmony at the societal level can be maintained only when this crime is negated (Agnes,2002). As functionalists also say that violence is collective, social, usually culturally structured and always culturally interpreted (Spencer, 2003: 1569).

⁴³ Rajgopal (1987) says that police are reluctant to register riot cases. In the Bhiwandi Riots of 1984, out of 600 cases only 185 were sent up to the courts.

The trivialization of crimes by ministers like George Fernandez is another aspect of the problem, who claimed, “.... *Ye jo sara rona roya ja raha hai ek-ek kahani batakar, jaise ye kahani pahali bar desh mein ho rahi hai ki kahan ma ko markar pet se bachche ko nikala, kahan ma ke samne uski beti ke sath balatakar hua, kisko aag mein jalaya gaya. Kya ye sab pahli bar ho raha hai? Kya 1984 mein dilli ki sadkon par aisa nahin hua tha.....?*”⁴⁴ As Gyanendra Pandey (1994:221) has argued that the treatment of violence simply as reflection of ongoing process serves to normalise the violence”.

What we are facing is the conjunction of the patriarchal assertion of power, an ideology of hatred and majoritarianism along with community sanction of violence against women. This has resulted in the worst even form of use and legitimization of sexual violence against women (Saheli, 2002).

Psychological Problems

Women were not only the direct victims of physical and sexual violence but also in most of the incidents, they saw their husbands, sons, daughters and dear ones killed, mutilated in front of their eyes. This must have a profound psychological impact on their minds. One of the women Mumtaz (Panchmahal district, Pandarwada village) found her three year old son sitting next to the body of her husband, Fakir Mohammad, whose face had been so badly dismembered that only his Adam’s apple was left. There many women saw their husbands hacked and burnt to death in front of their eyes (PUDR,2002). Women had to face the horror and stigma of their own violation as well as the loss of their loved ones.

⁴⁴ On the floor of the parliament during the debate on Gujarat,30 April,2002.

In the post riot scenario, women are facing psychological problems like tension, depression, fear, loss of sleep, a sense of loss also Hameeda, a 14 year old girl, had seen the rape and murder of her 11 year old sister, she could not help her. She was still trying to deal with the guilt of not helping her sister in those final moments of gruesome torture. She was trying her best to work a valid justification within her self to erase the guilt (Hegde, 2002:13). There are many women like Hameeda, who are constantly suffering psychologically due to their vital loss of the family members. While interviewed, some would clamp down, others would protest. I don't know I don't remember I don't want to talk I don't want to sign..... I will not come to court. Young girls in their teens crumbled with the shame of having to graphically describe the defilement of their mothers. Older women broke down while re-living the trauma of watching the rape and dismembering of their beloved daughters. Old men in their seventies, recalled the slitting of their pregnant daughter's stomach (Agnes, 2002).

In such a psychologically depressing scenario it is doubtful that the victims would be able to stand up against the system or even the KG Shah-Nanavati Commission set up by the government of Gujarat.

Wounds Inflicted by the State and Police

Political complicity in the recent Gujarat riots has been a major issue which has drawn attention. The state including elected representatives, the political executive, the administration and the police abdicated its responsibility. For worse, it actively connived in the maiming, raping and butchering of hundreds of men, women and children in Gujarat. *"Arre ye Narendra Modi ne hi sub kuch kiya*

hamara zindagi barbaad kiya". This is how the Muslim women of Gujarat see their chief minister. (The Survivors Speak,2002:15).

In the second phase of violence, women suffered at the hands of police more. Forced out of burning homes, running for their lives on violent streets, they have been targeted not only by rampaging mobs, but far worse by the police, whose job it was to protect them. Everywhere women narrated graphic, first hand tales of police complicity. In the words of one Muslim woman, '*Yeh to Hinduon ki police hai*' (Ibid: 16)

Charles Tilly (1978: 177) found in European riots 'repressive forces are themselves the most consistent initiators and performers of collective violence. The same happened in Gujarat it's the political executive, police administration who instead of repressing violence, prorogated it. Actually policemen are part of the society and cannot remain unaffected by the nature of public discussions in society.

In Wadi Taiwada, Wadi Panigate (15 March – 30 April), there was an obvious police brutality and cold blooded murder in combing operations, in which women suffered the most. In the night of the trouble (15th March) police started arbitrary and brutal combing operations in which women were targeted for highly abusive treatment. Hamida Banu Ibrahim Sheikh, (40 years old) had her right hand and fingers broken by the police due to which she had to undergo four operations (PUCL,2002).

Nineteen year old Zarina had delivered hardly a month earlier. The police smashed open the door of the house and it fell on her back. They smashed her foot with butt of a gun. They took away her husband after beating him up. Fourteen

women were hit that night all requiring medical attention. Police took away 25 to 30 men in the combing operations after beating them up on the road for 2 hours (Ibid: 32-37).

All these women, in interviews to different fact finding teams said that they did nothing to provoke violence from the police. Some may have lied also, but the role of the police has become more than clear after the CBI filed chargesheets against police officials of Gujarat as well as by the statements of Supreme Court of India.

Some of the accesses of the police were – pulling women from their homes, sometimes dragging them by hair, abusing, using curse words with religio-sexual connotations, beating including old, widowed women; sometimes very severely, hitting pregnant women on their stomachs with butts of guns, violating the right to practice the religion by bursting into homes during prayer timings and treating the Kuran Sharif with disrespect.⁴⁵ (Ibid: 7).

Women were living in constant fear as no one knew when the men of the family would be taken away by the police without telling the charges. In order to protect their men, women were being forced to venture out of their homes for daily chores and encountering the police brutalities.

Humiliation through Verbal Abuse

The effect of verbal abuse on women was stark and this arena of violence against women is, perhaps, underrated. Humiliation as a result of verbal abuse,

⁴⁵ For detailed account of police brutality in combing operations, see PUCL report.

rankled for long and carried almost as much weight as physical abuse. In almost all testimonies, women remembered abuse and slogan shouting very vividly.

Women from Kagda Chawl expressed that sexual *gaalis* (abuses) by the police almost amounted to verbal rape. Mehrunissa of Kasmala Kabristan said that the police gave such bad *gaalis*, '*jo hamare mardon ne bhi kabhi hame na di hon*' (PUCL,2002:8). The intensity of the verbal abuse by the police can be understood, as women who were the subject of verbal abuse by their own husbands also, took it as seriously as verbal rape. These abuses really had a greater psychological effects because they humiliate the woman and shake her dignity.

Betrayal of Trust

Muslim have become a truly ghettoized people in body and mind.⁴⁶ Betrayed by neighbours and friends, left for dead by the state, they trust only each other. Women testified to feeling an acute sense of betrayal by neighbours, friends, people they have lived with, done business with, celebrated festivals with. Saira, from vadali camp, who works with centre for social justice said, "*Of course I can recognize them, I saw them everyday. I grew up with them. Now with my work, I know everybody here, what could I tell them — don't kill me, you have seen me everyday of my life.*" Mehrunnisa of Kasmala Kabristan puts it, "*who is a friend and who is a foe? Insaan par se Vishvas hi uth gaya hai*" (Ibid:14-15). In spite of some instances where neighbours helped neighbours what happened in Gujarat really puts a question mark on the effectiveness of inter communal engagement in preventing communal violence, as has been argued by Varshney (2002). The

⁴⁶ Ghettoization once only an urban phenomena, seems to be rural future as well.

communalization of neighbourhood spaces has hit women very hard. Tragically suspicion has entered relationships that have lasted for decades and it is very doubtful if the common cause, which women have forged across communities can be rebuilt.

Ghettoisation

In the aftermath of communal violence, Muslim women's education, independence and livelihood options have been severely disrupted. In the few camps across the state, from which the students did sit for their board exams, most of the students who did not dare to venture out to examination centers, were girls. The grotesque sexual abuse, rape and burning of minority women has destroyed the confidence of young girls and women right across the state, and they feared to step out even in places like Godhra city, where no rioting had taken place after 27th of February until May 6th 2002 (PUCL,2002). As Susan Vishwanathan (2002) said, "the psychological degradation that comes from watching people closest to you being killed, raped, mutilated, ravaged, these(are) far greater than that of loss of material possessions".

It seems that the insecurity felt by the Muslim community as a whole will also have ramification not just on education, but even on the individual liberty of children especially daughters in the long run. With the entire community under threat, women in particular are paying the price — with their freedom and mobility because first response to fear is imposition of restrictions. But then this is an hour of crisis for the community as a whole. Some might call it childish to raise issues of emancipation at a time like this. Women's issues have to wait for more peaceful times.

Cultural Domination

The pressure to conform culturally in order to survive has become part of the fear psychosis of women. Fact finding teams have shown many testimonies where rural Muslim women had to adopt, Hindu attire, shun their salwar kameez in favour of sarees and wear bindis in order to escape to safety (Survivors Speak, 2002: 28) Wearing a bindi or not wearing one — such a small gesture and yet so large when seen against the ideology of cultural nationalism of Hindutva forces, that Hindustan is for Hindus only.

Economic Destitution

The brutal killings and sexual violence was accompanied by widespread looting and burning of homes. For many, the violence became an excuse for daylight robbery in which even affluent Gujaratis took part (Sethi, H., 2002). Most people, inhabiting the relief camps were homeless and completely disposed of all their belongings. This was a kind of re-victimization of women, who were physically, sexually and psychologically abused and who had lost their earning family members in the riot.

Thirty year old Noorjehan belonged to a relatively affluent Muslim family, and lived in government quarter of Mehndi Kuva. She suffered severe head injuries but survived the attack after being left for dead. She told: “.....After we came out, our house was looted. They did not even leave our animals..... There was a temple in front of our house. They ate the animals there the next day. They took our gold, our silver.....” (RHRW,2002).

In this statement we see that — “eating the animals in the temple signifies the inhuman and unreligious attitude of the rioters” in the view of Noorjehan. It also shows that how some people participate in riots to fulfill their own needs and desires by using religion as a medium.

Sudden economic destitution is hitting women hard. Many have lost the family income earner. Curfew in the most of Muslim dominated areas had meant that daily wage work, petty business and self employed work had come to stand-still. Muslim women hitherto, employed in home and small scale industries were not being taken back to work by the employers, after violence. Scores of women have lost everything overnight; everything except the clothes on their back.

Single women and widows who had acquired economic independence, now rely community patriarchs for survival. The psychological impact of this sudden destitution has been brutal because most of the women who were affected in the violence were lower class working women. Many worried about future livelihood, firstly because rehabilitation did not seem to be forthcoming and secondly because they lacked the confidence that their businesses could be safe after being rebuilt from scratch (Survivors Speak, 2002). As far as the amount of compensation is concerned we really wonder that even if it is given by the government, they will really get it, as we have seen in 1984 anti-Sikh riots, that family became the source of friction for the victim Sikh women (Das, 1990). We have to also see that how their own community deals with these women who have suffered ghastly forms of sexual abuse, when fixes are put down. Are these women left back as useless and polluted things or Muslim community accepts them as their fate, and these women play an important role in the revival of the community.

We should not see Muslim women only as victims rather they have taken the lead in protesting against injustice as we have seen in the case of Zahira Sheikh. An immediate impact of the violence is the creation of female headed households. These women with all their property looted or burnt are trying to survive, to cope. They are bearing the responsibility of the family and community on their shoulders (PUCL,2002).

We should understand that if this kind of gender hatred remains unchecked, and becomes normalised, (as was implicit in the statement of George Fernandes) it would not be confined to the 'other' the Muslim, the minority, the marginalized. In 'peace times' it would turn inward and unleash upon the women 'inside'. The writing is already on the wall. The tornado of communal violence swept away the lines of few Hindu women as well. Hajrabehn, Geetabehn, Sarojbehn and many other targeted only because they had Muslim partners, were in mixed marriages. Who knows which other category of Hindu women will be marked next? (Agnes, 2002: 17).

CHAPTER-IV

HINDU WOMEN AS AGENTS

CHAPTER- IV

Hindu Women As Agents

“In former days, we would both agree that you were me and I was you, what has now happened to us two. That you are you, and I am me?”

Sanskrit Poem by Bhartrahari (C. 5th Century A.D.)

This chapter deals with the role of Hindu women as agents in Gujarat riots and explores why and how they participated in the violence against Muslims.

The communal violence in Gujarat and the visible participation of Hindu women against the minority community, has again shown the futility of the notion of universal womanhood and the usefulness of the post modern subject, that is fragmented & occupies various subject positions. The romantic feminist notion of war as being ‘naturally male’ and women as ‘naturally peace loving’ is challenged for being over simplistic.

The insecurity which feminists experience when beginning to address women’s use of violence, reflects a profound concern that it will undermine feminist analysis of both sexual violence and heterosexuality. But feminist theory is not that fragile. Including women’s use of violence is only a threat to a version of feminism which views men and women, masculinity and femininity as fixed unchanging biologically based, which defines violence as an inherent potentiality in men (Kelly,1996:36-37).

A feminist analysis that begins with understanding gender as a social construct, which recognizes the variability with which gendered selves and individual biography combine, can locate women's use of violence within its existing framework. But here one thing should be kept in mind that "to use violence from a position of powerlessness cannot have the same foundation or the same meanings as that from a position of powerfulness, even though the consequences for those it is directed towards, may be the same" (Ibid).

Parthasarathy(2002) says that, "in a society where social and family norms do not even permit women to show their faces outside their homes, what changes have led to women participating in violent activities along with men? Has the legitimacy given to violence among groups provided legitimacy to changes in women's behaviour as well? Has the strategy of the Sangh Parivar in bringing women into their fold also led to their greater participation in violence?"

It is worth mentioning here that genuine/satisfactory literature regarding participation of Hindu women in Gujarat riots is not available. Most of the data is provided by the fact finding teams, NGOs, Independent groups, so ascertaining their validity/ideological biases is a difficult task. Although all Hindu women did not participate in the riot, but literature generalizes the issue and does not specify the age, caste, class, occupation of these Hindu women. This is also possible that those women who participated, belonged to RSS/VHP families. So we have to keep this limitation in mind and move forward.

Deciding to participate in violence against others, for most individuals, but especially for women, is not a simple act, it requires a coherent explanation. This is

especially true of the participation of women in communal violence, which has become far more notable in recent years(Parthasarthy,2002).

The participation of Hindu women in Gujarat riots, should be seen in the light of many aspects as-(i) identities are multiple & fluid (ii) impact of Hindutva organizations in Gujarat (iii) women's own interests and agendas, that is how some Hindu women are benefited by this participation. As Ortner says that, agency is part of simply being human and thus its denial or absence is as much of a problem as its construction(1996:10).

Identities are fluid and multiple. They are fluid in that overtime new interpretations of an identity may emerge. Identities are multiple in that during one particular period there may be various interpretations of one identity contesting for dominance. Recent feminist analysis acknowledges that identity is a slippery notion and does not claim that woman is easy to locate. They have questioned the category of 'woman' given the differences in the experience of women of different classes, races, castes and communities. They state that there is no single 'woman' but a variety of 'women' shaped by differences(Haraway,1988:72-73).

The feminist framework's notion that 'woman' as an identity is fluid and constructed rather than immutably determined, provides a framework through which we can analyze the Durga vahini/ RSS/BJP's (Hindu organizations) skillful creation of a female identity, through a network of symbols and rituals. But we can not ignore the structural contexts and material benefits, the women obtain from this participation.

The concept of female in Hinduism presents an important duality. On the one hand, woman is fertile, benevolent, the bestower; on the other she is aggressive, malevolent, the destroyer. Two facets of femaleness relate to this duality and perhaps provide a cultural logic for it. The female is first of all 'shakti' (energy/power), the energizing principle of the universe. The female is also prakriti (nature), the undifferentiated matter of the universe. Good females – goddess or human – are controlled by males, that is culture controls nature. A popular myth represents the male controlling dangerous female power, thus rendering that power benevolent(Wadley,1988).

In Hindu mythology and religion, images of women's strength as Shakti was always been counter pointed by women as Sita, Savitri... wife, mother, faithful, where she must step out and serve the purposes of the community religion and patriarchal order when the need so arises and equally willingly retreat into the household when that moment has passed(Saheli,2002).

The Hindu organizations draw on this notion of femalehood and try to incorporate Hindu women into their fold. Here Hindu women do not have to choose one identity or the other, rather they may slip from one role to another.

Bharatmata, a personified image of the motherland is central to Hindutva ideology. Bharatmata, by the 1920s was no more limited to Hindutva ideology and had become a national symbol. It was not only a cultural artifact but as Bipan Pal has said, "not merely an idea or fantasy but a distinct personality..."(Bose, S.1997:55).

Hindutva literature talks about the history of aggression on our motherland at length and to regain the glory of Bharatmata, Hindus should organize. Savarkar puts it, "hence there is only one way of defense – that is masculine power and strength (*Paurush Somppann Shaktisamarthya*) which comes with the consciousness of nationhood"(Golwalkar,1966:216).

The representation of nation as the mother who needed the masculine protection of her sons presupposed male powers. As McClintock (cf.Heiffard,1993:61) says, "All nationalisms are gendered'. The state is often gendered male and the nation is gendered female.

In this motherland, the ideals of womanhood are the mythical characters like Sita, Savitri . Women represent tradition, culture, values and the purity of the nation. Nationalism rooted in an idealized imagined past represents women's roles as mothers and guardians of cultural identity symbolizing the stability in the face of change(Sarkar,1999).

This kind of symbolism does not directly question the essentialist role of reproduction for women or the gendered hierarchical social order, in which this role is rooted. Rather it uses the notion of womanhood in creation of national identity. Thus right wing politics defines women and their place in a very particular fashion which involves the control of women's reproductive capacity and curtailment of their sexual autonomy. But there is another image of Hindu women also(Ibid).

Symbolizing women as boundary markers, freezing the communal and national boundaries by the men of Hindu Rashtra calls for what Kristeva(1993) terms as, 'sexual nationalist and religious protectionism'. It reduces men and women

especially women to the identification needs of their originary groups, imprisoning them with the boundaries of family, ethnicity, nation, and race.

Thus by representing women as symbols of 'purity and pride' of the nation, Hindutva ideology burdens them with morality and chastity which they must guard against the other. This fear of the 'other' and the burden of morality ensure that they are forced to organize as an entity. The women accept the 'myth of the origin' that includes stories of male control over female sexuality because such stories offer the women a place as women, by elevating their reproductive powers as long as they are used in the service of the nation (Benton, 1998:18).

The leadership for Hindu women's activism comes from three women's organization. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) affiliated Rashtra Sevika Samiti; the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) affiliated Durga Vahini; and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) affiliated women's organization (Basu, 1998:168). There are some other small organizations also. Although these organizations are independent of one another in principle, they are closely affiliated in practice.

The Samiti was founded on the Vijaydashmi day, which marks the triumph of goddess Durga over evil and conceived by Laxshmibai Kelkar. The Samiti literature outlines certain aims; the development and honing of the women's ability for leadership and arousal of the sense of duty and motherliness – to enable her to dedicate to the service of motherland. The next aim however clearly situates her role in the domestic setting and her duties as daughter, sister, wife and mother, i.e. to inspire their father, brother, husband and son to take to the path of Hindu Nationalism (Rastra Sevika Samiti).⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Samiti was established not to produce soldiers to the nation but to produce Hindu Mothers – see Sarkar Tanika (1995):184.

Durga Vahini came into being at the height of the Ram Mandir agitation to recruit young women and girls and was given an organizational structure and form much later in 1994. Service, self defense and values – seva, suraksha and sanskara- it takes as its founding and guiding principles(Durga Vahini). Durga Vahini gave arms training to women during Ramjanmbhoomi Movement. It has significant presence in Gujarat.

Formed in 1980s BJP's women's organization remained dormant for many years. It has also played a role in organizing women regarding Babri Masjid issues(Basu,1998:168).

These organizations deploy a whole repertoire of images and symbols to connote the qualities desirable of a woman. They range from the warrior queens like Rani Lakshmi Bai, Durgavati and Vishbala to the able women administrators like Ahilyabai and Rani Chennama to the Bhakti poetess Mirabai, without however giving up the traditional figures of Sita, Savitri and Anusuya. As power she is Durga and in auspiciousness she is Parvati(Sethi,2002).

In fact Bharatmata, Durga, Parvati and physical mother all collide easily into each other. These images of goddesses as placid, bounteous, tempestuous and out of control allow women a wide array of role choices. They are not so much different roles as one single and harmonious whole, which may manifest different characteristics and forms at different times. It provides an ideology where women have the freedom of education, economic independence and activism even if confined within the accepted boundaries of family and society. They represent the idea of New Indian women, of the modern world. It seriously criticizes the western

liberation movement. Their conception is guided by the ideal of 'Nari Shakti' rather than 'Nari Mukti'.⁴⁸

As Flavia Agnes points out that this new Hindu woman can come out on the street in the same way as man from the community to avenge wrongs. And in this action, she has the blessings of political party and the community leaders (Agnes, 1996:98).

The endangered woman is an exceptionally potent weapon for violent mobilization and recreation of a homogenous Hindu community.⁴⁹ Women were imagined as perennially threatened – a conviction, according to Rashtra Sevika Samiti accounts, that inspired its creation (Sarkar, 1998:98).

In recent times, through rumors, public agitation and other channels, fear has been created among Hindu women by providing mostly fictional accounts of attacks by male members of other communities. The fear is now specifically focused on violation of women's own bodies. This strategy of Hindu organizations is meant to bring about a radical change in the attitude of women toward willingness to sanction and even engage in violence against minorities. Those who promote such violence can then presumably claim to have a greater degree of legitimacy for its use against members of other groups (Parthasarthy, 2002).⁵⁰

Krishna Sharma, a member of the Mahila Wing of the VHP said in an interview: 'Hindu must make sure that they are feared by others, we have to prove

⁴⁸ This is the title of several articles published by the Samiti.

⁴⁹ Indian History was rewritten by the Hindutva Ideologue V.D. Savarkar as a continuous assault on Hindu womanhood by Muslim invaders, whose conquest of the country was motivated by desire, see Agarwal, Purushottam (1995):48.

⁵⁰ In Gujarat during the recent riots, fundamentalist publications such as 'Sandesh' printed and distributed fictitious stories of Hindu women being abducted and carried away into mosques to be raped.

our mettle. If they rape 10-15 of our women, we must also rape a few to show that we are no less'(Anita, et. al.,1995:332) These words show horrifying logic of sexual violence, used as an instrument, which devalues not only the sexuality, but also the identity of women.

Durgas, Ranchandis and Bharatmata are not the only images of women's activism offered by Hindu Nationalism. Religious renouncers, especially after the rise of Sadhvi Ritambhara and Uma Bharti have emerged as powerful icons of the movement. The duty of incitement and reproach, which lay earlier with wife is taken over by Sadhvi whose speech serves to incite the entire community. She, as a celibate and sanyasin is elevated to the status of a screen goddess, visible and desirable but out of reach. For whose defense every Hindu young men and women should arise(Sethi,2002).⁵¹

Participation of Hindu Women in Gujarat Riots

The violence in Gujarat affected Hindu women in multiple ways. At one level, Hindu women were caught in a fear psychosis about attacks by the 'other'. Although in some areas women and men of Hindu community also became targets of Muslims (RHRW, 2002), this fear largely stemmed from rumours that were being spread by communal organizations in different areas, through various pamphlets and booklets, as well as rumour mongering by the local press(PUCL,2002),⁵² concerns over safety and security have reshaped their daily lives even as they participate in the creation of such an environment. Affluent Hindu women routinely stayed up all

⁵¹Also see Kakkar, Sudhir (1995).

⁵² In Delhi in 1984, the roles were inverted in the crowd's perception of the situation, the Sikh who were being attacked were the 'real' aggressors, and recurring rumors supported this view of the situation, see Spencer, Jonathan (2003).

night with the men in middle/upper class housing societies for fear of Muslim attacks, albeit in traditional gender roles, providing tea and snacks at regular intervals to the local vigilant men(Ibid).

Women are undeniably an agency through which the ideology of hatred is being perpetuated. PUCL fact finding team reports that the level of hate among Hindu women was alarming. Although they started off sounding sympathetic (*'bahut bura hua*, etc as seen in the infamous Best Bakery case) very soon they defended the violence saying, *'they had it coming'*. Women are very much part of a systematic hate – the – Muslims campaign that has been in place for the last few years, especially in Gujarat. They feel threatened by Muslims economically and socially. “They have four wives and 20 children, they will overrun us, they don't use contraception etc. they are taking away all business we are becoming poor”. The line between hating Muslims to condoning their killings and encouraging, it has been crossed, at least partly on the account of fear psychosis that centers around the notion of the ‘dangerous other’(ibid). We encounter a duality in this discourse which we also find in the discourse of Suhasini. She highlights the threats of Muslims, but at the same time justifies Muslim women being abducted by Jat men(Dutta,N.,2002).

At another level they have gained a new visibility in and access to public sphere. This was evident in the ‘Ramdhun’ programme and Ramshobha Yatra on 15 March where they participated enthusiastically in large numbers(PUCL,2002). It was not a show of Rambhakti, it was not suffused with the spirit of devotion, but

infact the entire city (Baroda) was terrorized. These programmes were part of an aggressive call given by the VHP.⁵³

Also noteworthy is the fact that they have taken active part in violence in small though significant numbers. Women especially from the affluent classes of Hindu society, were visible participants in the violence; in some cases they even led the assault and instigated Hindu men to commit sexual crimes against Muslim women. Telling examples are the BJP's elected representatives, namely su. Maya Kotdani and su. Anita Patel who guided marauding mobs that indulged in most vile forms of violence at Naroda Gaon and Naroda Patia, or the large number of women and young girls from elite sections of Ahmedabad, who came in their car to loot from the shops on CG Road(CCTR, 2002).

Area reports from Barampura, Bajwa and Navayard, among others, reveal that women have been active members of the attacking mobs. Some prominent women leaders have also been named in affected persons testimonies. On March 1 in Atladara, the Sarpanch Kantabehn Sanabhai Vasava was one of the main persons in mob. Kanchanben Barot, a BJP councilor in the ESI hospital area was seen to move around with a sword along with others in the mob. In Bajwa, Jayaben Thakkar was part of the attacking mob(PUCL,2002). These women politicians from BJP might be guided by their own political interests as well as the ideology of hatred against Muslims.

Women in their nighties came out on to the terraces of their houses, egging their men on, and even throwing stones at neighbours belonging to a different

⁵³ Analysis of newsreport of 'Sandesh' a Gujarati newspaper by PUCL:47-48.

community (Parthasarthy, 2002). Despite these informations, it is possible Hindu women have protected the harmony in neighbourhood spaces and went outside their localities to participate in the violence against Muslims.

Citizen's tribunal report (2002) has named following women among accused in Gujarat riots-

1. Bharuch District — Collector Smt. Anju Sharma
2. Ahmedabad
 - (i) Naroda Gaon & Patia
 - (a) Mayabehn Kotdani — BJP MLA
 - (b) Bhartibehn — BJP Corporator
 - (c) Anita Behn — BJP Corporator
 - (ii) Vatwa
 - (a) Anita Patel — BJP Corporator
 - (iii) Paldi Ellis Bridge
 - (a) Bhartibehn — BJP Corprator
 - (b) Anitabehn — BJP corporator
3. Vadodara
 - (i) Gotri Village
 - (a) Kanchanbehn Barot — BJP Councilor
 - (ii) Bajwa
 - (a) Jayabehn Thakkar — BJP, M.P.
 - (iii) Maretha
 - (a) Kantabehn Sanabhai Vasava — Sarpanch

Women have played a role in looting as well as is evident in arrests made in Vadodara. These arrests were widely reported in newspapers in mid-March(PUCL,2002). There are instances where, at the more affluent shops located on the main roads in Ahmedabad or Bharuch, the middle and affluent classes among Hindus, women and girls noticeably, were seen looting choice collections from a boutique or shop before it was completely destroyed. Big stores like Bata and Pantaloons and jewellery shops on Posh C.G. Road in Ahmedabad were completely wiped out. Sharif Khan, with the noble ambulance trust told communalism combat, 'I even saw women members of the Durga Vahini at CG Road and Ashram road. Out of the mob of 4-5000 here, 60 percent were women and they were looting and burning shops'(Genocide Gujarat,2002:42).

Dalit women have, more or less, allied with the upper castes during the violence. This has been seen in areas like Baranpura, Navidharti, Navayard, and Fatehpura. This has resulted in the Hinduization of dalit women on a scale never before witnessed in Vadodara. PUCL teams observed greater anxieties among dalit women regarding life and property as compared to upper caste women at least partly because dalit bastis lie almost always alongside Muslim bastis. Longstanding alliances forged by dalit and Muslim women on the basis of shared socio-economic concerns, as also neighbourhood spaces, seem to have broken down(PUCL,2002).⁵⁴

Muslim women testified to feeling an acute sense of betrayal. They feel betrayed by neighbours friends, people they have lived with. Zahida Bano of Naroda Patia, Ahmedabad said, "I asked my neighbour Hirabai for some water. I was told,

⁵⁴ As Varshney has pointed out that neighbourhood engagements can't do much if the associational engagements are not strongly inter communal, see Varshney, Ashutosh (2002):50.

“Aaj to pani nahin, aaj to marna hai” (No water today, today is for dying)(Survivors Speak,2002).

In Anjanwa, a village in Panchmahal, the Talati took the Muslims back. But Hindu women came out to say that now that Muslim will begin tending their fields again, what about the fields of those who have been arrested and are in jail among the Hindus? These comments caused a lot of fear; and though the women are staying on there is terror(We do not Want Muslims Here,2002).

One of the most disturbing & sinister truths about some prominent masterminds behind the Gujarat carnage was that many hailed from medical profession. They (including women doctors), despite their professional allegiance to the hipocratic oath, violated it to lead mobs. Dr. Amita Patel, Dr. Bharti behn Patel and Dr. Maya Kotdani (all the women are BJP MLAs), are all doctors by profession who were named by victims as masterminds and leaders in brutal crimes. One eyewitness from Jamalpur stated “The worst conduct was at sola civil hospital, here Bharti behn and Amita behn, both BJP corporators were actually telling doctors whom to treat and not to treat”(CCTR,2002:47-48).

In the testimonies of mass rapes in Naroda Patia, it came to light that there were no women and children in Hindu society, who had been sent away for safety. In an interview Shakeela, (a 20 year old girl from Naroda Patia), told that Hindu men had sent their women for safety before inciting the violence(Saharwaru,2002). Here, we are compelled to think that whether Hindu women were aware of the forthcoming attacks? If they were aware, then their inaction should come into the category of indirect participation or not?

The killings were marked by a ritualistic frenzy. Banusabil Qureshi of Randhikpur, who took shelter in an adivasi house, claims he saw some Hindu women dancing 'garba' after burning down of the Muslim houses(Dalwai andMhake,2002:12).

One Muslim man from Naroda Patia whose ten year old son was badly burnt and in hospital, alleged that BJP MLA from Naroda Patia, Maya Kotdani gave the signal which let the mob loose on their locality; 'If she is brought before me today, I will tell her, we elected you to the assembly and you brought this disaster on us'(Ibid).

In an interview with Maya Kotdani, it was found that she was indifferent, complacent and even bemused. She showed no remorse at the state abdicating its responsibility. There was nothing that the state could do, she says, "There was a natural *ghrina* (hate) and *akrosh* (anger) in the heart of every Hindu and we could not control it".

When questioned about the reported rapes, she said – '*Ahchha, kya ye sach hai, suna hai, ek police wale ne mujhe bataya ki aisa hua par usne dekha nahin*'. (Is this true? One policeman mentioned this to me, but he had not seen any thing). She had not taken the trouble to investigate further. She claims that this kind of communal violence is part of *Gujarat ki prakriti and Gujarat ki tasir*. (It is a natural part of life, and should be expected as such.)(Survivors Speak, 2002).⁵⁵

(As MLA and a woman, to boot, her casual attitude to sexual violence was alarming).

⁵⁵ A detailed account of the conversation is attached in the report's annexure 2.1.

In Laxmipura village, Khed Brahma Taluka of Sabarkantha District, Mahila Sarpanch Nathibehn, is clearly a puppet sarpanch. Her husband and son have been identified as leading the mobs, who torched Muslim homes on the evening of 27th February, 2002. The entire family, Nathibehn, Jitu bhai, and Ramesh expressed a great deal of hatred for Muslims and said that Muslims could only live in the village if they followed village tradition(Ibid). Such compulsions for the Muslims to be a part of Hindu community was also seen during the violence against Muslims in the 1990's which followed the demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya where a group of Hindu men entering a Muslim neighbourhood would shout, ugly provocative slogans- "if you want to remain in India, you will have to become a Hindu....."(Basu, 2000:275).

This situation is worsened due to official discourse which is about denial. Uma Bharti (currently Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh) asked, in feigned disbelief, "*who is she whose stomach was slit and foetus taken out? No one has heard of this woman. She is a fiction created by media.*"(Agnes,2002:25).

A further report by another statutory body, instituted presumably for the protection of women, the National Commission of women continued with this denial mode. In a cursory report brought out after the commission's whirlwind tour of the riot torn state forty days after violence broke out, it gave no details of sexual violence on the pretext that media and fact finding teams have already done so. Their argument was that peace will be restored only when women forget and lie in harmony with their aggressors(ibid).⁵⁶

⁵⁶ A member of the team, advanced a cultural argument that admitting rape may result in abandonment. So women should not be forced to share their experiences.

Both AIPRF and PUCL were separately told – in Anand, Kheda, Godhra and Vadodara of household surveys done by a group of women about a month and a half prior to the Godhra incident. In some cases they were identified as VHP women, whereas others said the women claimed to be from Gandhinagar(All India Fact Finding Report,2002:4). This survey may have or may not have some connections with Gujarat riots, but in the survivors' mind, it does have.

In Fatehpura taluka, Fathehpura, and its twin settlement, was attacked by Hindu mobs on 2nd March, 2002. Many women were raped. The police station is almost a kilometer away from this place. These women, who had been raped and doused with petrol had to walk naked and brutalized all this distance and no one – not even one of the Hindu women who were part of the watching crowd – gave them anything to cover themselves. Trying to cover themselves with some leaves on the road, they managed to flee to the police station(Forum,2002:15-19). However, it could be argued here that communal feelings does nor necessarily play a role. Hindu women might have got scared also.

In Mehsana district, visanagar taluka, Muslim recognized the attackers and said that even Patel women participated in the attack by throwing stones on the Muslims from the rooftops(PUDR,2002:22).

Local political leaders used the electronic media in the most despicable manner. Among others, Bhartiben Vyas (Mayor of Baroda) on 18th March, convened a 'shanti samiti' meeting that was attended by the police commissioner and the collector, as well as leading political figures of various parties. She made appropriate pacifist remarks in this meeting and then on the same day she made

inflammatory remarks against the minority community in the VMC council. On 29 March, 2002 on VNM or News cable, (Local TV Channels) she said, 'Like Hirankashyap destroyed evil, we will also destroy *deshdrohis* (traitors.)

Bharti, the BJP corporator of Millatnagar area was seen firing on innocent Muslim people running for shelter, when asked why is she doing this when they have also voted for her, her reply was crude. She said, *'I don't need you, pointing to the Hindu locality, she said they are my vote banks so obviously I will support them'* (Saharwaru, 2002:2).

Citing the active participation of women in the violence against members of the Muslim community, the head of the All India Muslim women's conference termed it as a division of women along religious lines.

It may not be out of place here to note that between riots and rumours, a new public space came to be etched, howsoever provisionally, where men and women (the latter largely segregated within the family in normal times) could socialize. Between them they also supplied the ballast for showing up or even redefining – community bonds and boundaries against an imaginary foe.

Perhaps when women engage in such violence, it is also a form of catharsis or release for these women. Perhaps it also provides them with some feeling of empowerment. What is also important that they get a sense of being included in a major public act of family and community, an arena where they rarely participate. So it can be seen as a kind of urge for recognition on the part of these women, who engage in such violence. As Arvind Rajgopal has pointed out, that more emphasis

has been given to the disruptive effects of participation rather than to the possible role they play in generating a greater sense of inclusion(cf.Parthasarthy,2002).

Parthasarathy argues that the combined effects of (a) family and group legitimacy that enable attacks on members of other communities and (b) the failure to label domestic violence as criminal and illegitimate have created a situation where women find it much easier to collaborate with their own oppressors in inflicting violence upon others than to combat oppression within the family(Parthasarthy, 2002).

Hindu militancy allows the unfolding of agential trajectories, giving them access to a world of action and public life. It becomes a permissible arena of their agency as it goes along the grain of the conceptual world view of the Hindu household. The choice of this form of gender expression is embedded in the women's material interests of the class, caste community.

The entire oeuvre of practices both discursive and material – the imagery of Bharatmata, the fiery as well as the fecund mother goddesses, valiant historical figures and subservient mythical wives all allow women to become angels in moments of crisis and when these moments ebb away, they can return to the mode of nurturing mothers and obedient wives, much like the Shanti of Anandmath and Sarala Debi who was so inspired by her(Sethi, 2002).

But this liberation is not real as Tanika Sarkar argues that, “We know the costs only too well.... Political involvement has reached its culmination in an authoritarian Hindu Right that promises no liberation..... accepts final commands from an all male leadership that refuses any debate on Hindu Patriarchy (Sarkar,1993:43).

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

The major thrust of this study has been to explore the location of women in communal riots- victims as well as agents- while simultaneously looking at some other related aspects by taking Gujarat riots-2002 as a case study.

Recent communal riot in Gujarat is unparalleled in the history of independent India because of its brutal, heinous, and organized killings of Muslims at a mass scale. It showed that a riot is not a result of a single factor rather multiple factors combining at a single moment. It was no different riot that occurred in independent India in the sense, that it was based on the same selfish premises of political, social, economic and religious gains. It was marked by the involvement of political leaders, administrative machinery, communal organization and mass media, but the most disturbing feature of it, was the participation of civil society at large scale which was not seen in earlier riots.

It was a clear cut case of communalization of state. with general communalization of Gujarati society, in which Muslim women were specially targeted. They were subjected to most brutal forms of attack on their personas'. Sexual subjugation of the female body is seen in almost all cases of collective violence, but this time we also saw the visible participation of Hindu women in killing as well as lootings against the Muslim community. So we are confronted with the question that how to explain the victimization of some women as well as the participation of other women as agents in a communal riot.

Existing theories of gender construction and the relation of gender identity to community identity provided us the framework in which we tried to explore the above posed question. Discursive theories of gender inform us that men and women are constructed differentially according to their locations in the social structure. But all men and all women are not alike, rather they are differentiated according to their caste, class, religion etc. Woman is an individual, who can only be understood in terms of the community identity in which she is located, she is a 'concrete' rather than 'generalized' other.

Community is a group within which members have something in common and who also share a similar difference in social organization from other groups. Women become the focal point of this construction of ethnic/communal difference because of their symbolization with '*private/pure*' sphere of community life. Due to their confinement in private sphere, women are seen as carriers of authenticity. Discourses of ethnic distinctiveness call upon the metaphoric of blood, kith and kin, heritage and sexuality, and women occupy a central place in this process of signification.

Within this framework we tried to explore that with the same logic of merging of women with community identity, women become the victims of communal violence on one hand and agents of communal violence on the other. But the agency of women should not be seen as only identified with male games rather we should also take into account, women's own interests in exercising this kind of agency.

The riots in Gujarat manifested that women continue to suffer in caste and communal conflict because of the notion of '*honour*' attached to them. Patriarchal

discourses about the modesty of women are generally about sexuality, because a woman's body symbolizes the property or territory of the other, and this makes them more vulnerable to ghastly forms of sexual violence in a communal riot. However, problematic may it seem in itself, but rape of a woman is seen as violating the honour of her community and not merely violating her person. Actually the violence against women in communal/caste conflict is the extension of everyday violence against women.

In Gujarat also, when Hindus attacked Muslim community, Muslim women, of all age groups, were focal points of attack. They were primary targets of heinous forms of sexual, physical, psychological abuse. The murderous mob it seems, were safeguarding the 'honour' of their women and violating the 'honour' of the Muslim community through the rape of these women. The cruelty with which women were treated in Gujarat riots was not seen in earlier riots of independent India. It can only be compared to the partition riots of India, in which women bore the huge share of burnt. We have to also see this kind of violence against women in the light of general hatred against women in the society. Violence in society is increasing in general and it is getting normalized. It seems that only rape was not sufficient to humiliate and destroy the minority community in the eyes of its perpetrators. So they invented more brutal forms of violence to inflict a deeper impact on the minority community in a long run. We should not get shocked even if this kind of violence also gets normalized at certain point of time in future.

Muslim women have also suffered as survivors of the violence. Their complaints were not registered, police threatened them, and political leaders justified the violence. They were facing the problem of insecurity, economic destitution, loss of independence and education and further ghettoization. State is absolutely central

to any discussion of what happened in Gujarat because state was itself complicit in perpetrating the wounds on minority community. So these women, belonging to minority community, became more vulnerable because they were not liable of getting any support from the state. Actually we are facing a situation in which, patriarchal assertion of power conjuncts with an ideology of hatred and majoritarianism, along with community sanction of violence against women.

We should not see Muslim women as only victims but they are also exercising their agency with the help of different institutions. They are resisting and confronting the communal forces despite daily threats and virtually no financial base. We have seen in the case of Zahira Sheikh, who spoke out against the perpetrators of violence with the help of National Human Rights Commission. They did not sit back rather they have taken the responsibility of the family and community on their shoulders. The case of Sikh widows in Delhi, who have been struggling to get justice for more than two decades, clearly proves this point. The indifference of state organs like police and administration has not weakened their zeal to resist and demand. If more and more helping hands are offered, there is an expectation that these women have a future. We should also keep in mind that not all Muslim women were the victims of violence rather it were the women of a particular caste, class who were severely affected.

We have seen the participation of Hindu women in violence against Muslims in Gujarat riot in the light of three aspects. The participation of women in this kind of violence needs a different kind of explanation. Here the location of women becomes critical since most of the time they had been in the position of powerlessness within the community, and their peripheral involvement cannot have the same meanings as that from the position of men. Moreover, their participation in

violence could be seen in the light of recent feminist analysis, which focuses on identity as a slippery notion and that 'woman' is not easy to locate. There is no single 'woman' but a variety of 'women' shaped by differences. The whole repertoire of images used by Hindu organizations also facilitates Hindu women's participation in the violence against the minority community. They allow women to become angels in the moments of crisis and when these moments ebb away, they can return to the mode of nurturing mothers and obedient wives.

The notion that women are closer to religion than men makes it much easier for fundamentalist forces to socialize women in religious fundamentalism and to use them politically. Religious values are deeply embedded in most of the women. So religion, with its scriptural authority, becomes the means with which to reclaim women in order to define family, community, and nation and to use them accordingly.

But while talking about women's use of violence, which readily connotes essence of negative ness/ disruptiveness, one can not, at the same time deny several functional / positive aspects which comes out of this participation. Such aspects may include women's own political, social and economic interests i.e. the opportunity to socialize, redefining community bonds and boundaries among men and women, a feeling of empowerment and a greater sense of inclusion. Yet, as already has been mentioned, women's involvement in violence has been in the periphery as compared to men, so an investigation into the roots or origins of women's involvement becomes relevant. Although, through the literature we get a kind of encompassing picture regarding the participation of Hindu women in violence against Muslims, we should always take into account the particular caste, class and ideological affiliations of these women.

The political implications of this gender/ethnic divide relate to whether a unified women's movement is possible. The increasing gender violence over the world was the main rallying point against which women's movement was organized. But the use of violence by women against the women and the men of other community undermines the basic postulate of the women's movement in India and the world. By appropriating and redefining important concepts associated with the women's movement, such as equality, identity, secularism to name three, the religious fundamentalism in India has subverted the very basis of the women's movement. But 'woman' is not universal. Gender subordination takes the second place in the context of an appeal to ethnic identity. The riots dealt a severe blow to the premise that the women have a separate existence away from their communal identity, where they could discuss different problems faced by them as women.

We have to also see what kind of empowerment Hindu women get from this kind of participation. Does it help them better to negotiate with their husbands, families and in public spaces in general? Sarkar has pointed out that this participation does not hold promise of any liberation for these women. By locating the importance of women in relation to their roles in the family and the community the fundamentalist discourse curtails her rights as an individual. The moment she is seen exercising her rights, she is blamed as going against the interests of the family, religious community and the nation.

Minority women are forced into an even worse scenario, as defense of their existence and identity vis-à-vis Hindu communalism becomes equated with acquiescence to the dictates of fundamentalist leaders of their community. The implications of this patriarchal domination on women have been already seen in the case of Shah Bano and Roop Kanwar.

The kind of communal violence/pogrom unleashed against the minority Muslim community has dealt severe blow to the secular traditions of India. Communalism has emerged as a major obstacle to the building of a modern, progressive nation- state and a secular democratic society. We really wonder that after this kind of severe violence what will be the nature of relations between Hindu and Muslim community. If this kind of violence remains unchecked, it would not take time to spread in other parts of the country as well.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- A Report by the Combined fact finding team of CPDR and APCLC.1998. *Attacks on religions minorities in South Gujarat*. October.
- Agarwal, Purushottam .1995. 'Savarkar, Surat and Draupadi: Legitimising Rape as a Political Weapon,' In Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia (eds.) *Women and the Hindu right: a Collection of Essays*. New Delhi: Kali for women: 29-57.
- Agnes, Flavia .1996 'Redefining the Agenda of Women's Movement Within a Secular Framework,' In John Macguire, Peter Reeves and Howard Brasted (eds.) *Politics of Violence from Ayodhya to Behrampada*. Sage: New Delhi.
- Agnes, Flavia .2002. 'Gender and Community,' *Communalism Combat*, September, 2002 :25-29.
- Agnes, Flavia .2002. 'The Quest for Justice,' In Agnes, Flavia (ed.) *Of Lofty Claims and Muffled Voices*. Bombay: Majlis:10-17.
- Ahmad, Riaz 2002. 'Gujarat Violence: Meaning and Implications,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 18, vol.xxxvii, no. 20:1870-1873.
- All India fact finding report on Genocide in Gujarat, Preliminary Report*.2002.
- All India Radio*, FM gold, Evening News, 8:30p.m. 1 May 2004.
- Alsop, Rachel, Annette Fitzsimons and Kathleen Lennon .2002. *Theorizing Gender*. Cambridge: Polity press.
- Anderson, Benedict .1983. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.
- Anita S., Manisha, Vasudha and Kavita .1995. 'Interviews with women,' In Sarkar and Butalia (eds.) *Women and the Hindu Right*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.
- Anthias, Floya and Nira Yuval Davis.1983. 'Contextualising Feminism: Gender, Ethnic and Class Divisions,' *Feminist Review* 15: 62-75.
- Bagga, Arvinder Kaur.1997. *Impact of Communal Violence on Women*.Unpublished Thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University.
- Barrett, Michele .1980. 'Ideology and the Production of Gender,' In Barrett (ed.) *women's oppression Today*. NLB :110.
- Bartky, S. .1988. 'Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power,' In I.Diamond and L.Quinby (eds.) *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*. Boston Mass: North Eastern University Press.
- Basu, Amrita .1998. 'Hindu Women's Activism in India and the Questions it Raises,' In Patricia Jeffery and Amrita Basu (eds.) *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicised Religion in South Asia*. New York/London: Routledge..
- Basu, Amrita .2000. 'Engendering Communal Violence: Men as Victims, Women as Agents,' In Julia Leslie and Mary MCGEE (eds.) *Invented Identities: the Interplay of Gender, Religion and Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford: 265-285.
- Bedi,Rahul .2002. 'Soldiers Held Back to Allow Hindu Revenge,' *Telegraph*, April 4.

- Benhabib, S. 1987. 'The Generalized and the concrete other: The Kohberg – Gilligan controversy and Feminist Theory,' In S. Benhabib and D. Cornell (eds.) *Feminism as critique*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Benton, Sarah .1998. 'Founding Fathers and Earth Mothers,' In Charles Nickie and Helen Hintjens (eds.) *Gender, Ethnicity and Political Ideologies*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Bohannon, Paul (ed.). 1967. *Law and Warfare: Studies in the Anthropology of Conflict*. New York: Natural History Press.
- Bose, Sugata .1997. 'Nation as Mother: Representations and Contestations of India in Bengali Literature and Culture,' In Ayesha Jalal and Sugata Bose (eds.) *Nationalism, Democracy and Development: State and Politics in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bose, Prasenjit, Kamal Mitra Chenoy, Vijoo Krishnan, and Vishnu Nagar .2002. *Ethnic Cleansing in Ahmedabad: A Preliminary Report*. SAHMAT, March 10-11.
- Bosworth, Mary .1999. *Engendering Resistance: Agency and Power in Women's Prisons*. Sydney: Ashgate/Dortmouth.
- Bourdieu .1979. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Bourdieu Pierre .1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre (1990), 'La Domination Masculine' *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, 84 (Sept.): 2-31
- Bourdieu, Pierre and Terry Eagleton.1992. 'Doxa and Common Life,' *New Left Review*, 191, (Jan-Feb): 111-21.
- Brass,Paul R. 2002. *The Production of Hindu -Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*. New Delhi:Oxford University Press.
- Brown,Beth Duff .2002. 'India's Religious violence spreads to Rural Villages in Gujarat,' *Associated Press*, March 2.
- Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, Vol. 4, October- December, 1993.
- Butalia, Urvashi .1998. *The other side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. New Delhi: Viking.
- Butalia, Urvashi.1993. 'Community, State and Gender: On Women's Agency During India's Partition' *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 24, WS-12-WS-24.
- Butalia, Urvashi.1999 'Soft Target,' *Himal*, 12(2):26-28.
- Butler, J. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Butler, J. 1993. *Bodies that matter: on the Discursive Limits of 'sex'*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Chakravarty, Mukta .2002. 'The face Behind Gujarat Foetus Headline,' *Indian Express*, 23 May.
- Chandra, Bipan .1984. *Communalism in Modern India*.Delhi: Vikas.

- Chandrashekar, Rajiv .2002. 'Provocation preceded indian Train Fires: Official Faults, Hindu Actions, Muslim Reactions for Incident that Led to Carnage,' *Washington Post*, March 6.
- Chhachhi, Amrita .1991. 'Forced Identities: the State, Communalism, Fundamentalism and Women in India,' In Deniz Kandiyoti (ed.) *Women, Islam and the State*. London: MacMillan: 144-175.
- Cohen, A. 1985. *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London: Tavistock.
- Concerned Citizens' Tribunal Report.2002. Crime Against Humanity, *Communalism Combat*, November – December 2002, Year 9, no.81-82.
- Dalwai ,Shama and Sandhya Mhake .2002. *Godhra and After: Report of Violence in Gujarat*. Mumbai, May.
- Daly. M. 1978. *Gyn/Ecology: the Metaethics of Radical Feminists*. Boston Mass: Beacon Press.
- Dar, A.M.2002. 'Narendra Modi's Gujarat,' In M.L. Sondhi and Apartim Mukarji (eds.) *The Black book of Gujarat*,New Delhi: Manak Publications.
- Das ,Veena .1990. 'Our Work to Cry, Your Work to Listen,' In Veena Das (ed.) *Mirrors of violence: Communities, Riot and Survivors in south Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press:345-98.
- Das, Veena .1990. 'Introduction: Communities, Riots, Survivors – The South Asian Experience,' In Veena Das (ed.) *Mirrors of violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press:1-36.
- Das, Veena et. al. 2001. *Violence and Subjectivity*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Dasgupta ,Manas.2002. 'NHRC indictment shocks Gujarat,' *Hindu* April 3.
- Dasgupta,Manas .2002. 'Saffronised police Show their Colour,' *Hindu*, March 3.
- David Robin And Leena Mishra .2002. 'Legal Experts Fear Manipulation of FIR.' *Times of India*, March 26.
- Davis, N.Z. 1973. 'The Rites of Violence,' In Davis, N.Z. (ed.) *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*. Stanford: Stanford University Press:152-187.
- Delphy, Christine .1977 *The Main enemy*. London: women's Research and Resource Centre.
- Desai, A.R. 1984. ' Caste and Communal Violence in Post Partition India,' in Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.).1984. *Communal Riots in Post Independence India*. Hyderabad: Sangam Book.
- Dube,Leela.2001. *Anthropological Explorations in Gender: Intersecting Fields*. New Delhi:Sage Publications.
- Dumont, Louis .1980. *Homo Hierarchicus: the Caste and its Implication*. ' Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Dumont,Louis .1970. *Religion, Politics and History in India: Collected Papers in Indian Sociology*. Paris :Mouton.

- Durga Vahini: Parichay Mala*. 1998. Pushpa-3, V.H.P.
- Dutt, Barkha .2002. 'The Rape of Reason,' *Outlook*, May.
- Dutta ,Nonica .2001. 'Partition Memory; a Daughter's Testimony,' In Mushirul Hasan and Nariaki Nakapls (eds.) *The Unfinished Agenda: Nation building in South Asia*. New Delhi: Manohar: 17-48.
- Dutta, Sujan.2002). 'When Guardians of Gujarat Gave a 29 Hour License for Punitive Action,' *Telegraph*, March 9.
- Engineer, Asghar Ali. 1984. 'An Analytical Study of the Meerut Riot' In Asghar Ali Engineer (ed.) *Communal riots in Post Independence India*.Hyderabad: Sangam Books.
- Engineer, Asghar Ali.1995. *Lifting the veil: Communal violence and communal harmony in contemporary India*.Hyderabad: Sangam Books.
- Engineer, Asghar Ali.2002). 'Gujarat Riots in the Light of the History of Communal Violence,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 4, Vol. XXXVII, no. 50.:5047-54.
- Forum against oppression of women and Awaj-e-Niswaan .2002. *Genocide in Rural Gujarat: the Experience of Dahod District*. Mumbai, May.
- Foucault, Michel.1981. *History of Sexuality*. Vol.I, Trans. by Robert Hurley, Penguin Books.
- Freud, Sigmund .1905. 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality,' S.E.7:123-45, PFL.7.
- Freud, Sigmund .1933. 'Femininity: New Introductory Lectures in Psycho analysis,' S.E.22. PFL 2.
- 'Genocide Gujarat' .2002. *Communalism Combat*, Special Issue, March – April, year 8, no.77-78.
- Golwalkar, M.S. 1966. *Bunch of Thoughts*. Banglore: Vikram Prakashan.
- Grosz, Elizabeth .1994. *Volatile Bodies: Towards a corporeal Feminism*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana university Press.
- 'Gujarat Inching Towards normalcy', *Times of India*, March 6, 2002.
- 'Gujarat used as Hindutva Laboratory,' *Asian Age*, March 25, 2002.
- Gupta, Dipankar .1996. *The Context of Ethnicity: Sikh Identity in a Comparative Perspective*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Haraway ,Donna .1988. 'Situated Knowledges: the Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspectives,' *Feminist Studies*, vol.14, no.4:72-73.
- Hebermas, J. 1987. The Theory of Communicative Action Volume II, 'Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason,' Trans. by Thomas McCarthy, Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hegde, Naina .2002. 'Hameeda's Sister,' In Flavia Agnes(ed.) *Of Lofty Claims and Muffled Voices*. Bombay: Majlis.

- Heiffard, Rick and Robert Miller (eds.).1993. *Women, Ethnicity, Nationalism: The politics of Transition*. London: Routledge.
- Hindu*, September 10,2002.
- Hochschild.1989. *Second Shift*. New York: Avon Books.
- Holloway, Wendy .1992. 'Gender Difference and the production of subjectivity,' In Helen Crowley and Susan Himmelweit (eds.) *Knowing women*. Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press: 240-74.
- Horowitz, Donald .1990. *Ethnic groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press:41-54.
- How has the Gujarat Massacre Affected Minority Women: The Survivors Speak*. Fact finding by a women's panel, sponsored by Citizens' Initiative, Ahmedabad, April 16, 2002.
- Jackson, S. 1996.*Christine Delphy*. London: Sage.
- Johnson, Diane .1991 'Rape,' In Evelyn Ashton – Jones and Hary A. Olson (eds.) *The Gender Reader*.Massachussets: Simon & 'Schuster.
- Kakkar, Sudhir .1995. *The Colours of Violence*. New Delhi: Viking.
- Kakodkar, Priyanka .2002. 'Just Like Hindustan-Pakistan' *Outlook*, March 18.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz .1988. 'Bargaining with Patriarchy,' *Gender and Society*, 2 (3): 274-290.
- Kannabiran, Kalpana .1996. 'Rape and the construction of communal Identity,' In Jayawardena and Malathi de Alwis (eds.) *Embodied violence: Communalising Women's Sexuality in South Asia*. New Delhi: Kali for women.
- Kelly .1988. *Surviving sexual violence*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Kelly, Liz . 1996. 'When Does the Speaking Profit Us? Reflections on the Challenges of Developing Feminist Perspectives on Abuse and Violence by Women,' In Marianne Hester, Liz Kelly and and Jill Radford (eds.) *Women, Violence and Male Power: Feminist Activism, Research and Practice*. Buckingham/Philadelphia :Open University Press.
- Kishwar, Madhu.1998. *Religion at the Service of Nationalism*. Delhi: OUP.
- Kristeva ,Julia .1993. *Nations without Nationalism*. trans. by Leanon S. Roudienz, New York :Columbia University Press.
- Lacan, Jacques .1982. 'The meaning of the Phallus,' In J.Mitchell and J. Rose (eds.) *Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne*. London: Macmillan.
- Mander, Harsh .2002. 'Cry the Beloved Country: Reflections on the Gujarat Massacre,' *South Asia Citizens Web*, March 13.
- McClintock, Anne .1995. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*. London: Routledge.
- McNay, Lois .2000. *Gender and Agency: Reconfiguring the subject in Feminist and Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

- Menon, Ritu and Kamala Bhasin. 1998. *Borders and Boundaries: women in India's Partition*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.
- Menon, Vinay .2002. 'Hindu Activists taunted for less violence,' *Hindustan Times*, April 8.
- Menon, Vinay.2002. 'Hindu Activists Taunted for Less Violence,' *Hindustan Times*, April 8.
- Minsky, R. (ed.).1996. *Psychoanalysis – Gender*. London: Routledge.
- Mishra,Ravish.2002. 'BJP Backs Off, Withdraws RSS Circular,' *Indian Express*, March 8.
- Mohanty, C.T. 1992. 'Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience,' In M. Barrett and, A. Phillips (eds.) *Destabilising Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debate.*, Cambridge: Polity: 74-93.
- Mohanty, M.M. 1987. ' Communalism: A Democratic Rights Perspective,' *Lokayan Bulletin*, vol.5:58.
- Morgon, Robin (ed.) .1984. *Sisterhood is Global*.London: Penguin.
- Naidu, Ratna .1980. *Communal edge to plural societies: India & Malasiya*. New Delhi: Vikas.
- Nandy, Ashis .1990. 'The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance,' In Veena Das (ed.) *Mirrors of violence :Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press:69-93.
- Nicholson,L.(ed.).1990.*Feminism/Postmodernism*.London: Routledge.
- Ortner, Sherry B. 1996. *Making Gender: the Politics and Erotics of Culture*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Ortner, Sherry B.1974. 'Is Female to Male what Nature to Culture,'In M. Rosaldo and L.Lamphere (eds.) *Women, Culture and Society*. Standford: Standford University Press.
- Pandey, Gyanendra .1977. 'Community and Violence,' *Economic and Political Weekly* , Vol.xxxii, no. 32: 2037-2045.
- Pandey, Gyanendra .1990. 'The Colonial construction of 'Communalism': British Writings on Banaras in the Ninteenth Century,' In Veena Das (ed.) *Mirrors of violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press:94-134.
- Pandey, Gyanendra .1993. 'Introduction,' In Gyanendra Pandey (ed.) *Hindus and others: The Question of Identity in India Today*.Delhi: viking .
- Pandey, Gyanendra .1994. 'The Prose of Otherness,' In David Arnold and Hardiman David (eds.) *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha*. New Delhi: Oxford:188-221.
- Parthasarathy, D. 2002. 'Women, Communal violence and Rights Rhetoric,' *Manushi* no. 129:38-42.
- People's Union for Democratic Rights .2002. *Maaro! Kaapo! Baalo!: State, Society and Communalism in Gujarat*. New Delhi, May.

- Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties Vadodara and Vadodara Shanti Abhiyan .2002. *At the Receiving End: Women's Experiences of Violence in Vadodara*. May 31.
- Perrot et. al. .1990. 'Culture and Power of Women: A Historiographical Essay,' In Aymard and Mukhia (eds.) *French studies in History*. Vol.II. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- Prabhune,Tushar.2002. 'Brave Lawyer Fears for Life,' *Asian Age*, April 20.
- Rajan,Nandini Sundar .2002. 'A License to Kill: Patterns of violence in Gujarat,' In Siddharth Varadrajan (ed.) *Gujarat: the Making of a Tragedy*. New Delhi: Penguin Books:75-134.
- Rajgopal, P.R. 1987. *Communal Violence in India*. Delhi: Centre for Policy Research, Uppal Pub. Co..
- Rashtra Sevika Samiti: Ek Parichay*. Mathura: Sevika Prakashan, nd.
- 'Refugees in Gujarat Camp Pray For More Relief Aid,' .2002. *Channelnewsasia*, April16.
- Rege, Sharmila and Karuna Chanana (eds.). 2003. *Sociology of Gender: the Challenge of Feminist Sociological Knowledge*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- Report of Human Rights Watch (New York) on the Gujarat Riots .2002. 'We Have No Orders to Save You' – State Participation and Complicity in Communal Violence in Gujarat,' In M.L. Sondhi, and Apratim Mukarji (eds.) *The Black Book of Gujarat*. New Delhi: Manak:183-296.
- Report of the citizens' commission.1999. Violence in Gujarat. *Indian Journal of secularism*, Vol.3, no.2, July-September .
- Rosaldo ,M.1974. 'Women, Culture and society: A Theoretical Overview' In M. Rosaldo and L.Lamphere (eds.) *Women, Culture and Society*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Rubin, Gayle .1975. 'The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy of Sex,' In R. Reiter (ed.) *Towards an Anthropology of Women*. New York: Monthly Review Press:157-210.
- Rubin, Gayle .1984. 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality,' In Carole S. Vance (ed.) *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- SaharWaru: a Women's Action and Resource Unit .2002. *A holocaust in Gujarat with Epicentre Ahmedabad: Crushing a Religious Minority, Agenda of Hate*. Gujarat (India), Ahmedabad, May.
- Saheli Report .2002. *Impact of the Gujarat Genocide on Women: Challenges and Strategies*. New Delhi, Saturday, 10th August.
- Sarkar, Tanika .1993. 'Women's Agency Within Authoritarian Communalism: the Rashtra Sevika Samiti and Ramjanbhoomi,' In Gyavendra Pandey (ed.) *Hindus and other: The Question of Identity in India Today*. New Delhi: Viking .
- Sarkar, Tanika .1996. 'Heroic Women, Mother Goddesses,' In Tanika Sarkar and Urvashi Butalia (eds.) *Women and the Hindu Right*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.

- Sarkar, Tanika .1998. 'Woman, Community and Nation: A Historical Trajectory for Hindu Identity Politics,' In Patricia Jeffery and Amrita Basu (eds.) *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism and Politicised Religion in South Asia*. New York/London: Routledge.
- Sarkar, Tanika .1999. 'The Gender Predicament of the Hindu Right,' In K.N. Pannikar (ed.) *The concerned Indian's Guide to Communalism*. New Delhi: Viking Penguin India.
- Sarkar, Tanika and Urvashi Butalia (eds.).1995. *Women and the Hindu Right: A Collection of Essays*. New Delhi: Kali for Women.
- Sawicki, J. 1988. 'Identity Politics and Sexual Freedom: Foucault and Feminism,' In I. Diamond and L. Quinby (eds.) *Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance*. Boston Mass: North Eastern University Press: 177-191.
- Scott, Joan .1988. *Gender and the Politics of History*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Seifert, Ruth .1999 'The Second Front: The Logic of Sexual Violence in War,' In Manfred B. Steger and Nancy S. Lind (eds.) *Violence and its Alternatives: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. London: Macmillan:145-153.
- Sethi, Harsh .2002. 'Frayed at the Edges,' *Hindu*, March 16.
- Sethi, Manisha .2002. 'Avenging angels and Nurturing Mothers: Women in Hindu Nationalism,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, April 20, Vol. XXXVII, no.16: 1545-1552.
- Sharma, Ashok .2002., 'Indian Violence Spreads in Wake of Train Fire that Killed at least 58,' *Associated Press*, February 28.
- Sharma, Radha and Sanjay Pandey.2002. 'Mob Burns to death 65 at Naroda Patia,' *Times of India*, March 2.
- Sheth,D.L. 2002. 'The Politics of Communal Polarization: A Precursor to the Gujarat Carnage,' *Manushi*, no.129:15-21.
- Singh, Randhir .1988. 'Theorising Communalism: A fragmentary note,' *Economic and Political Weekly*, 23(3): 1547-50.
- Singh, Yogendra .1996. *Modernization of Indian Tradition*. Jaipur & New Delhi: Rawal Publication.
- Smelson, Neil.J. 1962. *Theory of collective behaviour*.New York: Free Press.
- Sondhi, M.L. and Apratim Mukarji . (eds.). 2002. *The Black Book of Gujarat*. New Delhi: Manak.
- Spencer, Johanthan.2003. 'Collective Violence,' In Das (Veena ed.) *Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*. New Delhi: Oxford:1564-1580.
- Tambiah, S.J. .1986. *Sri Lanka: Ethnic, Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy*. London: T.B. Tauras and Co.
- Thompson, E.P. 1971. 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century,' *Past and Present*, 50:76-136.
- Tilly, Charles .1978. *From Mobilization to Revolution*.MA: Addison Wesley.

- Tripp, Anna .2002. 'Introduction,' In Anna Tripp(ed.) *Gender*. Newyork: Palgrave.
- 20 chargesheeted in Bilkees Yaqub Gang Rape Case' *Hindu*, 20 April, 2004.
- Varadrajan, Sidharth(ed.). 2002. *Gujarat: the Making of a Tragedy*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.
- Varshney, Ashutosh .2002. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Vishwannathan, Susan .2002. 'Refugees in Gujarat Camps Pray for More Relief Aid,' *Channelnewsasia*, April 16.
- Visweswaran, Kamala .1990. *Family subjects: An Ethnography of Women's Question in Indian Nationalism*. P.HD. thesis, Standford University.
- Wadley, Susan .1988. 'Woman and the Hindu tradition,' In Rehana Ghadially (ed.) *Women in Indian Society*. New Delhi :Sage.
- Walby, Sylvia .1996. 'Women and Nation,' In Gopal Balakrishnan (ed.) *Mapping the Nation*. London/Newyork: Verso: 235-254.
- 'We do not want Muslims here,' .2002. *Communalism Combat*, July.
- Weedon C. .1987. *Feminist Practice and Post structuralist Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman .1991. 'Doing Gender,' In Judith Lorber and Susan A. Farrell (eds.) *The Social Construction of Gender*. New Delhi: Sage.¹
- Connell, R.W. 1987. *Gender and Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Williams, P.J. 1993. *The Alchemy of Race and Rights*.London: Virago Press.
- Yuval Davis, Nira and Floya Anthias .1989. 'Introduction,' In Nira Yuval Davis and Floya Anthias (eds.) *Woman-Nation-State*. London: Macmillan.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira .1980. 'The Bearers of the Collective: Women and Religious Legislation in Israel,' *Feminist Review* 4: 15-27.

