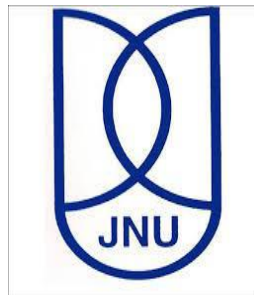


**ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN POST
COMMUNAL VIOLENCE SITUATIONS: A STUDY OF
POST-2002 GUJARAT SOCIETY**

*Dissertation Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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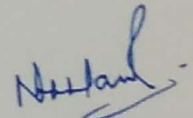
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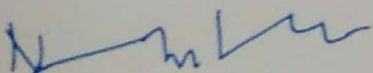
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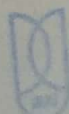
I declare that the dissertation entitled "Role of Civil Society Organisations in Post Communal Violence Situations: A Study of Post-2002 Gujarat Society" submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other university.

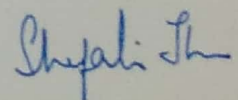

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To

My Parents & Siblings

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Finally, I own responsibility of any kind of error that might have occurred in this work.

Neelam

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMC	Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation
AWAG	Ahmedabad Women's Action Group
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
CBO	Community- Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FBO	Faith- Based Organisation
GHP	Gujarat Harmony Project
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
INC	Indian National Congress
KHAM	Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi, Muslim
M.P	Madhya Pradesh
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
PAC	Provincial Arms Constabulary
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SC	Scheduled Caste
SEWA	Self Employed Women's Association
SXSSS	St. Xavier Social Service Society
TLA	Textile Labour Association
U.P	Uttar Pradesh
VMC	Vadodara Municipal Corporation

INTRODUCTION

“Harmony makes small thing grow, lack of it makes great things decay”¹

Sallust

This quote is very well suited to the contemporary Indian scenario, as India is one of the richest civilizations, having diversity of every kind and known for the vibrancy of its democracy today. But in the face of several kinds of conflicts and violence it is susceptible to failure. Moreover, India is a multicultural country, where people of different languages, ethnicities, and faiths reside. For a country like India with such diversity, clashes, of different kinds, among people are not new. Be it caste-based violence, class-based discord, or religion- based violence, all of them lead to the erosion of trust and disharmony among the people. One such problem is the problem of communalism. It is one of the biggest threats to the secular fabric of the Indian polity that it has been facing since its inception as an independent state. Communalism as an ideology is widely used for political ends, and communal violence as its result has become, it seems, a part of our life particularly since the late 1960s so much so that “despite nefarious crimes and horrendous acts of brutalities committed during communal violence, our conscience is not appalled and nor do we pay enough serious attention to these hateful organised killings required to find out some way to stop this fast spreading canker in our national life.”²

This work, therefore, is an attempt to first look into the different communal riots that have taken place in India since partition till today, that have contributed in creating fissures in the Indian society. And hence, it also aims to analyse various explanations that different theorists have given on what are the factors responsible for the eruption of communal violence and for communalism in India. But, concerning more about the prospects of peace and the role of people in bringing about that peace, this work emphasizes on one such position that highlights the role of people’s engagement in preventing and controlling such violent occurrences. Meanwhile, this work also tends

¹ A very popular quote of a Roman historian named Sallust, encapsulates the essence of this work.

²Engineer, Asghar Ali. ”Intorduction.” In *Communal Riots in Post- Independence India*, ed. by Asghar Ali Engineer, Sangam Books, 1984, p.1

to underline the negative impacts that frequent communal riots and conflicts have on inter-community relations between Hindus and Muslims. The location for which, is Gujarat. It is widely known that Gujarat has witnessed one of the bloodiest communal riots that have contributed in widening the gap between the Hindus and the Muslims in the state. It has transformed the Gujarat's society into a segmented society and has left people apprehensive and suspicious about each other's communities. It, then, moves further to find out how different civil society groups, having members and volunteers of diverse backgrounds and religious affiliations, worked to reconstruct the lives of the victims and helped in reconciling the two communities and, finally to create a space for dialogue, that is needed to better the situations.

The Historical Narrative of Communal Violence Since Partition

India, as a sovereign, state came into existence only after undergoing a bloody phase of partition in 1947. India's independence itself cost people too high, there were widespread riots in different parts of the country. Although, the demarcations were very clear cut between various communities, however, it was only after the arrival of the British that the difference between them grew so much so that the country had to carved into a Hindu Majority India and a Muslim Majority Pakistan.

Partition was not actually brought about by religious differences between Hindus and Muslims but by differences and disagreements between the elite of the two communities on the power-sharing arrangement.³ These differences were strengthened by the 'two-nation theory' propagated by Mohammad Ali Jinnah. According to which, Hindus and Muslims are two completely different religious communities who could never live peacefully with each other. Therefore, a demand of a separate nation for Muslims was raised by the Muslim League headed by Jinnah. It was actually a matter of differences of political interests, and in order to achieve those interests, religion was used instrumentally. The partition of India was followed by brutal mass killings of the people of both the religious communities, looting, arson and rapes of women. Gopal Krishna writes;

“In India, Partition had appeared to have resolved the communal problem through the drastic solution of creating a separate state for the Muslim majority areas. It was,

³ Engineer, Asghar Ali. “Communal Violence in India.” *The Hindu*, January 12, 2000

however, not a complete solution to the problem because the residual India still remained a pluralistic collectivity. While partition was the solution to one aspect of the problem, secular democracy was envisaged as the solution to the structural problem of plurality within the Indian union.”⁴

India was, therefore, declared a ‘secular democratic republic’ by the forefathers of the nation, a nation which would guarantee political, religious, and cultural liberties and rights to its people belonging to the different communities. Equal citizenship was given preference over any other identity. The article 25 of the Indian constitution ensured the right to ‘profess, practice and propagate one’s religion.’ It was the reason that the Indian constitution was perceived to be innovative combination of modernity, secularism along with religious liberty and respect for it. But, the biggest challenge for India was to bring these conceptual ideas into practice,⁵ that had just come out of the trauma of partition violence that continued for almost two years. However, the following decade of the 1950s was relatively peaceful after the partition.

But, this anticipation got a blow by the 1962 riots in Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. The phenomenon of communal violence is understood through various approaches and viewpoints that will be elaborated in the next chapter. One such is the ‘instrumental approach’ that views communal violence as an instrument in the hands of the political leaders to polarise the society to stay in power. The role of the political leadership, hence, is very crucial in instances of communal violence. It was also true in the case of Jabalpur riots, in which some congressmen were found involved in the invocation of the riots who supported the perpetrators of the violence. Lack of political will to contain such violence led to an increase in riots in different parts of the country such as Durgapur, Ranchi, Jamshedpur and many places in West Bengal in the early 1960s.⁶ And as time passed by, the numbers of such riots and their intensity increased.

One of the most horrific riots were the riots of 1969 in Ahmedabad which were broadly targeted against the Muslim population of the state. The riots of 1969 will be

⁴ Krishna, Gopal. “Communal Violence in India.” In *Religious Politics and Communal Violence*, ed. by Steven Wilkinson, New Delhi, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p.153

⁵ Engineer, Asghar Ali. “Gujarat Riots in the Light of the History of Communal Violence.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 37, no. 50, 2002: p.5048

⁶ *Ibid*, p.5049

discussed in great detail in the 2nd chapter of this work, which will have a section of descriptive analysis of all the major riots that have taken place in the state of Gujarat.

Further, in 1970, Bhiwandi was engulfed in flames of violence. Bhiwandi having 55 per cent population of the Muslims and 45 per cent of the Hindus was seen vulnerable to communal conflagrations in the late 1960s. The violence erupted during the religious procession on the eve of 'Shiv Jayanti' carried out by Hindus, in which the death toll reached more than 250. The magnitude of violence was so high that a commission was to be appointed to look into the causes and the people involved in the perpetration of violence. Justice D.P. Madon headed the commission and "held the Shiv Sena as among the organisations responsible for fomenting communal trouble, along with the Bhartiya Jana Sangh, which was identified as the major instigator, and the All India Majlis Tameer-e-Millat."⁷

There were instances of communal clashes again in Jamshedpur and Meerut in 1973. Following that, there was no major instance of communal riot till 1977, as Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, declared the national emergency in 1975 that continued till 1977. Asghar Ali Engineer underlines that Indira Gandhi's declaration of emergency brought various opposition parties together out of pressure, who formed the 'Janta Party' that came in power in 1977. The coalition of parties, that also included the Jan Sangh, committed to observe the Gandhian version of secularism and socialism. This attitude of the leaders of Jan Sangh was unacceptable to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) that led to serious tensions. As a result of this, communal violence erupted and continued in various places such as Benaras, Jamshedpur, and Aligarh till 1979. The Congress party again came into power in 1980 as the Janta Party disintegrated in 1979 because of internal rifts. Engineer further asserts, "this time the Muslims did not vote as strongly for the Congress as the latter had expected. Gandhi was upset by the loss of Muslim votes and hence tried to develop a pro-Hindu slant to compensate for the loss of Muslim votes."⁸ This strategy was proved catastrophic in terms of situations of communal violence.

The year of 1980 was also marked by riots, this time in Moradabad. The communal clashes, between the Muslims and the Policemen who were present there on duty, in

⁷I. C. "Unlearnt Lessons of 1970." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.19, no. 20/21,1984: 826-28.

⁸ Engineer, Asghar Ali. 2002, *op.cit*, p. 5050

Moradabad began during the gathering of Muslims to offer prayers at Idgah on the occasion of Eid on 13th August. When the police refused to move away the pig who had gone stray toward the Idgah where the Muslims were praying. The deployed police force was very less in numbers with no arms and it was almost impossible for them to resist the agitated mob of the Muslims. That was also responsible for the death of some of the senior police officers, who were 'beaten to death.' Observing the increasing tension, the Provincial Arms Constabulary (PAC) was called in. Krishna Gandhi underlines, "the violence thus started as a confrontation between the Muslims and the police. There was hardly any reaction from the Hindu community on the first day. It was only on the 14th that some elements from the Hindu community became active."⁹ This is how, the clashes between the Muslims and the police force transformed into Hindu-Muslim clashes and went on till November. The official death toll was 284, whereas the unofficial figures reached more than 1000 deaths. The Saxena Commission was appointed headed by Justice M.P. Saxena to probe into the riots. But, the commission's report on Moradabad riots has not come to the table, even after almost four decades of the violent happening.

Moreover, there was riot in Meerut in 1982 that was followed by riots in Assam's Nelli in 1983, that accounted for more than 3000 deaths of Bengali Muslims. It was one of the worst riots that the north-eastern state had witnessed. Then, Moradabad again had to witness communal violence in 1984. Since independence, the riots involved mostly the Hindu-Muslim communities, however, the 1984 riots in Delhi were targeted against the Sikh minority. "The riots took place in November 1984 after Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguard. More than 4000 Sikhs were killed in this massacre, in which leading Congress members were involved. However, it was an exceptional event since it was the first and (so far) last riot against Sikhs. Also, the Congress government at the centre was involved in organising these riots for the first time."¹⁰ The 1984 riots further aggravated fear among the minorities and gave impetus to 'minority consciousness.' No deliberate attempts were made by the governmental authorities to rehabilitate the victims or set up relief camps for them. The help was offered by the co-religionists and some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the 'Nagarik Ekta Manch.' After 1984 Delhi, there were riots in

⁹ Gandhi, Krishna. "Anatomy of the Moradabad Riots." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 15, no.36, 1980, p. 1505-1507

¹⁰ Engineer, Asghar Ali. 2002, *op.cit*, p.5051

Ahmedabad in 1985. The 1985 riots began as caste-based clashes but gradually acquired communal colour that would be elaborated in chapter two of this work.

In 1987, Meerut again had to face another round of communal violence, which was followed by riots in Kashmir which rendered the Kashmiri Pandits at the receiving end. Although the killings did not take place on a very large-scale but, used instrumentally to spread the message among the Kashmiri Pandits to leave Kashmir. That led to the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from Kashmir out of the sense of fear and insecurity. Who have not been settled back in Kashmir even today. The Hashimpura Muslim massacre also took place in 1987, in which 42 people were killed, all were Muslims, by the personnel of PAC.

There were riots in Bihar's Bhagalpur, the riots in Bhagalpur caused more than 1000 deaths. Engineer, while looking into the riots of 1989, says; "it would be no exaggeration to maintain that Bhagalpur riot of October 1989 was one of the major riots of the post-independence India. More than 1000 people perished and many more were permanently maimed. Property worth crores of rupees was destroyed and the riots left permanent scar in minds of several thousands of people."¹¹ There were many incidents which already vitiated the atmosphere before the eruption of riot in Bhagalpur. Tension also increased because of the simultaneous celebrations of Muharram and Bisheri Puja.¹² And finally on 24th of October, 1989 the procession of 'Ramshila Pujan' was carried out, that resulted into clashes between the Hindu-Muslim communities and led to the killings by mob, looting, burning of property. According to Engineer, the villages were badly affected by these riots and the number of such villages were around 206, and around 60,000 people had lost their livelihood sources. The dreadfulness of this incident of killing and brutality was way worse than that took place during the time of Partition.¹³

The decade of 1990s was also not spared, as many riots broke out in the early years of the decade. The demolition of the Babri Mosque in December 1992 triggered tensions

¹¹ Engineer, Asghar Ali. "Bhagalpur Riots Inquiry Commission Report." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 30, no. 28, 1995, p. 1729.

¹² Chakravarty, Ipsita. "The Forgotten Riot: How Bhagalpur 1989 Left a Memory Trace in Bihar Politics", August 12, 2015, accessed from: <https://scroll.in/article/747650/the-forgotten-riot-how-bhagalpur-1989-left-a-memory-trace-in-bihar-politics>

¹³ Engineer, Asghar Ali. *Lifting the Veil: Communal Violence and Communal Harmony in Contemporary India*. Sangam Books India Limited, 1995, p. 173-187

which led to the eruption of riots in different parts of India. Bombay riots were among them. The riots in Bombay claimed more than thousand lives and loss of property worth crore of rupees. There were also riots in Gujarat's Ahmedabad and Surat, violence in Delhi, Bhopal and various other places. It is noted that there were no major riots after 1992-93 Bombay riots for some time, although there were instances of small-scale clashes such as in Coimbatore in 1997 followed by anti-Christian riots in different parts of Gujarat in 1998, and then in Kanpur and Malegaon in 2001.¹⁴

After post-Babri Bombay riots, there was no major riot till the end of 2001. The impression that big communal riots were the feature of the previous century was shattered in February 2002 as communal killing began in different districts of Gujarat after the Godhra train burning incident, when a coach of Sabarmati Express carrying the Hindu 'Kar Sevaks', who were coming back from Ayodhya was set on fire. This was the most horrendous act of violence against the Muslim minority population in Gujarat and India so far. The communal violence of 2002 in Gujarat and it's afterward is what this work is based on. The case study of Gujarat society for this project was chosen because of the effects of the incidents of communal violence that have taken place in the state over time and to examine how the society in Gujarat after 2002 has witnessed the worsening of inter-community relations between the Muslims and the Hindus with increasing segregation of residential spaces leaving no room for communication. All these things are parts of the different chapters of this thesis and will be discussed in details in the coming pages.

Moreover, 2002 Gujarat violence was no break to instance of communal violence and intolerance. There were clashes in some parts of Uttar Pradesh in October, 2005. In fact, in the year of 2005, there were total 779 incidents of communal violence registered which accounted for 124 deaths and left 2,066 people injured.¹⁵ In 2006 there were riots during the 'Ram Navami' procession in already riot-prone Aligarh, in which around seven people lost their lives.

Although, attacks on Christians became very frequent since the 1990s but the most gruesome attack that the Christian community had to face was in 2007 and 2008 in

¹⁴ Jaishankar. K. Haldar, Debrati. "Religious Identity of Perpetrators and Victims of Communal Violence in Post-Independence India." *ERCES Online Quarterly Review*, Vol. 1, Issue no. 2, 2004, p. 3

¹⁵ Siddhiqui, M.Y. *Combating Communalism*, Nation and the World, 2006

Odisha's (then Orissa) Kandhmal district. The properties, houses and many Churches were looted and burnt, Christian women were mass raped and killed. All this rendered around 35,000 Christians homeless who had to flee from their places and seek refuge in relief camps.¹⁶ Odisha has been notorious for being the centre of anti-Christian attacks that have instilled a sense of fear and insecurity among the Christians of the state. Since independence, communal riots and conflagrations have rarely spared any year. Every year has witnessed instance of violence here and there, at small-scale or large. Year 2009 was relatively peaceful with few trivial Hindu-Muslim quarrels and communal disturbances in different places such as Lucknow, Anand, Ahmedabad Thane and Kokrajhar. 2010 was not different from previous years in terms of communal riots and disturbances. The violence in Hyderabad, Jodhpur, Mangalore, Deganaga, violence-prone Ahmedabad characterised the year. In Deganga riots the Muslims were the perpetrators whereas in other areas they were the victims.

In 2011, many instances of communal violence occurred from the beginning till the end of the year. There were communal conflicts in Umrakhedi, Vadodara, Aurangabad, Bahraich, Meerut, Moradabad, Dharavi, Jabalpur and Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh and various other places. It was possible because the ongoing communal propaganda made the environment conducive for local trivial issues to be transformed into large-scale communal riots.¹⁷ Following which, several communal clashes occurred in 2012. The major one was in Assam that transpired between the Bodos and the Bengali Muslims in the Kokrajhar district. The violence took place in two rounds. First, in July and then August which claimed more than 70 lives and rendered around 40,000 people displaced, and caused high damage to people's property. After 2002 Gujarat, Assam was a major outbreak of communal violence.

Then, U.P again witnessed communal violence. It was not one but six riots that happened in 2012 under the government of Samajwadi Party. Bihar, in this way, remained an exception as there were no communal violence in the state except in Gaya on the occasion of "Ram Navami" procession that, however, was promptly controlled by the administration. Moreover, riots and clashes were also witnessed at

¹⁶ Engineer, Asghar Ali. "How Secular is India Today?" *Heinrich Boll Stiftung India*, October 7, 2008. Accessed from: <https://in.boell.org/2008/10/08/how-secular-india-today>

¹⁷ Engineer, Asghar Ali. "Communal Riots 2011." *TwoCircle.net*, December 30, 2011, accessed from: http://twocircles.net/2011dec30/communal_riots_2011.html

various other places including Buldana in Maharashtra, Sangareddy in Andhra Pradesh, and Faizabad in U.P.¹⁸

The feature of the majority of the riots is that the police has always played a biased role. The alertness of police and the administration can control the situation before they go uncontrollable that further deteriorate the condition. Moreover In 2013, there were riots in Muzaffarnagar and Shamli districts of U.P, that emerged out of the exchanges of heated arguments between a Muslim and a Jat boy. Subsequently, led to the murder of the Muslim boy by the young Jats of the village that raged the Muslims, who then killed the Jat boys. All this resulted in a bloody riot that made around 60,000 Muslims of these districts and surrounding places to leave their places and move to Muslim-majority areas and 62 people died.¹⁹ The properties of the Muslims of the village were burnt. In terms of intensity of violence, it was one of the major riots after 2002. The village, that did not have any issue of discord between the Hindus and the Muslims, all of sudden became a centre of communal hatred and animosity. The shock and pain could be felt in Raheem's voice, who is a survivor of the Muzaffarnagar riots, who lost his five family members in the violence. He says:

“There were some 300 Muslim households in the village, and 700 households belonging to Jat and other communities: Kashyaps, Dalits and others. The Jats were mostly land-owners, and on their fields worked Dalits, Bihari migrants and some Muslims. Very few Muslims or Dalits owned farm lands, they only owned the land on which their houses stood and small plots around them. Muslims mostly sold cloth from village to village, or were tailors or vegetable sellers, or worked in brick kilns. But there was always goodwill between us.”²⁰

The decades-old amity between the two communities got a jolt from this sole incident. A commission, known as the ‘Vishnu Sahai Inquiry Commission’, was appointed to probe into the Muzaffarnagar violence, that “squarely blames intelligence failure and laxity on the part of the administrative officials for the riots”²¹, and exonerates the

¹⁸ Engineer, Asghar Ali. “Communal Riots of 2012.” *Twocircles.net*, January 8, 2013, accessed from: http://twocircles.net/2013jan08/communal_riots_2012.html

¹⁹ Ali, Mohammad. “A Strategic Omission of Inquiry.” *The Hindu*, March 11, 2016, accessed from: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/columns/muzaffarnagar-riots-a-strategic-omission-of-inquiry/article8337424.ece>

²⁰ Mander, Harsh. “Muzaffarnagar Riots: We had been brothers until yesterday. Where did this hatred come from?” October 5, 2016, accessed from: <https://scroll.in/article/817229/muzaffarnagar-riots-we-had-been-brothers-until-yesterday-where-did-this-hatred-come-from>

²¹ Ali, Mohammad, *op.cit*

political leaders who further instigated violence.

There was also a violent incident that took place in Vadodara in September 2014 where, as the PUCL fact-finding reports notes, the police did not prevent the violent happening but provoked it and actively participated. The targets were the Muslims, staying in different Muslim-majority areas such as Yakutpura and Taiwada in Vadodara. The role of the police in carrying out the violent attacks was decisive in getting the “Disturbed Areas Act” further extended in Vadodara. As the report also concludes:

“It is not simply the growing influence of right-wing groups that resulted in riots in Vadodara, although that did have an impact. Instead, it also points to the ascendance of the builder lobby and even makes mention of a conspiracy that suggests some of the violence was prompted by a need to extend the Disturbed Areas Act, which prohibits the sale of property from one religious community to another. The notification for the Act to apply in Vadodara was ending on September 30, but it has since been extended by another five years.”²²

The communal unrest led to total 95 deaths and 1,921 people injured in 2014, and communal violence led casualties increased by 17 per cent in the year of 2015 with 97 deaths and 2,264 injured, which was actually lower than 2013. “States which saw the maximum communal incidents were UP (155), Karnataka (105), Maharashtra (105), MP (92), Bihar (71), Rajasthan (65), Gujarat (55). While UP and Karnataka are ruled by SP and Congress, respectively, four of the states – MP, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat- are ruled by BJP.”²³

The data provided by the ‘Ministry of Home Affairs’ on communal violence for the year 2016 shows that out of 29 states in India, in 2016 till May, 20 states already witnessed violent communal incidents. Most of the clashes have taken place during the occasions of religious processions. And the role of social media has also been a very crucial element in recent instances of communal violence.²⁴ As the society becoming technologically modern and advance, the speed of rumour spreading has

²² Venkatramankrishnan, Rohan. “Gujarat Police Didn't Just Not Prevent Vadodara Riots, They Provoked Them.” October 13, 2014, accessed from: <https://scroll.in/article/683432/gujarat-police-didnt-just-not-prevent-vadodara-riots-they-provoked-them>

²³ “Communal Violence up 17 % in 2015.” *The Times of India*, February 25, 2016.

²⁴ Engineer, Irfan et.al. “Communal Violence in 2016.” *Matters India*, January 8, 2018, accessed from: <http://mattersindia.com/2017/01/communal-violence-in-2016/>

increased by multiple times and have also increased the chances of frequent communal clashes. And understanding communal violence primarily as an urban phenomenon has also become problematic since equal number of riots' occurrence is registered from the rural areas. Moreover, in 2017 UP faced 60, the highest numbers of, communal incidents as per the data of the MHA till August.²⁵ India, has not gone through any major communal riot after Muzaffarnagar, however, along with riots and communal outbursts, a phenomenon of “mob lynching” in the name of religion is a new way of disturbing peaceful relations between the Hindu-Muslim communities. And with this overview of communal violence in India, enduring peace and harmony looks like a distant dream as 2018 and coming years will not be any different. But we should not lose hopes because many people are relentlessly working for peace in society and striving for *civic engagement* and cooperation.

Civic Engagement for Enriching Social Capital

All these riots over the years have ruined the *social capital* of human relations, and have created divides between communities. which have very serious implications for the Indian society as a whole. Every instance of communal violence, between Hindus and Muslims, is a new low in their relations leading towards segregation of the two communities. The incidents of communal violence and killings have created a ‘vicious circle’ in which, riots have led to exclusive and segmented living that has limited the possibility of inter-ethnic dialogue and engagement. All this has contributed in strengthening prejudices and stereotypes regarding each other’s communities, and with growing intolerance it increases the possibility of riots breaking out of petty issues. In such a situation civil society organisations and people’s groups working for human rights, equality, justice and harmony can play a decisive role in bridging these gaps.

For that, a need to stress upon the very concept of ‘social capital’ is very important. Various political scientists and sociologist such James Coleman, Pierre Bourdieu, and Robert Putnam, have emphasized and defined the concept of social capital in varied manners. The founding theorists of the idea have been Bourdieu and Coleman later followed by Putnam. Bourdieu defined it as “the aggregate of the actual or potential

²⁵ “UP witnesses 60 communal incidents in 2017, highest so far.” *The Indian Express*, August 9, 2017.

resources which are linked to possessions of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationship of mutual acquaintances and recognition.”²⁶

Further, the definition of social capital provided by Putnam solicits the ‘civic engagement’ view of Coleman. For Putnam, “social capital is a feature of social organisation- such as trust, norms, networks- that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions. Like other types of capitals, social capital too is productive, as it makes possible the achievement of ends that would not be attainable without it.”²⁷ Thus social capital brings out the essence of harmonious human relations. And not just social capital but the “bridging social capital” is needed in the time of inter-communal tensions. Putnam distinguishes between “bonding” and “bridging” social capital. The former takes place within a community or a social group which is seen as homogeneous, whereas, the latter occurs between people of different identities and backgrounds groups and communities of different ethnicities.²⁸ And the social capital of *bonding* nature within a group may bolster ‘in-group’ solidarity (based on ascriptive identities such as caste, religion etc.) and tend to strengthen antagonism between groups of different identities. The *bridging social capital* on the contrary is ‘inclusive’ in nature which facilitates cooperation and interaction between people of divergent communities. As Susanne Hoerber Rudolph also put, “if we are to use the concept of civil society at all, and populate it with social- capital we must be able to specify what type of associations are likely to generate habits of mutual trust and collaboration.”²⁹

The intra-state conflicts and violence tears apart the social fabric of the country, inter-state conflicts, on the contrary, foster national unity and give strength to the cohesiveness in society. Since the concern is of this work is communal violence and its impact on inter-community relations and on society at large, it emphasises upon the endeavours to enhance interpersonal trust and to encourage values that highlight the significance of collective action and cooperation, and stresses on ‘inter-ethnic’ and

²⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre. “The forms of capital.” In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. by J. Richardson, New York: Greenwood, 1986, p.245-246

²⁷Bhattacharya, Dwaipayan et.al, “Introduction.” In *Interrogating Social Capital: The Indian Experience*. ed. by Dwaipayan Bhattacharya & et.al, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005, p.16

²⁸ Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000, p. 25-26

²⁹ Rudolph, Susanne Hoerber. “Civil Society and the Realm of Freedom.” *Economic and political weekly*, Vol. 35, no. 20, 2000, p.1762

civic efforts to rebuild the broken trust between communities and to fabricate the weakened social fabric.

Research Outline

The first chapter of this work follows from the historical narrative of communal violence that has already been explained in the first section of the introductory chapter. After looking at the various riots and instances of communal violence since partition, the first chapter is an attempt to understand the causes of such happenings, and to analyse different approaches of ethnic/communal violence. It is through understanding different theoretical positions on the phenomenon of communal violence, the work derives the theoretical framework from one of the approaches, that is, the ‘civic engagement and ethnic cooperation’ approach proposed by Ashutosh Varshney. The chapter stresses on the significance of people’s role in maintaining peace and harmony between the religious communities of Hindus and Muslims unlike other ‘top-down’ approaches which do not heed much to local initiatives in containing violence. There is no denying that political elites and state institutions play major roles in instigating and containing communal violence and there are also various socio-economic factors which lead to such conflagrations, however, the importance of people to people interactions and endeavours of civil society organisations in ensuring peace between communities should also be given due recognition. This chapter, therefore, brings in the people-centered approach to the problem of communalism and then moves on to the second chapter.

The second chapter is devoted to the case study of post-2002 Gujarat society, that is characterised by increasing residential segregation between the two communities after going through several rounds of communal violence in every decade since 1969. It would focus on certain districts of Gujarat that have been badly affected by communal violence. Using various ethnographic writings and empirical accounts on Gujarat, the chapter would analyse the changing residential patterns in the state and how it has widened the gap between the people of Hindu-Muslim communities with very less or no interactions and exchanges as well as increasing apprehensions vis-à-vis each other.

Chapter three of this work actually tries to situate the role of the civil society in Gujarat and how different civil society organisations responded during the violence of 2002, and what all did they do in reconstructing the lives of the victims of one-sided terrible violence. But before that, it would analyse the very concept of civil society which is required to move further, and the history of civil society and civil society organisations in Gujarat. this is significant to understand the nature of civil society groups on the state in order to understand how they responded the way they did.

Methodology and Research Material

The methodology that is used in this work is primarily ‘descriptive’ and ‘analytical’. Descriptive method is used to describe different aspects of the phenomena that are part of the case study of the dissertation. This method helps in describing and identifying the issue what is it, whereas, the analytical method is helpful in understanding the ‘why’ part of the problem and how that came to be. Hence the study is qualitative in nature.

This study is a secondary source-based study that uses various empirical and ethnographic writings. The study material that will be used during the course of writing this dissertation would comprise various journals, books, newspaper clippings and articles, several reports (governmental and non-governmental), and working papers of various scholars. The material has been collected from libraries of Centre for Political Studies and Centre for Study of Social Systems and the Central library of Jawaharlal Nehru University as well the library of the department of Political Science of Delhi University, and various online journals and other articles have also been collected from internet sources.

Research Questions

- What is communalism and what are the factors responsible for the spread of communalism in India?
- What are the different theoretical positions on the phenomenon of communal violence? do they also emphasize upon peace-building and peace-making by civic efforts?

- Why the pattern of residential segregation is very extreme and intense in certain districts of Gujarat and not others?
- How do civil society organisations help victims of communal violence in rebuilding their lives? How far have they been successful in bringing the Hindu-Muslim communities together in Gujarat?

Objectives of Research

- This work aims to analyse the different theoretical positions on the phenomenon of communal violence;
- to assess the relevance of civic engagement approach in maintaining inter-community harmony between Hindus and Muslims;
- the objective of this work is also to analyse the growing phenomenon of residential segregation and factors responsible for its rise in Gujarat, and its impact on society in Gujarat;
- finally, the objective of this work is to examine the potential of civil society organisations and people's groups in rebuilding victims' lives and bringing the two communities together in a communally torn society.

CHAPTER-I

APPROACHES TO COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

Today, the contemporary plural Indian society is facing numerous challenges and dangers and one such is the problem of “communalism” and its long-term implications for the society at large. It is no longer a local or state-specific phenomenon rather it has become a nation-wide problem. It has raised a question mark on the basic values envisaged in the Constitution of India. India has opted for a secular democracy, but since its inception as an independent state the secular polity has been under threat. Communalism can be defined as an ideology that is responsible for the animosities between different ethnic groups that pose a challenge to the Indian democracy and its secular fabric, values on which the Indian State stands. It is very much visible in the form of communal riots that take place every now and then. It is not to say that riots would not happen before the British took the hold of the reign, but those riots and quarrels were more religious in nature. They were not as politicised as they are today. The prior condition of understanding the phenomenon of communal violence and communalism, to be precise, is that one needs to first understand the academic discourse on communal violence, the different positions that several scholars hold on this issue.

Various political scientists have tried to understand the phenomenon of communal violence and the factors leading towards its outbreak. Thus, having different opinions, they have sought to explain the phenomenon. This chapter, therefore, tends to elaborate on various approaches used to the study of communalism in general and causes of the eruption of communal violence in particular.

However, before looking into the different explanations of communal violence, we must distinguish between communalism and communal violence since one is an ideology and the other is the likely consequence of the propagation of that ideology. The ‘process of communalisation’ of the society (Indian) through inciting people’s religious sentiment leads to communal violence. Hence, both cannot be used as synonyms.

Approaching Communal Violence

One such approach is the “*Primordialist approach*”. Primordialists believe that our ethnicity and nationality-based identities emanate from human nature and are firm – they are “fixed” or “given”. The language, culture, traditions and history are the sources from which a group develops consciousness about its identity, that is further reinforced by the process of socialization as a result of shared cultural and historical memory³⁰. This consciousness of differences of identity between different ethnic groups leads to tensions. They draw distinction between “us” and “them”. Thus, using the primordial frame in the context of communal violence makes their argument very clear that Hinduism and Islam are fundamentally different from each other and therefore, the incidents of contemporary conflicts can be followed back to ‘ancient animosities’ between Hindus and Muslims. It assumes that religious identities are ancient and sharply distinct from each other. As per this view, the inter-religious conflagrations were present, even in the pre-modern period, and not something very recent in origin.³¹

K.N. Panikkar holds that “communalism in India draws Sustenance from history, from the selective appropriation. It seeks to construct an ‘imagined past’ in order to legitimise its view of the present.”³² Romila Thapar also comes up with a similar point, that “distorted version of history feeds communal emotions with its deliberate intention to propagate antagonism between both the religious communities in the present day”. In other words, this approach underlines the importance of historical myths and prejudices of a community vis-à-vis the other. And “an exclusive cultural lineage is traced for each community on the basis of a supposed continuity from the past.”³³ The Muslim and Hindu communities are, therefore, historical realities – culturally different and socially distinct.

The another very prominent perspective on communal violence is the “*Constructivist approach*”. This actually challenges the categories projected as natural and never

³⁰ Pressman, Jeremy. “Visions in Collision: What Happened in Camp David.” *International Security*, Vol.28 Issue no. 2, 2003, p.18

³¹ Brass, Paul. *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003, p.25

³² Panikkar, K.N. “Introduction.” In *Communalism in India: History, Politics and Culture*. ed. by K.N.Panikkar, Manohar Publications, 1991, p. 01

³³ *Ibid*, p. 01-02

changing. Constructivists are of the view that communalism is a camouflage that obscures multiple factors responsible for the Hindu-Muslim violence, especially political and economic in nature. The constructivists argue that we should understand how the content of what it means to be a 'Hindu' or a 'Muslim' changes over time, and how the importance one attaches to this dimension of a person's identity is dependent on historical and political developments. The key propositions of the constructivists rest purely on: a) construction of identity and b) its instrumental use for political and economic purposes by the elites. It is this communal identity, which is used later by the elites to create an atmosphere of communal violence to serve their own interests.³⁴

One of the most renowned writers on Hindu-Muslim riots and communal problem in India since independence is Asghar Ali Engineer, who proposes ideas in accordance to this perspective. He is of the opinion that a careful analysis of this phenomenon would make it clear that religion itself is not the sole factor responsible for its origin and growth. Religion plays an important part though, but it is used by those, who want to play their game in politics through it, more as a tool to serve their personal interests. Engineer, while explaining the causes of communal violence in India, underlines that the communal phenomenon is political in origin. The political elites, by projecting and identifying their economic, political and cultural aspirations as those of the whole community, skillfully manipulate the cultural essence and religious sentiments of people contribute in arising communal tensions. Moreover, Engineer cautions not to see it as the sole cause of communal problem, this is just an aspect of the problem as it does not include all its complexities.³⁵ He, thus, puts more emphasis on the political and economic dimensions of the problem.

Moreover, this approach also incorporates some other perspectives such as "*instrumentalism*" and "*institutionalism*" put forth by Paul R. Brass and Steven Wilkinson. Instrumentalists too believe that political elites use ethnicity purely as an instrument for political and economic purposes. For this, Brass uses the 'functional' analysis and argues that, in India, the reason behind the persistence of Hindu-Muslim violence and riots is that they have a "functional utility for a wide array of individuals,

³⁴ Horowitz, Donald. *The Deadly Ethnic Riots*. Oxford University Press, 2002,

³⁵ Engineer, Asghar Ali. *op.cit*, p.34

groups, political parties, and the state authorities”³⁶ at various levels. He highlights the crucial role of the Indian elites in manipulating religious issues to mobilise communities at some times and not in others. The fact that many of these moves are timed just before elections is a strong proof of their instrumental and political trends. Brass asserts these riots have had substantial gains for certain political organization and also for broad political uses. Further, Hindu-Muslim conflicts and riots, according to him, help some local political organisations to have stronghold in the town and city areas in North India where they have wide networks.³⁷

Brass’s main contention is that “a pervasive discourse that emphasizes Hindu-Muslim differences and hostilities in India, provides the framework that allows the escalation of trivial incidents into major riots.”³⁸ He argues, there exists a master narrative or a hegemonic discourse in India that requires no knowledge of facts. It comprises two main components, firstly, riots, generally, are viewed as unprompted occurrences that arise out of trivial quarrels that transformed into bloody mass furies through rumour spreading that overstate the triggering incident; second, Hindu-Muslim riots, in particular, are said to arise from the prejudices and hostilities that exist between these two communities, such that there is a natural tendency to expand any quarrel into a riot. Further, he writes, such explanations are based on the deep-seated belief that popular passions are aroused as much by a preexisting history of communal antagonism and a pervasive atmosphere of tension between Hindus and Muslims as by the actual or perceived circumstances surrounding the precipitating incident. On the contrary, Brass proposed that the divisive factor is the action that takes place before the precipitating incidents and immediately thereafter, action that is often organized and planned and that fills the intermediate space and time between past history and immediate circumstances.³⁹

In other words, according to him, this is neither automatic nor spontaneous rather it requires a great deal of planning and preparation. Brass criticizes the causal analysis

³⁶ Paul Brass is a political scientist, who has done an extensive study of communal violence in India. He carried out his study over a period of almost forty years in the town of Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh (North India) and examined the recurrence of Hindu-Muslim riots at a single site. For details see, Brass, Paul. *The Production of Hindu Muslim Violence in Contemporary India*. Oxford University Press, 2003

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Ibid, p.18

³⁹ Ibid, p.10-11

of Hindu-Muslim violence primarily because it does not heed to three main aspects of human action and struggle, namely, intentionality, process, and meaning. For him, only one kind of causal explanation either multi-causal or single causal explanation is not adequate to explain as to why instances of communal violence occur in India.⁴⁰ As he asserts, “it is the combination of objectives, underlying factors of demography, economics, and electoral competition with intentionality and direct human agency that makes causal explanation of riots in general so difficult.”⁴¹ He believes that such instances of riots and pogroms can best be conceived as dramatic productions where specific roles are occupied by different people and groups in the rehearsal and the production of communal violence. Brass terms such a system as “*institutionalised riot system*” which transforms a trivial precipitating incident into a large- scale riot. It operates as a network of roles which aims at maintaining communal hostilities.

Further, on the question of the persistence of riots, Brass writes:

“there is a clear association between large-scale riots or waves of riots and electoral competition and mass political mobilization such that Hindu-Muslim riots are product of actions designed to consolidate one community or the other or both at the local, regional, and national levels into a cohesive political bloc. Riots precede elections and intensify political competition. Riots accompany political mobilization around religious symbols and contribute to the strengthening of the movement, which in turn solidify communal solidarity in subsequent elections.”⁴²

Hence, riots persist because they are functionally useful for a wide group of people, political parties, organizations and state authorities. Brass argues that this particular form of recurrent violence is a function of the unwillingness, failure or lack of desire of such entities to take preventive measures because taking no preventive measures at all are politically beneficial for them.

As already stated, for Brass, riots are not spontaneous rather produced. In order to make his point clear, he distinguishes between riots and pogroms. In which riot carries the appearance of spontaneous, intergroup mass action, the second of deliberately organized – especially – the state-supported killings and the destruction of property of a targeted group. After making the difference clear, he argues, in India

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.31

⁴¹ ibid

⁴² Ibid, p.34

what are labeled as Hindu-Muslim riots have, more often than not, been turned into pogroms and massacres of Muslim, in which few Hindus are targeted and killed. The process of riot production, according to him, can be divided into three stages. First is the preparation or rehearsal phase, second, activation or enactment, third, is the explanation or interpretation phase. He believes that in sites of endemic riots, production, preparation, and rehearsal are continuous activities. Activation or enactment of a large-scale riot takes place under a particular circumstance, often in a context of intense political mobilization or electoral competition in which riots are precipitated as a device to consolidate the support of ethnic, religious or other culturally marked groups, by emphasizing the need for solidarity in the face of the rival communal group. The third phase comes after the violence in a broader struggle to have control over the explanation or interpretation of the causes of violence and in this phase many other elements in society become involved.⁴³

Steven Wilkinson is also one such political theorist who has worked on the cause of ethnic violence and puts forward a similar argument but with the reasoning of riots at the state level, unlike Brass (who has studied riots at the level of town or city). His institutional theory is based on three inter-connected arguments. He talks about the state capacity, party competition, and the electoral incentives as three basic components related to communal violence in India. Wilkinson answers the question of what causes communal riots in contemporary India? in his book "*Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Communal Riots in India*", in which he suggests that communal riots in India are result of the incentives available at the local level. And the politicians play a decisive role in instigating as well as containing communal violence because they possess both the capacities of causing and averting riots from happening, that is possible because they have control of the law and order situation through the state governments. Further, the intensity of political competition decides their behavior, "where political competition is most intense, parties that represent elites within ethnic groups use anti-minority protests, demonstrations and physical attacks that precipitate riots in order to encourage members of their wider ethnic

⁴³ Brass, Paul. *forms of collective violence, riots, pogroms, and genocide in modern India*. Three Essays Collective, 2006, p. 34

category to identify with their party and the ‘majority’ identity rather than party that is identified with economic redistribution or some ideological agenda.⁴⁴

However, the real issue in explaining riots, for Wilkinson, is not which local, political or sociological factors increase the likelihood of violence, but whether the level of government responsible for law and order chooses to prevent violence or intervene quickly to stop it when it breaks out. Wilkinson gives example of Bihar and argues that the paramilitary forces even there where the general quality of administration and governance is not high – have shown themselves capable of averting communal riots when given the right direction by the ministers. This shows that the control of such a chaotic situation depends on the discretion and political will of the politicians. When the administrative machinery in the state like Bihar can prevent riot like situations then the inability shown by many advance and forward states in controlling or preventing riots can be viewed as a mere excuse. Thus, Wilkinson demonstrates full faith in the power of the state government, for it has the capacity to reduce tensions between different ethnic groups ex-ante, also after the eruption of violence between the majority and the minority groups. However, this capacity of the state is shown only when it is in their interest.

For Wilkinson, the state governments protect minorities when it is in their electoral interest to do so. He writes:

“politicians in government will increase the supply of protection to minorities when minorities are important part of their party’s current support base or the support base of one of their partners in a coalition government; or when the overall electoral system in a state is so competitive – in terms of the effective number of parties – that there is, therefore, a high probability that the governing party will have to negotiate or form coalition with minority supported parties in the future”.⁴⁵

Therefore, it is the electoral incentive that makes parties proactive in combating communal violence keeping their long-term prospects into consideration. If the minority votes are important to any party or the state government for that matter then it will make endeavors to keep communal harmony and peace for sure in that particular area. Then, the questions that comes up is when does the party or state

⁴⁴ Wilkinson, Steven. *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Communal Riots in India*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p.04

⁴⁵ Wilkinson, Steven. “Communal Riots in India.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 40, no. 44/45, 2005, p.4768

government decide to prevent anti-minority riots. Here Wilkinson puts forward the idea of ‘party-competition’, the third most important factor in determining the role of the state government in preventing or controlling communal violence, and states that ‘high level of political competition combined with strong backward caste movement that regards Muslims as acceptable and valuable coalition partners puts Muslims in an extremely good position to demand security as the price of their votes’⁴⁶

He argues that the significance of a state’s level of party competition is the most crucial element in determining the government’s response to outbreaks of communal riots. Wilkinson suggests that “the increase in political competition in India in recent years has made minorities a pivotal swing vote in many states, which in turn has forced state politicians to promise and provide greater security to minorities”.⁴⁷To substantiate his argument, he gives example of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, states which could win over the votes of the Muslim population of the state, and also the state of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh where the Janata Dal United and the Samajwadi Party could gain power through coalition which comprised Muslims.

Wilkinson presents an “institutional approach” which underlines the importance of political parties, electoral competition, the role of the administrative and police machinery in controlling instances of such violence as well as not letting them erupt in the first place.

Where Brass gives an elaborative account of how riots and pogroms are produced or constructed in India with careful planning and organization, Wilkinson, on the other side, moves further and explains why there is a variation in the records of different state governments when it comes to the prevention of communal violence. Both of them do not much go into answering the causes of communal violence as they are already known, they rather through their studies, deal with the how, where and when of riots’ eruption.

Nevertheless, Wilkinson develops his argument in opposition not only to primordialist accounts of ethnicity and ethnic violence, but also in contradiction with other constructivist explanations for ethnic violence – which, in this view, fails to take into

⁴⁶ Wilkinson, Steven. *op.cit*, p.203

⁴⁷ Wilkinson, Steven. “Commentary: Putting Gujarat in Perspective,” In *Religious Politics and Communal Violence*, ed. by Steven Wilkinson, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005, p.5

account that why is it that politicians might work to stop the spread the violence, rather than incite it.⁴⁸ This is an aspect which Brass doesn't focus upon.

However, the studies done by them have faced many challenges and criticisms. For instance, Brass's idea that ethnic conflicts between Hindus and Muslims occur because of the political elites' manipulating strategies, has been challenged by Francis Robinson, the British Historian, who responds to Brass by stating that religious beliefs are much more important than the instrumentalists/institutionalists acknowledge. Robinson points out that many of the elites who led religious movements, such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, were themselves quite devout and often – as for example in the case of the Muslim League leader the Raja of Mehmudabad – willing to bear significant economic costs for their religious beliefs. This devoutness and willingness to sacrifice for a cause seems to call into question the rather simple cost-benefit analysis that the instrumental perspective suggests. Robinson also asks an important question that we all need to think over, that is: why do followers follow? He suggests that Muslim elites were always constrain by the strength of religious feelings and religious organizations among Muslims as a whole. If elites highlighted Muslim issues, he argues that this reflected both their own religiosity as well as their calculation that religious appeals were likely to be much more effective than other appeals. Robinson criticizes Brass for ignoring the role of beliefs, passions, and emotions. They believe that people are not driven primarily by ideology or religious belief, or by momentary passions, but rather by more pragmatic concerns such as the economic or political incentives.⁴⁹

This leads to the next approach which brings in the role of “ideology”, in causing communal violence, to the centre stage. Bipan Chandra, a renowned Indian historian, has been the main proponent of the ideological perspective on Hindu-Muslim violence in India. According to Chandra, communalism is an ideology and to some extent politics organized around that ideology. He views it as a way of looking at society and politics. He writes, no doubt, communal violence act as a means of spreading communal ideology and also communal ideology leads to communal violence. But one should not equate them. This is very important to keep into account

⁴⁸ Kalra, Nikhila & Tatsumi, Kayoko, The Search for Order: Understanding Hindu-Muslim Violence in Post-Partition India, *Pacific Affairs*, Vol.85, no. 2, June 2012, p.292

⁴⁹ Wilkinson, Steven, 2005, *op.cit*, p.05

that communal ideology can prevail without the spread of communal violence however, it is not possible for communal violence to take place without the presence or prior spread of communal ideology. Also, for communal violence requires immediate administrative and political action but communal ideology requires long-term political and ideological struggle.⁵⁰ Communal violence is the reflection of communalism than being its main form or content. They are reflection of its active episodic expression, its bitter and virulent manifestation and consequences, and one of the instruments and agencies for its spread.⁵¹ He believes, “it’s a new kind of consciousness, a new kind of organizing principle of politics, which, in order to mobilize people for political gains, might try to appeal to the past and to establish links with the ideologies and history of the past. However, that doesn’t mean that it existed there in the past. It is rather a modern phenomenon. Communalism, according to Chandra, had no objective basis in reality, it was consciousness of a concrete social condition and it represented a distorted or perverse reflection of reality.”⁵²

In other words, Chandra believes that communal violence or riots erupt because of the propagation of communal ideology in Politics which creates social cleavages. He also puts emphasis on the *socio-economic causes* contributing in the eruption of communal violence. According to him, communal politics till 1937 was organised around government jobs, educational concessions and the like as also political positions – seats in legislative councils, municipal bodies, etc.– which enabled control over these and other economic opportunities. He underlines that communalism developed as a weapon of economically and politically reactionary social classes and political forces. Communal leaders and parties were in general allied with these classes and forces. The vested interests deliberately encouraged communalism because of the capacity to distort and divert the popular struggle, to prevent the masses from understanding the real issues.⁵³

In contemporary India, moreover, the socio-economic conditions continue to favour communalism. The Indian economy has growth at less than the required rate, so the

⁵⁰ Chandra, Bipan. “Communalism and State: Some Issues in India.” *Social Scientist*, Vol.18, no.8/9, August 1990, p.38

⁵¹For more details see Chandra, Bipan. *Communalism in Modern India*. New Delhi: Vikas Publication, 1984, p.05

⁵² Ibid p.30

⁵³ “Factors Responsible for the Growth of Communalism.” *Hindustan Times*, February 11,2004 IST

problem of unemployment and inequality have grown, breeding frustration and social anxiety among the people. Chandra asserts, there has grown unhealthy competition for the available economic resources and opportunities. Along with Bipan Chandra, Zoya Hasan too talks about the socio-economic aspect of the communal problem. Hasan's paper 'Communalism and Communal Violence in India' elaborates on this dimension as well as the political compulsions behind communal riots and violence. While discussing about the socio-economic factor she writes: "the process of the fragmented and uneven capitalist development has created conditions of backwardness which, in turn, have facilitated the growth of communalism". She further asserts, economic stagnation has led to a situation in which certain groups treat each other not only with suspicion and hostility, but also as rivals in the scarce market for jobs, concessions and subsidies. And the bourgeois political parties have, quite successfully, turned intra-class contradictions into the stream of communal consciousness to serve their narrow interests.⁵⁴

The contemporary impetus of communalism is obtained from the landscape of fragmented and unequal capitalist development. Capital modernization, under the auspices of the colonial rule, inducted many communities into its fold at different levels and stages. Muslims joined this process of modernization quite late because of their adjacency to bureaucratic, judicial and economic structure of feudalism made it very difficult for them to adapt to new vocations.⁵⁵ The decline of feudalism was the main reason of their problems. Along with this, the decay of traditional crafts, and the steady erosion of their status as landed gentry too contributed to their hardships. The status of the landed gentry collapsed as the government gradually took over all the administrative functions with the increasing pace of modernization. Also, the very basis of their landed status was already consistently up to decline due to the rise of the powerful commercial classes that comprised mostly Hindus. And who were not only capable enough to achieve the status of landed gentry but also to buy their land.⁵⁶ In other words, banishment and loss of privilege, joined with the militant attitude of Hindu communal groups in the post-colonial period, bolstered the insecurities in

⁵⁴ Engineer, Asghar Ali. 1984, *op.cit.*, p.5

⁵⁵ Robinson, Francis. cited In Zoya Hasan's *Communalism and Communalism in India. Social Scientist*, Vol.10, no. 2, February 1982, p.30

⁵⁶ Naidu, Ratna. cited In *ibid*, p.30

Muslims that provided the ground for their communal loyalties and alliance (based on religious identity).

Hasan asserts that Hindus and Muslims have been engaged in a competition for their survival and betterment, which intensified against the backdrop of underdevelopment. The basic structure of economic and political underdevelopment formed the communal fabric of the Indian society particularly the north. There are also numerous instances of competition between the two communities, for example certain areas in the western part of the U.P state have engulfed by the fire of the communal problem. Where Muslims have come to acquire a relatively strong and influential position in the economic and political domain of the region which has apparently jeopardized the dominance of the Hindu commercial class.⁵⁷ Further, the decreased dependence on Hindu factory owners generated a sense of solidarity based on their religious identity. This sense of distinct identity was exploited by the economic and political elites of the two communities.

Asghar Ali Engineer also puts across the reasoning. He draws certain conclusions from the empirical data that he collected from different centres of communal violence. He says, the medium-sized towns like Aligarh, Moradabad, Jamshedpur, Bhiwandi, Godhra for that matter are thriving centres of small-scale artisan-based industries. In these towns the Muslims have gained a relative degree of affluence and richness. Engineer argues, it is not altogether unrelated with communal problem in these towns. And economic competition between the Hindu-Muslim communities in town had often lead to social tensions which can be easily converted into communal tension by exploiting certain conditions on the occasions of religious importance.⁵⁸

He believes that the dynamics of social violence cannot be properly understood without taking into consideration its class dimension. The 'haves' of the warring communities successfully exploit the sense of ethnic or communal identities of their respective communities. This is one of the very significant contributing factors stocking the fire of communal violence. He further elaborates, the under-development of economy often results in uneven-development of economy, both community as

⁵⁷ Ibid, p.32-33

⁵⁸ Engineer, Asghar Ali. "The Causes of Communal Riots in the Post-Partition Period in India." In *Communal Violence in Post-Independence India*. ed. by Asghar Ali Engineer, Sangam Books India Limited, 1984, p.36

well as region-wise and in turn, this uneven-development leads to a sense of relative-deprivation that creates the problem of communal and regional identity.

There are numerable examples of petty economic issues between the two religious communities, often at the local level, turning into big communal frenzies, for example, the riots at Moradabad had its genesis in the economic rivalry. Engineer writes, increased affluence among a section of Muslims brought about a change in the conventional pattern of leadership and economic hegemony at the local level. And the socio-political tensions and conflicts arising there, often becomes unmanageable and burst in the form of violence. Talking about the Moradabad riots, he argues at Moradabad the growing number of Muslims and their wages in the brass industry entrepreneurs brought prosperity amongst the Muslims as well as lessened the significance of the middlemen who are often Hindus, in business transactions. This enraged the Hindu middlemen, who then started to rally round Jan Sangh, which has its base among the petty businessmen, who are very often religiously conservative and easily influenced by such communal propaganda.⁵⁹ Thus, the economic and business competition has often led to violent communal frenzies and riots.

The Civic Engagement Approach: A Quest for Peace and Harmony

There is another very prominent political scientist who has given a new dimension to the study of ethnic violence in general, and communal violence in particular. The study done by Ashutosh Varshney on '*ethnic cooperation and civic engagement*' provides a very important insight to the issue at hand. Varshney believes that ethnic violence takes place where level of inter-ethnic interaction is very low or completely absent. He tries to make a connection between civil society⁶⁰ structures and ethnic or communal violence. He tends to explain why communal riots occur in some places than in others. The question that "despite ethnic diversity, some places – regions, nations, towns, or villages manage to remain peaceful, whereas others experience enduring patterns of violence. He believes that variations across time and space

⁵⁹ Ibid p.39-40

⁶⁰ By civil society or civic life Varshney means "a sphere of life that comes between the state on the one hand and families on the other, that allows people to come together for a whole variety of public activities, and that is relatively independent of the state, civil society is not a non-political but a non-state space of collective life. Moreover, in its non-state functions, it can cover both social and political activities". For more details see; Ashutosh Varshney's *Ethnic Conflicts and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. Yale University Press, 2002, p.4

constitute an unresolved puzzle in the field of ethnicity and nationalism.”⁶¹ Scholars of ethnic conflicts very often struck by this question. However, Varshney believes that this puzzle cannot be solved until and unless the question of ethnic peace is studied properly. Therefore, he puts emphasis on ‘intercommunal’ not intracommunal networks of civic engagement and interaction.

These intercommunity relations, Varshney argues, brings people of different communities together. And these networks can further be divided into two parts, namely; associational and quotidian. Associational form includes formal associations for example, business associations, professional organizations, reading clubs, trade unions, sports clubs, cadre-based political parties etc. whereas Varshney calls the latter as “everyday form of civic engagement”, which includes interaction on regular basis at a personal level. For instance, families of these religious communities visiting each other on different occasions and also participating in each other’s festival celebration. Varshney asserts that robust form of these networks, promote harmony and peace between Hindu-Muslim communities whereas their absence opens up new ways for communal tensions and clashes. Hence the main argument of Varshney’s conceptualization is that the existence or pre-existence of local level intercommunity interaction and engagement is the crucial factor responsible for difference between violence and peace. In other words, places where such networks and interactions exist, communal tensions and conflicts can be regulated as well as prevented; where they are absent and missing, consciousness about community identity leads to conflicts and endemic violence. Varshney, very precisely, states the logic of his research, as he notes:

“with isolated exceptions, uncovering commonalities across the many cases of violence has been the standard research strategy. This strategy will continue to enlighten us, but it can only give us the building blocks of a theory, not a theory of ethnic conflict. The logic underlying this proposition is simple, often misunderstood, and worth reinstating. Suppose that on the basis of commonalities we find that interethnic economic rivalry (a), polarized party politics (b), and segregated neighborhoods (c) explain ethnic violence (X), can we, however, be sure that our judgments are right? What if (a), (b), and (c) also exist in peaceful cases (Y)? In that case. Either violence is caused by the intensity of (a), (b), and (c) in (X) or there is underlying and deeper context that makes (a), (b), and (c) conflictual in one case and

⁶¹ Varshney, Ashutosh. 2002, *op.cit*, p.5-6

not in the other; or there is another factor (d), which differentiates peace from violence”⁶².

Therefore, Varshney focuses more on peace studies than on violence because he is of the opinion that in order to have a good theory of ethnic or communal conflict, we must study ethnic peace. For him, the reason behind the recurrence of communal violence is the lack of social capital that incorporates inter-community relations of cordiality and harmony. It is actually the norms, values, and social relations that brings communities together as well as the bridges between different community groups, civil society, and the state. It is less tangible though, for it exists in the relations among people and therefore, can only be seen in their treatment of each other. Varshney asserts that strong intercommunity relations can withstand the challenge of communal problem and social capital is that bond that strengthen inter-ethnic relations.

Moreover, in opposition to Paul Brass’s idea of ‘institutionalised riot system’, Varshney proposes an alternative system of “institutionalised peace” that exists in peaceful cities. Where different formal associations and organisations are communally integrated and work with cooperation as countervailing forces. Varshney believes that associational networks are more sturdier and concrete in preventing instances of communal clashes. He is also of the opinion that everyday form of engagement is possible and successful in the local village level settings, which are smaller in size and where one to one interaction on everyday basis is possible and helpful in maintaining cordial relations and harmony. However, the effectiveness of quotidian networks is doubtful when it comes to the level of the cities, which tend be less interconnected and anonymous. In such city like structures, according to Varshney, associations are critical because they lack village-like intimacy. Because organized civic networks, when intercommunal, not only withstand exogenous communal shocks but they also constrain local politicians in their strategic behavior.⁶³

Varshney, through a large-scale survey in six cities, more or less having the same size in terms of population, tries to explain the major contention of his research that is, “not only why communal riots occur persistently in some cities but also why Hindu-

⁶² Ibid, p.06

⁶³ ibid, p.10

Muslim riots do not occur in other”. He opts for a city-level analysis and takes up ‘paired comparisons’ as a methodological strategy. He chooses three pairs of cities namely; Aligarh and Calicut, Ahmedabad and Surat, and Hyderabad and Lucknow. The former three in each pair, are seen among the most violence-prone cities in India on the basis of the number of instances of riots and number of people who died in them by examining the daily ‘Times of India’ covering a span of forty-six years, that is, from 1950 to 1995. And terms the latter three as Peaceful cities since they have been relatively peaceful in the situations of clash and violence. And concludes, what distinguishes riot-prone cities from peaceful ones or what make some cities peaceful and stable even in the time of duress is the presence of an ‘*institutionalised peace system*’ which is possible only through inter-ethnic engagement and interaction. This is possible through the endeavors of various civil society organisations which also incorporate the ‘peace committees’ that work for fostering inter-communal harmony.

Further, he maintains that the city of Surat, for instance, has managed to restrain violence much better than Ahmedabad (including during the riots of 2002) because it has many more inter-communal organizations, especially among businessmen and the weavers in the textile industry in the integrated old city. Varshney also gives an example of Bhiwandi to demonstrate how participation in such inter-ethnic civic organisations could permanently change the pattern of communal riots in even sensitive cities.⁶⁴ However, there is also an instance of violence in Bhiwandi in 2003, in which 34 people died despite efforts at building inter-community organizations that have been working for the cause of Hindu-Muslim solidarity. It is, therefore, cannot be seen as the sole factor in containing communal violence. Also, because this kind of people to people interaction and engagement having deep roots is likely to take place in a more local and mixed community set up but that also gets weakened in the presence of recurrent communal violence. This is evident in many riots where the idea of riots being an urban phenomenon was falsified, simply because those instances of violence affected many earlier untouched rural areas badly, for instances, riots that took place in the state of Gujarat particularly in 2002 crossed the rural threshold which unsettled the tranquility existed there earlier. In the situation of recurrent violence even the villages are increasingly communalised.

⁶⁴ Wilkinson, Steven. 2005, *op.cit*, p.11

Varshney draws attention to the relation between the pattern of interactions between Hindus and Muslims and the capacity of inhabitants to resist the instigation of violence. Ward Berenschot differs with Varshney's argument that inter-ethnic associational ties and activities help in preventing ethnic violence. Berenschot holds that "associational activities do affect the capacity of interested actors to instigate violence. But Varshney has overstated his case by presenting the absence of interethnic associational activity as the proximate cause of violence. He asserts, by doing so Varshney obscures the political context that requires civic bodies to counter rumours and prevent hostilities in the first place: with his focus on associational activity he obscures the fact that various actors at work who have an interest in creating and maintaining communal tensions".⁶⁵

Further, Vinod Jairath also raises a point regarding Varshney's approach which he things Varshney does not pay attention to. He writes that the Caste and religion based mobilisation in a competitive political environment have differed from region to region and city to city since 1920s, because of the distinct conditions of those place. These varied situations become mandatory to explain why riots or instances of violence continue to take place in different parts at different times. And inter-community or intra-community relations or associations develop in such complex way as a result of those processes at work for quite a long time.⁶⁶

If we analyze the work of Ashutosh Varshney what we see is that he does not completely deny the role the state actors play in situations of communal violence. However, the difference with which Varshney deals with the issue of ethnic violence in general and communal violence particularly in the case of India offers a new insight. Unlike many other positions, Varshney touches upon the missing element that is the role of the civil society and the people who make up a civil society outside the purview of the state, the role of the people of different ethnic groups in containing the shocking waves of ethnic and communal violence. He takes our attention away from the role of the state and political parties, the construction of ethnic identities and manipulation of those identities by political and economic elites to the role of

⁶⁵ Berenschot, Ward. *Riot Politics: Hindu-Muslim Violence and the Indian State*. London: C. Hurst & Co. (Publishers), p. 35-36

⁶⁶ Jairath, Vinod. "Studying Communal Riots: Some Methodological Issues." *Sociological Bulletin*, Vol.54, no.3,2005, p. 457-58

communities. That can be viewed as an advancement in the field of the study of ethnic violence or ethnic peace to be more precise.

Although, a particular cause leads to communal violence in particular context, however, as violence unravels itself various elements add into it. Any discussion on communal violence is incomplete if the role of the state is not analyzed properly. This becomes imperative to get a full picture of the problem. Therefore, there is one more approach, it highlights the *role of the state* in instigating as well as containing communal violence. The state bears the responsibility that is, to perform the duty of maintaining peace. But in a multicultural and multi-religious society like India it becomes very difficult for the state to maintain peace and harmony among various communities that coexist. Hence, the state is expected to be neutral and not to favour one community over the other by following the doctrine of “*principled distance*.”⁶⁷ The state must be dissociated from all the religions and should have equal regard for all religions. And this doctrine of state neutrality has already taken the constitutional form of extending equal opportunities to followers of different religions and atheists and the absence of discrimination among citizens on the grounds of their religion and caste.⁶⁸

In situations of inter-ethnic violence, the onus falls on the state to get things back to normalcy. And the role of the state has been evident in several instances of ethnic violence in post-independence Indian polity. The state, nevertheless, as an institution, that includes the government at all levels, political parties, the administration, the police etc., has all the capacity to prevent trivial issues between different ethnic groups from being turning into extremely violent incidents and also to control them with active actions when such clashes and violence erupt. However, if we examine the

⁶⁷ Principled Distance: policy of principled distance entails a flexible approach to the issue of the state’s inclusion or exclusion of religion, and to the issue of its engagement with or disengagement from religion, which at the level of law and policy depends on the context, nature, and current state of relevant religions. Inclusion or engagement must be governed by principles undergirding a secular state, which flow from a commitment to the values mentioned above. This requirement means that religion may be included in the affairs of the state if such inclusion promotes freedom, equality, or any other value integral to secularism, and thereby reduces inter- or intra-religious domination. For example, citizens may support a coercive state law by including a purely religious rationale as a ground if this law is compatible with freedom, fraternity or equality. Principled distance rejects the standard liberal idea that the principle of equal respect is best realised only when people come into the public domain by leaving their religious reasoning behind. For more details see: Bhargava, Rajeev. “Reimagining Secularism: Respect, Domination and Principled Distance.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 48, Issue no.50, 2013, p. 86

⁶⁸ Chandra, Bipan. *Communalism: A Primer*. New Delhi: National Book Trust of India, 2008, p.2-3

behaviour of the state and its responses in situations of ethnic violence we find a rather discouraging trend. What we witness is a clear diminution of its identity as a neutral player and strengthening of its partisan attitude. Consequently, this capacity of the state, on the contrary, is used to instigate violence against communities who do not usually share the traits of the majority community. There have been cases of violence organised by the state as well as where sheer inaction could be seen on the part of the state authorities in controlling violent situations. It is not just in India that politicians and their followers play an important role during outbreaks of communal riots. Donald Horowitz in his book, '*The Deadly Ethnic Riots*' which provides a very comprehensive account of 150 incidents of ethnic violence in 50 countries, writes that 'organisation without political support rarely produces deadly ethnic riots. The riots with pure organisational features are only possible when the vast majority is regulated and organised either by the political leaders or by those who have some connections to political parties.'⁶⁹ The riots of 1984 in Delhi (anti-Sikh riots), and in 2002 in Gujarat (anti-Muslims riots) could well be seen in the light of state sponsored killings of people of the minority communities. In fact, many post-partition riots including the riots mentioned above conform to the definition of *state terrorism*.⁷⁰ In both the cases the targets were the minority (religious) communities. The role that the state actors play keeping their interests intact is very much confirmed by the study done by Steven Wilkinson, according to which communal riots and violence is used as a tool by the political leaders and political parties to divide their electorates on communal lines in order to stay in power for a longer period of time as already discussed above. The state's biases in such scenarios has become a new normal that we do not even bother to claim our 'right to be secure' from the state, the sole reason that such an institution called the "State" came into existence for.

Summing Up

Before concluding this, some other factors which are responsible for precipitating violence between the two religious groups are also need to be mentioned. Sudhir

⁶⁹ Donald Horowitz cited In Berenschot, Ward. *op.cit*, p.193

⁷⁰ Terrorism by the state involves deliberate coercion and violence directed at some victims, with the intention of inducing extreme fear in some target observers who identify with the victims in such a way that they perceive themselves as potential future victims. In this way they are forced to consider altering their behaviour in some manner desired by the actor. For details see: Blakeley, R. "State Terrorism in the Social sciences: Theories, Methods and Concepts." In *Contemporary State Terrorism-Theory and Practice*, ed. by Richard Jackson et al. Abingdon, 2009, p.14

Kakar gives a *psychoanalytic approach* to understand the phenomenon of communal violence in contemporary India. According to which, violence serves to establish or maintain a longed-for feeling of superiority. One's self-esteem, is closely tied up with one's membership of an ethnic group; by establishing the group superiority over another group through violence we can boost our feeling of self-worth. Using this insight, Kakar describes India's Hindu-Muslim violence as a 'narcissistic rage' between two equally grandiose group selves.⁷¹ If we dig in more we will come to know that there are numerous reasons and factors responsible for the riots that has been happening in India ever since independence. There are historical factors, institutional factor, socio-economic factors, psychological factors, ethnic factors and many more. And scholars holding these factors in their positions stress upon fixing responsibilities on the state authorities and institutions. Which can be and will be suffice, but only as a short-term solution and if we aspire for an enduring solution we need to move a step ahead, that is not relying on the state institutions only for maintaining cordial inter-community relations. This is where Ashutosh Varshney's work becomes relevant.

One thing is important to notice that all the approaches of communal violence, discussed in this chapters focus upon the *causal factors* and origins of the eruption of communal riots. Although, it is crucial to understand the root cause of any problem before providing solution for it. All above-mentioned approaches, though look into the factors responsible for the breaking out of Hindu- Muslim riots. The fact that majority of post-partition riots have been politically motivated and manipulated, also that communal riots are viewed as merely a law and order problem are well established. Therefore, the discussions on communal violence revolve around the causes and factors responsible for its eruption, the parties involved, the role of the state and the police. But the implications of such riots for inter-community relations have rarely been their concern. The deeper question, thus, of worsening human relations in general and inter-ethnic relations in particular is raised very rarely. Ashutosh Varshney's civic engagement approach to problem of communal violence, in a way, brings in the importance of people to people interaction and inter-community engagement in resisting the waves of communal tensions, and to maintain peace between different ethnic groups. For Varshney, the efforts should be made on the part of the people, the civil society and complemented by the state efforts.

⁷¹ Berenschot, Ward. *op.cit*, p.34

Therefore, a collaborative approach is what we require in which the state as well as the civil society comes up together to complement each other's endeavors in peacekeeping and peacemaking. This is how the 'civic engagement' and the crucial role that the civil society organisations play in maintaining and strengthening cordial relations between the Hindu- Muslim communities cannot be neglected and should be given due recognition. Because people's efforts have always been helpful in 'bridging social capital' and to bring people of different faiths and communities together.

MAP OF GUJARAT⁷²



⁷² Source: <http://www.indiagrowing.com/Gujarat> (showing highly riot-prone districts in Gujarat)

CHAPTER-II

COMMUNAL CONFLICTS AND THE CHANGING RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS IN CONTEMPORARY GUJARAT

“Gujarat appears to have always been there, with a distinct ethos, a separate and discrete language and a particular political and social character.”⁷³ However, the state of Gujarat came into existence in a modern form as an independent state in 1960 after being separated from Bombay on linguistic grounds. Today, the state comprises of 33 districts with total population of 6.03 crores as per the 2011 census data. The Hindus make up the 88.57 per cent and the Muslims are 9.67 per cent of the total population. Where the highest number of people resides in the Ahmedabad district. T.K. Oommen writes:

“Based on common geographical and cultural factors, Gujarat can be broadly divided into three major regions. The first region is the peninsula region of Saurashtra and Kutch, consisting of the great Rann of Kutch in the northern part. The second region is the hilly tract in the east, beginning from Sabarkantha in the north to Dangs in the south. The third region is the mainland or central Gujarat, comprising Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar (the state capital), Kheda, Vadodara, Mehsana – the so-called ‘golden corridor’ because it has remained the principal beneficiary of economic growth in Gujarat.”⁷⁴

These districts in central and south Gujarat are the most populous districts in the state. The state is known for its business and trading community and its economic development. It is among India’s most industrialised state as well as one of the economically fastest-growing state since the beginning of the 21st century. However, the state is also known for its record of communal violence. As instances of communal violence are not new to Gujarat, certain districts of the state have been a hotbed of violence since its inception.

⁷³ Simpson, Edward. “Introduction: The Parable of Jakhs.” In *The Idea of Gujarat: History, Ethnography, History and Text*, ed. by Edward Simpson and Aparna Kapadia, New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2010

⁷⁴ Oommen, T.K. *Reconciliation in Post-Godhra Gujarat: The Role of Civil Society*. Pearson Longman, 2008, p.19-20

Instances of Communal Violence in Gujarat Since 1969

The state was not communally very sensitive but rather known for its commitment to non-violence and peace. In fact, the district of Ahmedabad which has been a centre of communal conflagrations for several decades, was not, traditionally, a communally sensitive place. There was no riot at the time of partition, although there were incidents of communal violence in 1941 and in 1946. But things began changing gradually rather in a systematic form in the 1960s and 1970s. The first ever blow was the riots of 1969, in which around 1000 to 2000 people were killed, mainly the Muslims. Howard Spodek argues, “The assaults began when a policeman was perceived as throwing a copy of the Koran to the grounds, and Muslims were perceived as harassing cows belonging to Ahmedabad’s Jagannath temple”. This event marked an end of the Gandhian era known for its commitment to non-violence and peace. Spodek further elaborates that what was more important was not just the presence of forces of violence but, the absence of forces of peace. Which existed during Gandhi’s time in the city. There was a chain of political control and order, labour union and its leadership appealing for peace, and industry leadership actively working for harmony. Now there was also absence of voluntary engagement of people in pacifying society in crisis situations. This all ended as Gandhian era got over.⁷⁵ However, the 1970s remained relatively peaceful for the country as well as for Gujarat in terms of happening of incidents of communal clashes.

1985: Caste Clashes or Communal Riots?

Again, in 1980s caste clashes also turned into communal clashes when in 1985, after the anti-Sikh riots in Delhi, Gujarat had to face another phase of communal violence which continued till 1986. Asghar Ali Engineer underlines that the riots of 1985 were organised to overthrow the Congress government which came to power with the help of the KHAM card that included the Kshatriya, Harijans, Adivasis and the Muslim communities as its political support base. This electoral strategy brought favourable political outcomes for the Congress party. It declared reservation quotas for these communities as well as the Other Backward Classes in jobs and educational institutions which angered the upper castes and the Patels who objected to it in the streets. The Bhartiya Janata Party, meanwhile, worked to win over the backward

⁷⁵ Spodek, Howard. “From Gandhi to Modi: Ahmedabad, 1915-2007.” In *ibid*, p. 139

class, which voted for the Congress in the state election of 1985, by making them find pride in their identity as Hindus and portraying Muslims as their enemy. This is how a caste-based issue turned into a communal conflict. And violence was then relaunched on anti-Muslim agenda. With the polarisation of the Gujarat society the BJP could manage to strengthen its hold in the state. The Police was found involved in attacking the minority community.⁷⁶ The Dave commission was formed to look into the causes of the riots of 1985. It was found that the riots were pre-planned as the killings specifically targeted the Muslims minority and their properties. With this incident, the sense of alienation among the Muslim community of the state began growing which made them cling to the neighbourhoods of their co-religionists.

1992: An Unprecedented Demolition

The decade of 1990s also witnessed growing Hindu-Muslim tensions throughout the country and it was also true of Ahmedabad.⁷⁷ Following the Rath Yatra of the then BJP president Lal Krishna Advani in 1992, after the Babri Mosque demolition, Gujarat again had to experience major communal clashes. While in places like in Mumbai, riots were fostered by Muslim attacks on public institutions in protest against the demolition of the mosque in Ayodhya, in Ahmedabad, Muslims were the victims since the assailants were the Hindu nationalists. Ahmedabad and Surat were the worst affected areas by communal violence in 1992-93. Though there was a lull in communal violence after the post-Babri riots but Gujarat remained 'hyper-sensitive'.⁷⁸ And since, the demolition of the mosque was telecasted on television, the serious implications of the event just did not limit to Ayodhya, in fact, there were widespread communal clashes across India. And in Gujarat too it was evident. The violence of 1990s brought the inter-community relations between Hindus and Muslims to the lowest ebb and consolidated the already existing borders of social geography in the state of Gujarat resulting in declining social interaction and dying trust between the two communities.

⁷⁶ Engineer, Asghar Ali. "Gujarat Riots in the Light of the History of Communal Violence." *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 37, no. 50, 2002, p. 5051

⁷⁷ Field, E. & et al. "Segregation, Rent Control, and Riots: The Economics of Religious Conflict in an Indian City." *Economic and Political weekly*, Vol. 98, no. 2, 2008, p. 507

⁷⁸ Engineer, Asghar Ali. 2002, *op.cit*, p.5051

2002 and Afterwards

However, the 20th century did not witness what the 21st century did, in terms of Hindu-Muslim violence. Although, there was one such event but that time it was not the Muslims but the Sikh minority who had to bear the brunt during the Congress regime where the government itself endorsed the violence against the Sikhs in 1984. In terms of atrocities, that were inflicted upon the Muslims in Gujarat, the communal violence of 2002 was the bloodiest moment in the history of Hindu-Muslim riots in India. In which the government played partisan role and encouraged violence against the Muslim minority of the state. The riots began after the Godhra train burning that was targeted against the Muslims of the state. Bhiku Parekh, notes, “Gujarat’s dubious distinction of having the highest per capita death in such violence in the country and causing the highest number of casualties in a single cluster of riots”. In fact, with 1,119 victims of Hindu- Muslim riots between 1950 and 1995, Ahmedabad ranked just behind Mumbai until the 2002 violent riots, when it became the most affected city in terms of casualties of communal riots.⁷⁹

Things spoiled to the level that the event of 2002 became a reference point in identity narratives of differentiating ‘us’ from ‘them’.⁸⁰ The common thing in all these events of communal violence was that the riots were concentrated in certain districts of Central Gujarat, particularly, Ahmedabad, Baroda (today’s Vadodara), Mehsana, Kheda and Sabarkantha, and Anand. But it was uncommon to communal violence that took place in 2002 since it was not confined to the urban space or some cities. Rather, Parekh underlines, the violence extended to a total of 37 cities and towns. Also, the expansion of violence to rural areas was similarly unparalleled. Dipankar Gupta also draws attention to this point by arguing:

“Gujarat 2002 has forced us to pay attention to the fact that villages are also getting increasingly ethnicised. What we find in Gujarat is that villages have turned upon villages with a ferocity that was till recently reserved for the urban people. It is also true that this is not the first time such incidents have occurred in rural Gujarat. In 1987 during the Ram-Janki Shobha Yatra villages in Kheda, Sabarkantha and

⁷⁹ Parekh, Bhiku. *Making Sense of Gujarat Society Under Siege*. Seminar 513, 2002, p.26

⁸⁰ Ahmad, Riaz. “Gujarat Violence: Meaning and Implications.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.37, no.20, 2002 p.1870

Himmatnagar districts were affected. This time however the scale was so much greater that there is no doubt that villages can no longer claim to be riot-proof.”⁸¹

The recurrence of communal violence also engulfed the earlier violence immune villages into its fold. The divides are so visible that many villages in today’s Gujarat before their names carry the suffix ‘Hindu Rashtra’ and that too specifically between two districts of Vadodara and Bharuch.⁸²

This actually contributed to the division not only of urban spaces but also in village areas earlier known for their inter-community ties, along religious and caste lines, and to the collapse of the social infrastructure of an industrialised state. As Rowena Robinson also puts that it is easy to pinpoint ‘Hindu’ and ‘Muslim’ areas in Ahmedabad and Baroda. Before the violence of 2002, residences of Muslims could be easily located. The violence of 2002 however, made the spatial borders between Hindus and Muslims even more stark.⁸³ Bhiku Parekh also adds to it and argues, “there is extensive residential, social, and educational segregation in many parts of the state. And children of Hindus and Muslims often go to different schools”⁸⁴ And there are fewer and fewer chances for children to play together and establish any bonds. even today, these borders can be easily viewed in different forms. Tridip Suhrud in his paper also raises the same concern as he writes that there is total collapse of the civil society space which has always kept alive the prospects of dialogue and mediated between the communities in the past. And violence of 2002 Gujarat vividly demonstrated that ‘there is today no collective which can exercise moral authority and rescue the dialogue space’⁸⁵, which is the fundamental need of the ‘civic engagement approach’.

With this background, this chapter attempts to look into the dynamics of post 2002 violence Gujarat society, specially the idea of residential segregation with increasing tensions between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority population of the state,

⁸¹ Gupta, Dipankar. “Limits of Tolerance: Prospects of Secularism in India After Gujarat.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 37, no.46, 2002, p.4617

⁸² Gupta, Dipankar. *Justice Before Reconciliation: Negotiating a ‘New -Normal’ in Post-Riot Mumbai and Ahmedabad*. New York: Routledge, 2011, p.35

⁸³ Robinson, Rowena. *Tremors of Violence: Muslim Survivors of Ethnic Strife in Western India*. Sage Publication, 2005, p.48

⁸⁴ Parekh, Bhiku. 2002, *op.cit*

⁸⁵ Suhrud, Tridip. “No Room for Dialogue.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.37, no.11, 2002, p.1011-1012

which has concretised in Gujarat in the form of ‘Muslim Ghettos’ where a big chunk of state’s Muslims resides. Although the phenomenon of Muslim ghettoisation is not confined to the state of Gujarat, as Laurent Gayer and Christophe Jaffrelot in their book “Muslims in Indian Cities” also underline that a very few Indian cities remained untouched of this phenomenon. In fact, in India, the country with the third largest Muslim population in the world, residential segregation along religious lines, has long been an issue of concern. The phenomenon has very serious implications for a multiethnic country like India. The spatial or residential segregation, nevertheless, is not only confined to the Muslim minority rather people of particular caste and community have also been forced to live in separate spaces. For instance, the provision of public housing for members of the Scheduled Castes (SCs) in India, very often turns out to be a mode of segregation of these communities from the rest of the city and its population.⁸⁶ And the caste-based segregation is more notable than segregation based purely on people’s socio-economic standard. While the data for caste-based segmented living is usually available at local level, such information is hard to gain as far as segregation on religious lines at local level is concerned, as many researchers have also noted. They also underline, in some cities “religion is likely to be more important axis of residential segregation...(and that) analysing residential segregation by religion would improve our understanding of socio-spatial inequalities.”⁸⁷ Since majority of Indian states follow a particular pattern of segmented living on religious ground, Gujarat seems to follow an extreme version of segregation. This phenomenon of spatial and residential segregation can be witnessed in majority of Gujarat’s districts and is a peculiar feature of the districts of central Gujarat.

Since the concern of this chapter is the worsening intercommunity relations between the Hindus and the Muslims, it tends to look at the phenomenon of spatial segregation in Gujarat on religious lines, which in turn, makes situations even worse. And attempts to examine whether this is a new phenomenon known as ghettoisation of the Muslim community or has it been there since the inception of the state due to the very structure of the cities in the state. Several studies have already been done on this issue

⁸⁶ Dupont, V. “Social-Spatial Differentiation and Residential Segregation in Delhi: A Question of Scale?” *Geoforum*, Vol. 35, Issue no. 2, March 2004, p. 157-175

⁸⁷ Vithayathil, T. and Singh, G. 2012, *cited* In Gazala Jamil’s, *Accumulation by Segregation: Muslim Localities in Delhi*. Oxford University Press, 2017, p.36

of concern with different viewpoints. Some view it as Muslim marginalization, some perceive this as a consequence of politics of communal hatred and violence, some would understand this from a perspective of citizens' rights and their denial. This chapter views this issue as fading away of intercommunal harmony and trust with every episode of communal violence and killings, as a result of which very less scope remains for dialogue between the two religious-communities, and it is both due to the history of communal violence in Gujarat as well as the structure of the cities, how they were designed and formed.

“The incidents of communal violence in India, particularly between Muslims and Hindus, have perpetuated dynamics of self-segregation among the Muslim minority community, who have been looking for safety in numbers. And this process of concentration in particular areas has been further reinforced by the socio-economic marginalisation affecting Muslims. The Muslim-dominated neighbourhoods which have been growing in this process of regrouping are increasingly being referred to as ‘Muslim ghettos’ by the media, political class and academics alike. The term is also officially recognised in the Sachar Committee report.”⁸⁸

This can be understood as to restrict somebody to a particular area, not necessarily always with force in all contexts, which I would elaborate further in the coming section. When one says ‘a Muslim ghetto’, that leads us to presume it as a homogenous category, that is not really the case. Therefore, one needs to understand the nuances of this phenomenon and before that, note the variations within the religious communities. The insecurities of the inhabitants of the ghettos vary according to their social positioning as well as their identity as a man and a woman.⁸⁹ To make sense of all these peculiarities, the understanding of a ‘ghetto’ becomes crucial. The concept of ghetto, hence, is further explained by looking at five other elements, as defined by Jaffrelot and Gayer:

“The concept of ‘ghetto’ can be further elaborated by pointing out five major characteristics of these spaces of relegation: an element of social and political constraint over the residential options of a given population; the class and caste diversity of these localities which regroup individuals of different social backgrounds

⁸⁸ Jaffrelot, Christophe and Gayer, Laurent. “Introduction: Muslims of the Indian City, From Centrality to Marginality.” In *Muslims in Indian Cities: The Trajectories of Marginalisation*, ed. by Christophe Jaffrelot and Laurent Gayer, Harpercollins Publisher India, 2012, p.21

⁸⁹ Kirmani, Nida. *Questioning the Muslim Women: Identity and Insecurity in an Urban Indian Locality*. New Delhi: Routledge India, 2013, p.32

on the basis of ethnic or religious ascribed identities; the neglect of these localities by state authorities, translating into a lack of infrastructure, educational facilities etc.; the estrangement of the residents of the locality from the rest of the city due to lack of the public transport facility and as well as very limited job opportunities and restricted access to public spaces beyond the locality; the subjective sense of closure of residents, related to objective pattern of estrangement from the rest of the city”.⁹⁰

These are factors categorised by Jaffrelot and Gayer, but there are also many other things that we should consider before generalising the phenomenon. There is not just a single form of segmented or segregated living. Rather, the residential clustering can be classified into four types, that are: ‘ghettos’, ‘slums’, ‘Citadel’ and ‘enclave’. And according to Raphael Susewind, there seems to be a consensus that all these four types of residential clustering are highly segregated spaces, but then, it makes a normative and thus conceptual difference whether these segregations came about by choice or by force, where the former suggests an ‘enclave’ or a ‘citadel’ and the latter suggests a ‘ghetto’ or a ‘slum’.⁹¹ Galonnier further explains, the term ‘ghetto’ and ‘enclave’ are very often used for spaces which are primarily segregated along ethnic, racial, religious or caste lines- i.e. according to ascribed identities of the residents - ‘slum’ and the ‘citadel’ denote primarily economic or class-based segregation. That is, in other words, if people are placed together because of the economic bracket they belong to, particularly the poor who have no other option, and live together then they form a ‘slum’. This does not have ethnicity as a criterion to become a resident. And when a particular ethnic group is relegated to specific areas, those neighbourhoods are seen as ‘ghettos’. Whereas enclaves are seen as more of a voluntarily chosen segregated spaces for the purpose of promoting the welfare of its members, and in cases of rich being segregated by themselves to protect and enhance their superior position from the rest of the community, they form ‘citadels’.⁹² Hence, this classification makes it easier to figure out which form prevails where and when. This point makes it clear that the Muslims are not a homogenous entity and no community is for that matter, rather, the religious community consists of caste and class-based differences. And the difference between a ‘ghetto’ and an ‘enclave’ is unclear within the neighbourhoods and this distinction is unable to see the complexity of such spatial

⁹⁰ Jaffrelot, Christophe. and Gayer, Laurent. *op.cit*, p.22

⁹¹ Varady cited In Raphael Susewind’s “Muslims in Indian Cities: Degrees of Segregation and Elusive Ghetto.” *Sage Journals*, Vol.46, Issue no. 6, June, 2017, p.1288

⁹² Marcuse, Peter. “The Enclave, The Citadel, and The Ghetto: What has Changed in the Post-Fordist U.S City.” *Sage Journals*, Vol. 33, Issue no. 2, Nov. 1997, p. 228

segregation along religious lines. It is thus a “combination of necessity and choice”.⁹³ And in a case of choice, the rich and affluent Muslims can afford to move to the enclaves (equipped with all modern facilities available) or can form citadels whereas the poor Muslims are compelled to move to slums and ghettos with no other options available. Jamil also point out:

“civic neglect by the state, discriminatory treatment by its agencies, and insecurity among urban Indian Muslims have long been offered apparent reasons for their marginalisation. Violence and/ or threat of communal violence and everyday prejudices combine to give impetus to spatial segregation. But it would be a mistake to conclude that discriminatory segregation of Muslims in the city does not have deeper roots. It would be a bigger mistake to imagine these neighbourhoods as static, unchanging, decadent spaces. Today, the older Muslim neighbourhoods are altered in size, composition, and scale of economic activity and have turned into contiguous clusters of several neighbourhoods with distinct features.”⁹⁴

Now many new Muslim localities are coming into existence in forms of ‘gated enclaves’ reserved for the affluent section among the Muslims.⁹⁵ Therefore, the dynamics of changing urban spaces need to be examined. Jamil explains this in the context of Muslims in the urban spaces of Delhi, however, this seems to be similar in the case of Gujarat.

Residential Segregation in Gujarat: An All-Pervasive Phenomenon

The phenomenon of spatial or residential segregation can be witnessed in certain districts in Gujarat that have always been centres of communal violence and Ahmedabad comes at the top in that list, besides Ahmedabad, the districts of Anand, Sabarkantha, Vadodara (formerly known as Baroda), and Mehsana have seen gruesome events of communal bloodletting. All these cities had had good number of Muslims and mixed neighbourhoods. Perhaps, this has been a major reason for these central districts to be more vulnerable to communal propaganda. However, there are also many other factors such as preferences of a group, economic status, discrimination in housing facilities, and contextual factors such as the historical and

⁹³ Kirmani, Nida. *op.cit*, p.196

⁹⁴ Jamil, Gazala. *op.cit*, p.33

⁹⁵ Ibid

structural explanations are seen responsible for Muslim clustering in certain parts of the state and therefore these variations cannot be ignored.

Gujarat is really an urbanised state where out of its total population around 31.10 per cent lives in urban cities.⁹⁶ No other district than district of Ahmedabad represents this trend more precisely where its 84.04 per cent population resides in urban areas with only 15.6 per cent staying in rural areas.⁹⁷ In the case of Ahmedabad, it is the largest city of Gujarat with 5.7 million population. As its name suggests, Ahmedabad was founded by Sultan Ahmad Shah in 1411 on the eastern side of the Sabarmati river and remained the capital of the Sultanate of Gujarat till 1422. It was more a political city than an economic one, however, the city emerged as an important centre of trade and industry from the sixteenth century onwards.⁹⁸

The area of Ahmedabad is divided into two parts, namely; eastern and western part of the Sabarmati river. The city includes four different regions: the old city; the industrial area; the western district which is relatively more affluent; and the suburban area that does not come under the boundaries of Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) but falls within the authority of Urban Development. Ahmedabad has different forms of housing patterns. And “housing in Ahmedabad serves, to some extent, as a historical indicator of how class and religion were spatially organised in the past. Each part of this city is associated with particular type of housing stock”,⁹⁹ in the form of Pols, Chawls and posh housing societies that exist in the city and all the different regions of the district manifest them. For instance, the old city that is the original walled city, also known as fort walls were divided into ‘*pol*’s, a unique form of a residential pattern. Harish Doshi defines pol, “ecologically, a Pol is a residential street. It has well-defined boundaries through a main gateway, sub-gates and cluster of houses.”¹⁰⁰ The residence in pols was based on one’s profession. Hence, in terms of people residing in pols, pols were more or less homogenous, since people of a particular community or caste were engaged in same occupational activities. And this

⁹⁶ GOI, census of India, 1981 cited In K.S.Singh, *Anthropological Survey of India, People of India Gujarat, Vol.XXII, Part one*. Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd, 2002, p.7

⁹⁷ Census of India 2011

⁹⁸ Jasani, Rubina. “A Potted History of Neighbours and Neighbourliness in Urban Ahmedabad.” In *The Idea of Gujarat: History, Ethnography and Text*, ed. by Edward Simpson and Aparna Kapadia, New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2010, p.155 and also Jaffrelot, C. and Gayer, Laurent. 2011. *Op.cit*, p.44

⁹⁹ Rubina, Jasani. *Ibid*, p.160

¹⁰⁰ Doshi, Harish. cited In Jaffrelot, Christophe and Gayer, Laurent. *op.cit*, p.46

was very much clear by the names of the pols such as Jain Pol, Patel Pol etc. however, the groups of different communities and castes residing in pols lived in an indiscriminate manner because pols of Brahmins, Baniyas, Patels, Muslims and Dalits were side by side.¹⁰¹ In this sense, all these groups were ‘living together but separately’¹⁰², as they were living in close proximity but among people of their own community so the inter-community interactions, in such a context, were very limited.

The Industrial area also known as the industrial belt too demonstrates similar pattern of living in the form of ‘*Chawls*’¹⁰³ or Chalis, which had been made by the Mill owners in the 1920s in order to provide the workers with some kind of housing facilities in the face of increasing number of workers coming from rural Gujarat and other parts of the neighbouring states in search of employment including both Hindus, Muslims and also the Gujarati Dalits. The arrangement of the houses in Chawls was such they these groups lived separately from each other.¹⁰⁴

Moreover, housing in the western part is completely different from the eastern area, housing on this side of the river contains posh bungalows and housing colonies. The same pattern of exclusive living is also followed in the western region of Ahmedabad. As Jasani also points out, “they are often built around small temples, and have such names as ‘Hindu Colony’ or ‘Patel Colony’”. This is predominantly inhabited by the Hindus. And people who have settled in the western part after moving from the east have also spatially reorganised the space and maintained the exclusivity of living.¹⁰⁵ It was only after 2002 that the Muslims of this side have fled to other part of the city facing the insecurities from being in a Hindu majority area. And today, people who live in the western part generally call it as the ‘Muslim part’ or ‘city area’.¹⁰⁶ It is primarily an upper-class area but around 22 per cent of its population is concentrated in slums.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p.45

¹⁰² Derived from *Will Secular India Survive?* ed. by Mushirul Hasan, ImprintOne, 2004.

¹⁰³ Chawl is a form of residence in which a large building is divided into separate tenements or a row of rooms with common balcony, offering accommodation to workers at low rent cost. For details see: Jasani, Rubina. *op.cit*, p.158 and also Jaffrelot, C. and Gayer, Laurent, 2011. *Op.cit*, p.44

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p.159 and also Jaffrelot, C.and Gayer, L. *op.cit*, p.46

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p-159

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p.157

¹⁰⁷ Darshini, Mahadevia cited In Chandhoke, Neera. “Civil Society in Conflict Cities: The Case of Ahmedbad.” Crisis Paper Research Centre, Serial No.2, Working Paper No. 64, 2009, p.7

These different housing units in the district of Ahmedabad are all based on spatial exclusivity from the very beginning of the city's existence. Which gets even sharper after each incident of communal violence. In a place where living has always been segmented and exclusive people tend to be vulnerable to communal propaganda, and it is true in the case of Gujarat's Ahmedabad.

Moreover, this feature of Ahmedabad city cannot only be attributed to the simplistic 'two-bank thesis', as Rubina Jasani asserts that the geography of Ahmedabad involves lot many complexities such as of class, religion, caste, and history of migration which have made the city how it is today.¹⁰⁸ Further, this social distinction between both the areas is not maintained only through these factors but also "on the basis of purity and pollution expressed through religiously and culturally sanctioned ideas about diet and exclusive virtues of vegetarianism in particular".¹⁰⁹ And since Muslims are linked with eating meat and non-vegetarian food and also associated with traits of impropriety and belligerent nature, the religious distinction is made and maintained strictly.

Jasani explains that "the organisation of space in pre-colonial Ahmedabad was actually influenced by the ritual cosmographies of its Hindu population and its Muslim rulers. And consequently, the city adopted a 'traditional structure', which resembled both a Hindu town and a Muslim city. Secondly, there was no distinction between commercial, religious and residential land and all these were intertwined with each other in the urban expansion".¹¹⁰ Therefore it was not in the precolonial period rather after the arrival of the British and even after that the differentiation in the urban space became more vivid in the name of city planning. Gujarat already had cities built by the Mughal rulers or in the princely states by their rulers or developed during the British colonial rule such as Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat and Rajkot. And it was because of the establishment of textile mills in 1861 and railway connectivity in these cities began attracting people from other parts of Gujarat and India. In other words, these 'old' cities witnessed inflow of people from outside and newer cities and towns developed as industries flourished.¹¹¹ Resulting which, it was the emerging

¹⁰⁸ Jasani, Rubina. *op.cit*, p.155

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p.157

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 155

¹¹¹ Shani, Ornit. *Communalism, Caste and Hindu Nationalism: The Violence in Gujarat*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p.33

local elites who took over the charge of restructuring the city for building their own cultural and moral system. Subsequently, this process reshaped the relationship of workers and capital, hence, elite formed and then controlled this new form of civic organisations, such as neighbourhood and textile labour associations to the degree that they could twist inter-community relations to serve their own economic and political interests.¹¹²

Moreover, with the development of the working class and labour associations in Gujarat and Ahmedabad in particular, a common space was created where all other identities such as of caste, religion were subsided in the workplace. It was the workplace where the common concerns of the workers were at the forefront irrespective of their caste and religious identities. And it was only in the backdrop of declining textile industry and labour associations the potential of their solidarity also started disappearing. In such an insecure and uncertain environment where the conditions of working class were so precarious, and the process of ‘casualisation of the workforce’¹¹³ was almost done, people started resorting to their neighbourhoods, which, as a result turned into segregated and isolated spaces. Relatively isolated people, who had no work, easily fell prey to communal propaganda, that convinced them they shared nothing in common with their former co-workers and neighbours.¹¹⁴ This is when the BJP and its affiliates (the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal) could manage to establish their stronghold in the state. Berenschot underlines, as “the Textile Labour Association collapsed, the people became more dependent on the new patronage structure that developed around the BJP, the RSS, and the VHP. These organisations were well placed to fill the vacuum that Congress left behind”.¹¹⁵ And it was through their *Shakhas* ¹¹⁶ working at the local level, they offered the infrastructure to link the workers at the ground level to influence the leaders at the level of the state, and a widespread networks that this organisations has around them provided people with new ways to have access to the

¹¹² Raychaudhuri, Siddharth. “Colonialism, Indigenous Elites and the Transformation of Cities in the Non-Western World: Ahmedabad (Western India) 1890-1947.” *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 35 no.3, 2001, p. 677-726

¹¹³ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.25

¹¹⁴ Breman, Jan. and Shah, P. *Working in the Mill No More*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004, p.64 and Oommen. T.K. *ibid*, p. 25-26

¹¹⁵ Berenschot, Ward. *op.cit*, p. 69

¹¹⁶ As defined by Ward Berenschot.

state.¹¹⁷ The various facilities of education and health and its idea of “Seva” (service) could fetch BJP a great deal of support of Hindu upper and middle-class people in the state. Parekh also adds that their ideology of ‘Hindutva’ provided both an identity beyond caste and community as well as sanction to pursue their own agenda of greater political, economic and social control.

In such a scenario one’s community affiliation got strengthened. Which gave way to strong prejudices and apprehensions vis-à-vis the other community. such patterns of living along with drastic events of communal riots or planned anti-Muslim pogrom, and absence or a weak presence of civil society groups working for communal harmony, have helped vitiating the environment. In which the Muslim minority feel alienated. And in order to feel safe and secure they have moved towards Muslim majority areas now referred to as ‘Muslim Ghettos’. The city of Ahmedabad has the highest number of Muslim concentrated areas. Robinson points out that “areas with greater concentration of Muslims, for instance Paldi, which saw a lot of violence have been deserted in favour of areas like Juhapura, Shahpur, Khanpur and Jamalpur which have greater concentration of Muslims”.¹¹⁸ Muslims in Ahmedabad, after the violence of 2002, began evacuating the city. Consequently, they are either moving to the eastern fringes or Juhapura in the southwest of the city. In Juhapura, according to different analyses, around one-third or half of the Muslim population of Ahmedabad lives. And due to this peculiar pattern of Muslim clustering, Hindus, familiar with the place, refer to these areas as ‘mini Pakistan’. The area actually started growing in the aftermath of 1985 communal riots and since then such incidents of communal conflicts have contributed in migration of Muslims from Central Ahmedabad to this place.¹¹⁹

Besides Juhapura, Gomtipur, Jamalpur, Vatwa and Khanpur were some other areas which saw Muslim inflow in the relief colonies set up by various Muslim faith-based organisations and NGOs in the aftermath of 2002 violence. These regions, interestingly enough, were mixed in terms residents where both Hindus and Muslims resided next to each other. ‘But after being uprooted from their original homes, the

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p.69

¹¹⁸ Robinson, Rowena. *op.cit*, p.39

¹¹⁹ Jaffrelot, Christophe. and Gayer, Laurent. *op.cit*, p.6

Muslims from this region have preferred to move into the ghettos in other parts of the city out of a sense of insecurity'.¹²⁰

The research done by Neera Chandhoke and her colleagues in Ahmedabad came up with up findings which were actually in consonance with the structure of the city, and it states: "in Ahmedabad, the very preconditions for engagement in the spaces of civil society were markedly absent. Hindus and Muslims have lived in segmented spaces since the inception of the city, and violence between the two communities has been an ongoing phenomenon up to the present day."¹²¹

The observations made by Chandhoke and Breman (mentioned earlier) seem to be contradictory. For instance, according to Breman, the housing patterns, though, kept the people of these communities away from each other, but their identity at the workplace as workers transcended their other identities and brought them together. whereas Chandhoke argues that these segmented spaces in the city closed the possibilities of intercommunity interactions which was the prerequisite of engagement in the civil society space. And that is why, communalism could easily entrench itself in Gujarat and succeeded in creating fissures in the society.

Nevertheless, this cannot be denied that it was in the aftermath of violence of 2002, the society in Gujarat has divided strictly on religious lines without any room for dialogue. But there have been many other factors which made Ahmedabad a city with divides into a 'Hindu Ahmedabad' and a 'Muslim Ahmedabad'. For many non-governmental organisations and some sections of media, the 'ghettoisation' in Ahmedabad city and in various other districts is a new phenomenon. Jasani in her ethnographic account on 'history of neighbour and neighbourliness in Ahmedabad' emphasises that rather than seeing it as a new and recent phenomenon, the residential segregation on religious grounds in the city needs to be understood against 'the grand narrative of urban history and everyday struggle of ordinary people to survive its cruelties'. And she further underlines that several ethnographic and historical evidences have also demonstrated that the city has always been divided along caste, community and religious lines.¹²² And it was because of such a structure of the city,

¹²⁰ Chaudhary, Anasua, B.R. Sabarmati: Creating a New Divide, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42 Issue no. 08, 2007, p-699

¹²¹ Chandhoke, Neera. 2009. *op.cit*, p.7

¹²² Jasani, Rubina. *op.cit*, p-154

Ahmedabad has always been exposed to politics of communal hatred and the resulted polarisation of city. Moreover, this physical segregation, no doubt, is there but there are also borders for which material boundaries really not needed. The ‘mental maps’ or ‘cognitive maps’¹²³ through which one perceives his or her area and city are also there to demarcate the boundaries. As Raphael Susewind asserts, “the mere extent of segregation is an insufficient shortcut to the phenomenon of ghettoisation: a ghetto actually need not be highly segregated and a ‘mixed area’ can be surprisingly homogenous”. He stresses that along with focusing on segregation by choice and by force one also needs to understand the wider ‘mental maps’, through which people of particular city or area experience, understand and perceive that place. Which also help in unraveling the historical trajectories, sense of insecurity and their future aspiration and expectation concerning their cities not really connected with the physical form of segregation.¹²⁴ Raheel Dhattiwala’s ethnographic study of ‘mixed neighbourhoods’ in Ahmedabad illustrates this point in great detail. According to her, spatial proximity is vital however not really enough and sufficient condition for good neighbourly relations.¹²⁵

Although, Ahmedabad occupies great space in the discussions on communal violence and residential segregation but the signs of polarisation of people on religious lines are visible in other places as well. For instance, **Anand**, a district in central Gujarat, came into existence in 1997 after being carved out from Kheda. Almost around 75 per cent of these two districts population dwells in villages, that can be categorise as one, primarily Hindu dominated villages which make up the 70 per cent of the total villages; two, predominantly Muslim villages constitute 10 per cent of it; and third, is those 20 per cent villages which have significant Muslim presence. In terms of the demographic profile of Anand, Hindus make up 72.30 per cent and Muslims 21.93 per cent of the total population as per the 2011 census data. Anand comprises a diverse population and the Muslims of Anand, in terms of class, religious fractions and community background, are also very diverse. Bohra/ Vohra, Memon, Malek, Saiyad and Pathan Muslims all reside in Anand. Sanderien Verstappen conducted a study in Anand and writes that, ‘residents estimate at least 50 per cent of the town are Vohra

¹²³Used by Susewind, Raphael. *op.cit*, p.1286 and Dhattiwala, Raheel. “Next-door Strangers: Explaining ‘Neighbourliness’ between Hindus and Muslims in a Riot-affected city.” In *Indian Muslims: Struggling for Equality of Citizenship*. ed. by R. Hassan, Melbourne University Press. 2016

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ Dhattiwala, Raheel. *ibid*

or ‘Charotar Sunni’, Vohra, a community of Sunni Muslims with histories to the surrounding region.’¹²⁶

After the violence of 2002, the people of Anand compared the relative security and safety in Anand with other surrounding areas and villages. Anand saw a relatively limited spread of violence because there were variations in degree of violence at the local level. However, one of the ghastly incidents was also noted in Anand’s Odh village, ‘where 26 Muslims were burnt to death. In the entire district, at least 53 religious sites belonging to Muslims were attacked and demolished.’¹²⁷ Verstappen underline that people elucidate that the inflow of new people, particularly Muslims from adjacent villages and town led to the departure of the Hindus who would earlier live next to each other. And this is how the earlier mixed areas turned into single community spaces of living.¹²⁸ Villages in Kheda and Anand were badly affected by the violence. Oommen writes, “the violence prompted large-scale exodus of the Muslim residents from the villages to relief camps. Roughly more than 18,000 families from the rural pockets of Anand and Kheda districts were affected. Consequently, many of the villages in the districts such as Jingar, Timba and Silsar in Kheda and Odh, Samarkh and Chikodra in Anand are said to have been ‘wiped clean’ of Muslims.”¹²⁹

The Muslim appearance is witnessed in Anand since the early 1950s when it was conjoined with Kheda.¹³⁰ Some Muslims would stay in the old town with Kshatriyas, Rabaris, Brahmins, and Patidars and some would live a little far away in small town name Azad Chowk. The Muslim settlements began growing from the 1960s onwards and particularly after the riots of 1969. Two housing societies such as Nutan Nagar and Ismail Nagar consequently came into existence. And it was after 2002, the area near these housing societies expanded and now known as ‘Muslim Vistar’, which has been developing since the migration of Muslims from surrounding towns and villages

¹²⁶ Verstappan, Sanderian. “Communal Living: Religion, Class, and the Politics of Dwelling in Small-town Gujarat.” Contributions to Indian Sociology. 52. 2017 006996671774338 10.1177/00699667177433383, accessed from:

file:///C:/Users/win%207/Downloads/Communal%20Living_%20Religion,%20Class,%20and%20the%20Politics%20of%20Dwelling%20in%20Small-town%20Gujarat%20_%20Sanderien%20Verstappen%20-%20Academia.edu.html

¹²⁷ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.217

¹²⁸ Verstappan, Sanderian. *Op.cit*

¹²⁹ Oommen. T.K. *op.cit*, p.217

¹³⁰ Thakur *cited* In Sanderian Verstappen, 2017. *op.cit*,

still continues.¹³¹ Such Muslim majority areas in Anand are Ismail Nagar and Rahimnagar which is situated just outside the town of Anand. These areas are now homes to those Muslims who had migrated from their villages after the violence of 2002. Villages like Sureli in Anand were peaceful because of two main reasons, one because of the substantial number of Muslims residing in those villages, and two, because of their location on the periphery of the city, lessened the possibility of an attack from outside mob.¹³²

The assumption of rural areas being spaces of harmony was scattered when the rural threshold was crossed during many incidents of communal violence and particularly the 2002. Gupta proposes an interesting point that ‘a medieval peace characterised the countryside, but this peace was based less on tolerance or on natural goodwill and more on the fact that the ruling castes and classes held undisputed power in the villages’.¹³³ The migration from rural to urban cities in a way help the Muslims of Anand to connect with the wider urban space through which they could gain social mobility. Verstappen writes that Muslims who see them as part of the middle class, after coming to Anand could send their children to school for modern, secular as well as religious education. While moving into an all-Muslim area separated them from Hindus and other communities, however, in other way, it also availed them the facilities in surrounding Hindu spaces such as educational institutions and business activities.¹³⁴

If one is to analyse this, it cannot be denied that the Muslims majorly live in urban areas. And in Gujarat after 2002 many Muslims have migrated from villages to towns and cities. This, no doubt, gave them access to the urban spaces. However, this effect is limited to certain areas. In cities like Ahmedabad, where access to the urban space is not easy irrespective of the economic class to which a Muslim belongs, this seems difficult to apply there. There are variations as far as the intercommunity interactions and social mobility within the state is concerned.

¹³¹ *ibid*

¹³² Lokhande, Sanjeevini Badigar. *Communal Violence, Forced Migration and the State: Gujarat Since 2002*. Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 111

¹³³ Gupta, Dipankar. *op.cit*, p.36.

¹³⁴ *ibid*

moreover, the district of *Surat*, very popular for its diamond cutting industry, is the next in line as it is also not spared from communal violence and its after-effects in form of changing demographic profile of the city. The district of southern Gujarat which was earlier untouched by incidents of communal violence was badly affected during 1992-93 when riots broke out when the Babri Masjid was demolished at Ayodhya. The Muslims were targeted and killed on mass level. The level of violence in Surat was not as high in 2002 as it was in 1990s. The district of Surat was the worst affected during the 1992-93 riots, and the process of spatial segregation increased since then, when Muslim population of the district started moving towards areas where there was already a substantial number of Muslims residing and Hindus also made ways towards the Hindu dominated places. Consequently, the district of Surat also could not escape from the prevailing hatred and fear of violence. It has Hindu dominated areas such as Unn, Limbayat, Umarwada, Anjana and Dumbhal and on the other side are predominantly Muslim areas namely, Shahpore, Zampha Bazaar, Rani Tolao, Salabatpura, Mughlisara and Rander.

Further, the recent imposition of the ‘Gujarat Prohibition of Transfer of Immovable Property and Provision for Protection of Tenants from Eviction from Premises in Disturbed Areas Act’ known as the ‘Disturbed Areas Act, 1991’ in Surat and Vadodara has also contributed in closing the avenues of inter-community engagement. The Disturbed Areas Act was actually enacted in 1986 and with some changes replaced by the 1991 Act. The Act gave state government the power to declare any violence-prone area as ‘disturbed’. This requires additional clearance from the District Collector to sale and purchase the property in those areas. The rationale behind the Act that was given by the government was that it would prevent distress sales and also protect people from being displaced forcefully by members of other communities in areas of tensions.¹³⁵ The Act was meant to keep the mixed nature of several neighbourhoods intact, however, for some decades the Act has been evoked on very different grounds. The imposition of the act in many areas manifests the efforts to drive away the Muslim residents from areas that have mixed population.

¹³⁵ “Disturbed Areas Act Challenged in HC.” *Times of India*, May 3, 2018

The Act has also been imposed in Surat covers the central zone of Surat Municipal Corporation including 25 residential colonies in Limabayat, a Hindu majority area. As per the news in *The Indian Express*:

“The notification has come two months after BJP MLA Sangeeta Patil submitted a memorandum to the district collector for the implementation of the Ashant Dhara Act (Disturbed Areas Act) in 25 residential societies of the Limbayat area. The MLA demanded the imposition of the Act to “prevent Muslims from acquiring residential properties of Hindus”.¹³⁶

This unwillingness on part of both the political leadership and the people to have mixed neighbourhoods and inter-religious interactions indicate the worsening inter-community relations between Hindus and Muslims which has turned the former neighbours into strangers. Moreover, the district of *Sabarkantha*, which witnessed the most gruesome events during the violence of 2002 has also transformed into a highly segregated district. It also has Muslim concentrated spaces such as Himmatnagar, Idar and Modassa, where the victims took refuge during 2002 as these areas already had a significant Muslim population.

Another district of central Gujarat has witnessed changes in its demographic profile and increasing religious segregation, that is *Vadodara* also known as the ‘cultural city of Gujarat’. Which has, along with Ahmedabad, been facing the migration of Muslims from former mixed areas. Where Muslims have been leaving earlier mixed localities and Hindus are also migrating from Muslim-dominated areas in the face of recurring communal violence. Vadodara has 85.39 per cent of the Hindus and a good percentage of 11.40 of Muslims. Vadodara could not escape from communal riots of 1985-86, however, the place was peaceful, unlike Surat and Ahmedabad, in the 1990s when riots broke out after the demolition of the Babri Mosque. But, it could not resist the violence of 2002 and its afterward impacts. The areas such as Makarpura, Danteshwar, Pratapnagar and Tarsali where Muslims, mainly daily wage labourers, would reside in small pockets were peaceful areas, but during 2002 these particular pockets were badly attacked. .Sanjeevini Badigar Lokhande writes that like Ahmedabad, Baroda (Vadodara) has also faced a good number of communal clashes and riots especially because of processions carried out on religious festivals in the Old

¹³⁶“Disturbed Areas Act Imposed in Parts of Surat and Vadodara.” *The Indian Express*, October 15, 2017

city which consists of Wadi, Fatehpur and Panigate where people of the same community live in certain pockets. Vadodara had a good number of mixed neighbourhoods in many localities, if compared with Ahmedabad. However, it was post-2002 that the signs of clear polarisation are visible in the city spaces of Vadodara as there even the residential colonies for government employees which were rather known for more mixed residences are turning into single-community residences since 2002.¹³⁷ Different wards have Muslim dominated and Hindu dominated localities. Areas such as Shiabaug, now known as Babajipura and Fatehpura have always been violence-prone, which witnessed horrendous acts of brutality in different episodes of communal violence, in which 2002 remains the watershed event. Wadi, a Muslim majority area is inhabited by Bohra Muslims, Khojas, Memons, Pathans, Ghenchis, Shaikhs, had always been a problem area as far as communal clashes are concerned. Sayajigunj south and certain parts in wadi for instance Mughalwada had some pockets of mixed population but since 2002 Hindus of such localities migrated to Hindu Majority areas nearby. Whereas more and more Muslims are settling in Muslim dominated localities of Tandalja and Ekta Nagar. There are even less than five families of Hindus in the Gujarat Tractor Company's Residential Quarters and the Patrakar colony in Tandalja, since it is a Muslim-majority area.¹³⁸ Tandalja is referred to as 'mini Pakistan', as many other such Muslim ghettos in other cities and states are referred to, because of its Muslim population by the local Hindus. Like Ahmedabad, Vadodara also witnessed industrial growth till 1970s with rising industries and factories in the district. However, a decline could be seen in this development with closure of many factories 1970s onwards and there was reduction in job opportunities in formal sector. Which, since then made the unemployed to fall into the trap of communal propaganda. The state of Gujarat has not faced any such major riot after 2002 but there have been issues which led to clashes in particular districts and certain localities of those districts. Vadodara, in 2006 also faced communal riots in various cities when a Dargah of a Sufi Saint was removed by the Municipal corporation of Vadodara in carrying out road widening programme, claiming around six lives and left 25 people seriously injured.¹³⁹ This incident again solidified the already existing borders and made people believe that Hindus and Muslims cannot live together. The

¹³⁷ Lokhande, Sanjeevini Badigar. *op.cit*, p.49

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p.49

¹³⁹ PUCL Interim Report. *Vadodara: Violence on Gujarat's Gaurav Day*. 2006

issue of Muslim rehabilitation after the demolition of the Sulemani Chawl (where the Muslims of the Kapuria area live) by the Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC) has also raised the issue of perceptions vis-à-vis each other and questions the possibility of co-existence of both the communities. Where the residents of Kapuria – a predominantly Hindu neighbourhood, wrote to the VMC not to resettle the Muslims in their area, because “allowing Muslims to move into their locality would hamper the peace-loving nature here as their daily activities involve assaulting and abusing”.¹⁴⁰ The resentment of the Kalyanpur Hindu residences to the resettlement of the displaced Muslim families in their area. These lines themselves explain the widespread negative perception that is held amongst Hindus regarding Muslims. Segregated neighbourhoods are a part of vicious cycle, Where incidents of communal violence lead to distrust between communities and thus segmented and exclusive living, which in turn strengthens stereotypes and prejudices vis-à-vis each other’s community. This, therefore, increases the chances of petty and trivial issues between the two communities being turned into communal clashes and sometimes with high casualties. Therefore, after 2002 the pattern of segregated living thus got strengthen in Vadodara as well as other districts. Fredrik Barth has rightly written that “ethnic relations and boundary construction in most plural societies are not about strangers, but about adjacent and familiar “others”.”¹⁴¹ The borders, both physical and mental, have erected between people who used to be neighbours and colleague, that has made them complete strangers to each other.

There seems to be a strange silence. This unnatural way of living seems intriguing. If one chooses to live amongst people of his/her religion, caste, class and community is alright, but if one is compelled to move to coreligionists to seek security is a thing we need to think over. As M. Amruth also points out:

“The silence also points out to the perpetuation and reinforcement of an existing structure of hegemony that is affected through violence. The basic feature of these structures of hegemony are mutual exclusion and/or segregation and extreme disparity in accessing facilities and amenities among communities. This gradually leads to the production of different contexts of experiences and meanings. By structures, here we refer not only to urban life,

¹⁴⁰ “Vadodara Locality to the Civic Body: Don’t Let Muslims Here.” *The Indian Express*, June 2, 2016

¹⁴¹ Kirmani, Nida. *op.cit*, p.112

work, the commercial spaces, public services and financial institutions but also discourses such as development, justice, citizenship and equality.”¹⁴²

For instance, spatial segregation of urban living, work and commercial spaces is extreme between the Hindu and the Muslim communities in Ahmedabad. But, these trends can also be witnessed in many other cities in Gujarat, which, earlier, were relatively peaceful. And this division is not only confined to the material or physical sphere, but extends to the symbolic realm also, i.e., there are walls of segregation everywhere dividing the meanings and experiences between communities. And the structure of everyday experience of the communities have become so segregated that a particular kind of normalisation has been taking place.¹⁴³ Until and unless this process of normalisation is questioned, the situation will only worsen until. Our coming generations would be raised in an environment of mutual suspicions and hatred, where they would not even know each other’s ways of greeting. Is not this very perturbing?

The Muslim migration or forced displacement, to be precise, to Muslim dominated areas is to seek security among coreligionists and feel safe. “safe for them is more than an escape from the fear of violence. For them, it becomes an expression of their self, identity and ownership of space. A space where they don’t just feel secure but can also perform everyday rituals of life without a sense of stigma and shame. A space where they can connect with the discourse of citizenship.”¹⁴⁴ It is a space where they find ‘*Muslim maahol*’, where their Islamic way of living and dressing is not a taboo. With availability of and accessibility to Mosques to offer prayers, where being non-vegetarian is not labelled and no demarcations are made based on people’s food habits.

Questions have also been raised concerning the migration of the Muslim community after the incident of 2002 communal violence in Gujarat. There have been cases where the people of Muslim community did not leave their residences after communal clashes and riots. Why is it so? Dipankar Gupta in his book “Justice before Reconciliation: Negotiating a ‘New Normal’ in Post-Riot Mumbai and Ahmedabad”,

¹⁴² Amruth, M. “Silence and the Impossibility of Confabulation after Godhra.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, No. 49, 2007, p.23-25

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ Lone, Asaf Ali. “The Invisible ‘Other’ in Today’s Segregated India.” *The Wire*, December 13, 2017

provides explanations for such variations between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, which also gives us factors to consider while looking for such differences. According to Gupta, Muslims of Ahmedabad do/did not enjoy the firm support system of the community, like Muslims in Mumbai do. And added to which, Mumbai also have a notable business community and strong and good numbers of Muslim-dominated areas. All this helped the victims of communal violence in Mumbai to come back to their homes as situations got relatively better. However, in the case of Ahmedabad this was not possible also because of the nature and level of violence where the state government was overtly hostile to its Muslim population.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, the historical trajectories of different cities in different states and the contextual scenario help in understanding these variations in post-violence situations.

This phenomenon of spatial and residential segregation has very serious implications for how we understand communal peace and harmony. As Chandhoke puts it correctly:

“spatial segregation means that the children of one community have absolutely no interaction with the children of the other community. no mixed school, no playgrounds in which children of both communities can interact, no extra curricula activities that can form the basis of a future solidarity, and no personal friendship that involve visiting each other’s homes and dining will inevitably produce and reproduce alienation from the other community. Further, the spatial divide means that people of different communities are not easily able to access the domain of private transactions- i.e. friendship, associational life, dining with others, inter-marrying or indeed membership of social clubs”.¹⁴⁶

Moreover, she continues and makes a very interesting point about the narrowing down of the private space of social bargaining, that helps us understand that how such differences are creeping into our cultural sphere and contributing in widening the divide between both the communities. She argues that this phenomenon has changed the very domain of ‘the private’, that affects and affected society badly particularly in two ways. First, it is very crucial that a person should not be stopped from entering into a world that enables him/her to have an emotional support system in different forms such as by building friendships and also joining in the thoroughness of social arrangements of a society; second, is more instrumental. we know that political and

¹⁴⁵ Gupta, Dipankar. 2011, *op.cit*,

¹⁴⁶ Chandhoke, Neera. 2009, *Op.cit*, p.12

economic transactions do not always fall entirely in either the public domain or in the domain of the market. It is precisely in the private domain of social transactions that guarantees the acquisition of both social skills, which are indispensable for acquiring and retaining jobs, and influential contacts, which are necessary for the same.

Thus, residential segregation narrows the cultural and political horizons of communities, closes off options, pre-empts creative mingling of perspectives, and prevents the forging of other sorts of identity social interactions with persons who are 'not like us', prepares the grounds for coming together in civil society, and appreciation of social and cultural differences contributes to the development of reflective and critical judgement.

Summing Up

This chapter has discussed about the phenomenon of spatial and residential segregation along religious lines in the state of Gujarat. Which becomes sharper after every episode of communal violence? The state has witnessed many ghastly incidents of communal riots, however the term 'riots', which are considered to be spontaneous and where two parties involved are at par in terms of strength and number of people, becomes problematic to use in the context of Gujarat where the violent incidents have usually been one-sided, leaving the Muslims of the state at the receiving end. Within a span of four decades since 1969 the state has seen major instances of communal violence in every decade (except 1970s), which rendered the Muslim minority in Gujarat helpless and also worsened the inter-community relations between Hindus and Muslims. Today, majority of Gujarat's districts must have areas of Muslim concentration known as 'Muslim ghettos', many relief colonies which were set up by various NGOs and FBOs have become permanent residences for many Muslims who had to flee during the violence of 2002, in which around 2,000 people were killed across Gujarat and around 200,000 people especially Muslims were left homeless and displaced. During then, Ahmedabad was the worst affected districts in terms of casualties, brutality and pain inflicted upon innocents and displacement of Muslims. After which, Muslims of the state seeking security began heading towards Muslim majority areas such as Juhapura in Ahmedabad. Such segregation was also due to the structure of the city, how it was made and many other factors already discussed in the chapter. The central districts of Anand, Kheda, Sabarkantha, and Vadodara along with

Ahmedabad are highly segregated in terms of living spaces. In fact, the somewhat peaceful district of southern Gujarat Surat follows the same pattern of exclusive living with numerous separate Hindu-dominated areas and Muslim dominated areas.

The cost of such instances of communal violence is paid twice, ones during the violence itself when atrocities are inflicted on innocents because of what they are, and second post-violence when the trust between the communities is broken forever and the social capital of communities is lost, in the face of no efforts from the state and the people. Although, there are very few mixed colonies but with a ‘superficial cordiality’ in inter-community interactions and engagement. These are the conditions which prevails in Gujarat. In such a context, the endeavours of single individual and civil society organisation, no matter how limited they are, become crucial to maintain harmony and to keep the dialogue between people of these different communities going. Moreover, the role of civil society organisations in coping with such situations of communal animosities and violence and maintaining peace between the two religious-communities in Gujarat is the theme of chapter three of this work and would be discussed in details in the next chapter. Which is an attempt to look into what all ways they resorted to win the trust of the victims and help them to resettle in their lives.

CHAPTER- III

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS IN POST-2002 GUJARAT SOCIETY

The idea of civil society has gained currency in past few decades. Civil Society, an actor beyond the domain of the State, plays a very significant role in post-conflict situations in terms of relief and rehabilitation of victims. It, as already explained, is a sphere of associational life that brings different people together and helps in building civic values. Although, the term has been in existence since early times, but, as an intellectual construct it gained clarity and lucidity with the advent of modernity in the western world during the 17th century.¹⁴⁷ The importance of civil society has also been mentioned in several historical writings of various philosophers. For instance, early modern theorist like Hobbes and Locke, treated civil and political society interchangeably and in opposition to the state of nature. However, with the emergence of capitalism the distinction between what is political and what is non-political had become clearer which prepared the way for the emergence of civil society as an independent separate sphere, to be seen outside the purview of the state. Hegel defined Civil society as an intermediate stage between family and State. For him, the civil society sphere was distinguished by people's endeavours to fulfill their personal needs, and the conflicts and tensions that follow those endeavours. He, hence, viewed civil society as a midway juncture that requires to be transcended. He believed in the possibility of conflict resolution within the already existing structure of state-society relationship.¹⁴⁸ Some theorists of civil society define it as a 'space' independent of the state and the market. However, all these spheres are inextricably linked. The type and identity of a state also depends on whether civil society in that state is active which can hold the state accountable, or passive.

¹⁴⁷ Chandkhoke, Neera. 1995, *cited* In Tondon, Rajesh and Mohanty, Ranjita. "Civil Society and Governance: A Research Study in India." Draft Synthesis Report, Society for Participatory Research In Asia, 2000, p.01

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p.2

For Tocqueville and more recently Robert Putnam, “civil society is a network of associations and applications which safeguard democratic space between the state and the family.”¹⁴⁹

The potential of civil society to combat communal violence needs to be explored. Moreover, the role of civil society organisations in India is broadly confined only to post-conflict rehabilitation. Their capacity to prevent communal clashes and riots before their eruption is very limited. This chapter, therefore, tends to look into the works that different civil society organisations undertook in the post-2002 communally torn Gujarat to settle down the lives of the victims of violence.

One should not confuse civil society with civil society organisation (CSO) as the latter is an institutional manifestation of the former. Having more diverse base than the state and market institutions civil society organisations work on various issues ranging from education to health, development, environment protection, human rights, peacemaking and peacebuilding and many more. CSOs are primarily independent non-profit organisations working for the interest of the people. However, the “civil” of the civil society also consists ‘uncivil elements’ since it is a plural space which also consists people who possess will for disruption and violence that makes the endeavors of CSOs in maintaining peace in society even more difficult and also significant.¹⁵⁰ This chapter takes up the specific case of post-2002 Gujarat to examine the workings of some of the civil society organisations in the aftermath of the most brutal communal killings targeting the Muslim community. But before that, it discusses about the state and civil society in India.

The State and Civil Society in India

The inception of independent India can in a way attributed to the determined anti-British social movement that was led by the Indian National Congress that ended up representing the national movement for independence as a political party. This was the very first demonstration of the strength of the people who make a civil society. The INC in order to expand its base resorted to the politics of accommodation and consensus and embraced groups of different people especially the lower castes, poor

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p.2

¹⁵⁰ Chandhoke, Neera. 2009, *op.cit*, p.4 and Jayal, N.G. “Civil Societies Real or Imagined.” *Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol.63 no. 2/3, 2002, p.183

peasants, and the women which were earlier not a part of the freedom movement. This is how the Indian National Movement mobilised people in large number and transformed the nature of the freedom struggle from being elitist to really national. And from the 1920s onwards, the national movement led by the INC aimed at not just to achieve political independence but also the social transformation of the country.¹⁵¹ The presence of civil society, hence, has always been there. Moreover, the civil society space has redefined and reconstructed in last fifty year from time to time. In the 1960s the focus was on the fruitfulness of developmental endeavours and efficacy of state institutions. The rise of the idea of civil society sphere was a result of the failure of the state institution to fulfill the aspirations of its people who were seen as the 'losers' in the development process. With increasing unequal distribution of economic benefit, the discontentment among the people was also increasing, adding to which the shortage of food also gave a setback to the expectations of common people. Subsequently, people started questioning the very value of democracy in which the poor and the marginalised were neglected. The questioning of democracy and development strategy of the state gave impetus for the formation of civil society groups to hold the state institution accountable and make them more responsive. And by 1970s the civil society space was started to be occupied with new ways of addressing collective concerns such as the issue of human rights, status of women, question of ecology, Dalit movements, student movements, legitimacy of the state institutions, and their authority to implement policies, issues of citizenship and identity.

Hence, a plethora of social movements voicing their concerns characterised the 1970s. One of the reasons of this was also the imposition of the national emergency by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975 which led to the suppression of civil liberties of people and undermined the democratic system of the state. The fundamental rights of the people were curtailed. This has led to resentment among people against the arbitrary use of power by the government.

In the 1990s with the liberalisation of the Indian economy there was a gradual withdrawal of the state that gave way for the private players to fill the vacuum which led to rising demand by the marginalised or subaltern groups to state to respond to

¹⁵¹ Varshney, Aashutosh. "Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Rationality." *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol.1, no.1, 2003 p.85-99

their demand within the framework of sustainable development and participatory democracy. With liberalisation, new private actors came in, whose workings were based on profit-making and the role of the state was relegated to the background with some regulatory powers. With privatisation, the economic growth increased, however, there was an increase in discontentment among people, especially the marginalised sections, for the State remained less accountable to the people. And that dissatisfaction has been registered through movements run by the people and demands made by the civil society groups. A new trend was also witnessed that after 1990s various civil society organisations changed their strategies, rather than critically engaging and questioning the state, they began advocating the state and associated themselves with the state institutions. Hence, the civil society in India has gone through several phases, which needed to be looked into.

There are also concerns surrounding the concept of civil society that we all require to heed to. Neera Chandhoke writes about some of them. The concept or the very idea of civil society needs to be problematise. She underlines:

“since the 1980s we have witnessed a dramatic resurgence of the concept of civil society in both political theory and practice. We have also witnessed its almost uncritical celebration, so much so that it has become a somewhat ‘consensual’ concept. And when concepts become consensual, they become problematic. When a variety of dissimilar groups, such as international funding agencies, non-governmental organisations and institutions of state on the one hand, and left liberals, trade unions and social movements on the other, subscribe equally to the validity of the concept, it is time to worry. For if groups who should otherwise be disagreeing on the concept come to agree on it, it means that the concept has been flattened to such an alarming extent that it has lost its credibility. In other words, the concept of civil society may have become flaccid through consensus”.¹⁵²

This is a thing that one needs to keep in mind while engaging with the concept of civil society. civil society is not a panacea for all the problems that exist in a democracy, but one thing is clear that things would get even worse in the absence of such groups that have strived for making society just and equal. For the civil society organisations also need to have democratic elements in which the disagreements are not sidelined. As there exist a value in the idea of civil society that it presents the precondition for

¹⁵² Chandhoke, Neera. “A critique of the Notion of Civil Society as the ‘Third Sphere’”, In *Does Civil Society Matter?*, ed. by Rajesh Tondon and Ranjita Mohanty, Sage Books, 2003 p.27-28

formal democracy. The civil society and the democratic movements require to persistently expand the area where their potential to criticise the undemocratic practices increase.¹⁵³

History of Civil Society Organisations in Gujarat

If we come to the specific case of Gujarat then also it cannot be argued that civil society did not exist in Gujarat, because with the beginning of the twentieth century a number of social organisations in the state had already initiated programmes of social reform and social welfare, a trade union movement has worked for the interest of the industrial workforce and housing associations have established residential communities.¹⁵⁴ There has been dominance of a particular caste and specifically industrial class which nurtured civil society in Gujarat. In fact, in the early years of 20th century, the industrialists in Gujarat and especially in the city of Ahmedabad had formed the 'Swadeshi Mitra Mandal', an organisation that aimed at spreading awareness among the workforce through adult education. Many social reforms in the area of education, healthcare, hygiene were initiated in the city by the business class. For instance, Ansuyaben Sarabhai, the sister of one of the biggest textile business man of Ahmedabad, set up the 'Friends of Labourers society' in 1916 which facilitated credit facilities for the workers. These organisations worked for poverty reduction, for hygienic working environment, and development but they always tended to avoid mobilising the people for political issues such as confronting the government.¹⁵⁵ Jayal also adds to it and write that "historically civil society in Gujarat has been associated with the dominance of particular caste and significantly shaped by the business community." She further asserts that it is important to note the shifting linkages between caste, on one side, and economic and political power, on the other; as also the relationship between caste and religion as poles of identity mobilisation. In the functioning of the economic and business activities, the caste and even religious affiliations were considered irrelevant. Whereas in politics, the language of caste and religious identity was frequently employed, most notably in the national movement which saw a large scale mobilisation of the Patidars, that was the most upwardly

¹⁵³ Ibid, p.57

¹⁵⁴ Chandhoke, Neera. 2009. *Op.cit*, p.4

¹⁵⁵ Majumdar, P. *An Anatomy of Peaceful Industrial Relations*. Bombay: Tripathi Publications, 1973

mobile social group in Gujarat in the 20th century.¹⁵⁶ The Baniya-Brahmin and the Patidars together made the middle class in Gujarat which controlled both the production as well as the distribution of wealth in the state.

The CSOs in Gujarat were seen in the form of labour union and trade union. A labour union was established by Mahatma Gandhi carried on his tradition of social work and social reform. The Textile Labour Association (TLA) which was based on notion of partnership with capital, failed to establish a radical working-class culture in the city.¹⁵⁷ In other words, the middle class which was comprising the Baniya, Brahmins and the Patidars, who were very much into using the caste and religious identity mobilisation, had a stronghold on both the production and distribution of wealth, in partnership with capital did not leave space for a radical working-class culture to evolve in the city. Moreover, with this background of the civic spaces in Gujarat, there was relative peace until 1940 as there were some communal clashes in 1941 and then again in 1946 before partition. Ashutosh Varshney, attributes Gujarat's or particularly Ahmedabad's relative peace to four significant factors, namely; the domination of the Congress Party, presence of Gandhi's vibrant voluntary associations, strong labour unions and vigorous business associations in the city. As the Congress party of was very influential in Ahmedabad and dominated politics then, with its emergence as a political party from a representative of national movement. Gujarat as a separate state came into existence in 1960, and the first major riot it encountered in that very decade's end.

The emergence of people's organisations raising issues of human development and rights and aiming to protect the civil liberties of citizens could be traced back to only 1960s and 1970s, when many social and student movements were raising their voices against the arbitrary policies of the state institutions. The Navnirman Movement in Gujarat started by students and various unsatisfied peasants and workers in 1973 was a successful example of peoples' campaign that forced the then Chief Minister Chimanbhai Patel of Gujarat to resign on charges of corruption. And the concept of civil society got currency by the 1980s. However the issues, for which various NGOs or social groups were working, included the relief work for the victims of communal riots which were earlier not really an issue of concern for CSOs to cover. But, since

¹⁵⁶ Jayal, Niraja Jayal. *Op.cit*, p.184

¹⁵⁷ Chandhoke, Neera. 2009. *Op.cit*, p.5

the 1980s, with the rising frequency of communal riots and growing number of victims of violence the post-communal violence relief and rehabilitation have also become one of their duties.

With every spate of riots in Gujarat the inter-community relations between Hindus and Muslims got worsened. And the communal violence of 2002 in that case proved to be one of the most horrendous acts of brutality vis-à-vis the Muslim minority in Gujarat, there is no denying that many Hindus were also at the receiving end, however, the proportion of the Muslim victims was so high that this incident is referred to as ‘anti-Muslim Pogrom’ in various academic writings. In a scenario where the state was seen playing a partisan role and encouraged violence against its own people, the only source from where some relief could be expected was the democratic civil society organisations working for equal citizenship and the well-being of the people.

Therefore, this chapter looks into the roles played by certain civil society organisations in the aftermath of Gujarat violence to provide some relief and to rehabilitate the victims of violence but along with an additional job of healing the psychological wound of them through initiating a process of reconciliation in their own ways.

From Relief and Rehabilitation to Reconciliation

According to Oommen, in the case of relief, the victims are mere passive recipients of the benefits provided to them by the organisations and agencies which intervene to restore normalcy. In Gujarat, the violence continued for three months and was aided and abetted by the state authority. There were at least 1,74,000 refugees in relief camps and if including people who left for seeking shelters elsewhere then the total number would reach to around 2,50,000.¹⁵⁸ The relief initiatives were, unfortunately, taken by some local NGOs and Muslim organisations which is rather primarily a duty of the government. The single greatest contribution to relief and rehabilitation in Gujarat came from Islamic Faith-based organisations. Other non-faith-based NGOs and civil society organisations also contributed, but not as much by comparison.¹⁵⁹ If

¹⁵⁸ PUDR Report 2002 cited in Gupta, Dipankar. *Justice Before Reconciliation: Negotiating a ‘New-Normal’ in Post-riot Mumbai and Ahmedabad*. New Delhi: Routledge 2012, p.44

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p.47

in such conditions, when the helping hand comes from the people of the victims' community then intra-community solidarity strengthens but the inter-community bonds weaken. It is the high time when the civil society groups need to show the courage and reach out to the people irrespective of their religious identity and build the broken trust between different communities. There were numerous relief camps working to provide temporary relief and goods to the victims of February 2002 violence, such as Dariyakhan Ghummat Relief Camp in the Shahibaug area of Ahmedabad and Chartoda Kabristan Camp in Gomtipur. Both these camps were receiving aid from many non-governmental organisations and Muslim organisations in Gujarat. In Ahmedabad, the Jamaat-e-Islami-Hind sponsored Islamic Relief Committee and the GSRC, an arm of the Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, shouldered much of the burden. These organisations came up after the earthquake in Bhuj, Gujarat in 2001. Dipankar Gupta points out that most importantly, the Shah Alam mosque was the site for about the largest camp housing over 10,000 people. This camp ran for about six months, and throughout this period its maintenance and upkeep were almost entirely the responsibility of a few Islamic FBOs. These camps were aimed at providing -assistance for food and other basic necessities of housing and shelter.¹⁶⁰

Rehabilitation on the other side, necessitates a partnership between the victims and the agencies that intervene. However, in the case of 'Reconciliation', the victims and the perpetrators of violence will have to be the main carriers of the process, although outside catalysts are required to initiate the process of reconciliation.¹⁶¹

Moreover, relief and rehabilitation are endeavors with a material(istic) aspect. The provision of relief consists of short-term programme, which is only limited to the distribution of good to the survivors, whereas rehabilitation of people requires a good amount of time that keeps the well-being of the survivors (that includes primarily their housing needs) into considerations. Above all, if one talks about reconciliation, then "it is indeed a long-term process and to expect quick results itself is a hurdle to its success."¹⁶² Conventionally after most conflicts, members of the community seen by victims to have caused harm and perpetrated violence on the suffering community rarely work for relief and reconstruction for victims of the 'other' community. The

¹⁶⁰ Ibid

¹⁶¹ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.17

¹⁶² Ibid

dominant ‘common sense’- unconsciously accepted often by humanitarian agencies- is that relief workers from the group perceived to have caused harm will not be welcomed in efforts to help people after mass violence.¹⁶³ Since the process of reconciliation is a shared responsibility it requires both the parties to come forward to reconstruct the broken bridge of trust between them. Therefore, “the heart of the strategy of ‘Reconciliation through shared caring’ is a refusal to accept this post-conflict ‘common sense’: to swim against the prevailing currents of estrangement and suspicion, by resolving that all work in the aftermath of mass violence — for dialogue, relief, reconstruction, justice, welfare and caring — will be done only in diverse and pluralist mixed groups of youth, women and professionals. These must always include members of all the estranged and warring communities. More than what they contribute in tangible terms, the symbolism of mixed teams working together contributes most to healing and rebuilding trust”.¹⁶⁴

Reconciliation in post-communal violence scenario becomes imperative in a plural democracy. In such a context reconciliation can be perceived as the restoration between members of different racial, ethnic, or religious groups who have been estranged by mass violence and organised campaigns of hatred and distrust, of mutual dialogue, understanding, social, cultural and economic interactions, trust and goodwill, to levels that at least match with those prevailed before the violence took place. It actually requires the expulsion or neutralisation of prevailing hate and suspicion that invaded social relations between diverse people, and in the end a genuine meeting again of hearts.¹⁶⁵ Harsh Mander is of the opinion that no authentic reconciliation is possible until and unless it is based on four main components, namely; acknowledgment, remorse, reparation, and justice. The first two, according to him, require the acceptance of the public that brutal violence have taken place targeting a certain group of people. Remorse involves a public expression of collective sincere regret for the violence and injustice whereas for reparation, minimum, adequate and timely aid and assistance for enabling survivors of violence to achieve shelter, and an environment where they can earn livelihood, the cultural environment better than what existed prior to the violence phase is required, and the

¹⁶³ Mander, Harsh.” Reconciliation by Shared Caring.” *The Hindu*, April 6, 2013

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Mander, Harsh. “Living in Times of Fear and Hate: Failures of Reconciliation in Gujarat.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.42, no.10, 2007, p.847-848

fourth factor that is, Justice involves firstly legal justice, equal application and protection of law of the land and by the state institutions that includes, fair, timely and non-partisan processes of registering police complaints, investigations, arrest, bail, prosecution, trial and appeal.¹⁶⁶ Justice is a prior condition for reconciliation through which the trust of the victims could be restored. Dipankar Gupta¹⁶⁷, in his book “Justice Before Reconciliation: Negotiating a ‘New Normal’ in post-riot Mumbai and Ahmedabad”, also states that in order to secure the trust of the victims or the survivors, justice has to be done, which helps them to negotiate with their lives and move.

There were many NGOs that were working in relief camps but not just to provide shelter and food to the victims but to give them psychological and social support. They ran classes for little children, provided trauma counseling and helped many victims to find ancillary jobs. This chapter aims to look into the contributions that such non-profit civil society groups made in rebuilding the lives of the survivors and in reconstructing the broken trust that was perhaps, not so shattered earlier. This includes the workings of three civil society organisations, that is; the St. Xavier Social Service Society, henceforth SXSSS, and SAATH, which worked in partnership with the Gujarat Harmony Project. And the Self-Employed Women Association (SEWA), not to confuse with ‘Seva International’, worked independently in the aftermath of violence.

The Gujarat Harmony Project, henceforth GHP, has been a very significant example of restorative justice¹⁶⁸ when the retributive justice system failed.¹⁶⁹ The responsibility to maintain peace and harmony was left to democratic elements of civil society, the groups and individuals to stand against the campaign of hatred and to mobilise all sorts of aid to the victims including legal and psychological. GHP a

¹⁶⁶ Ibid p.848

¹⁶⁷ Gupta, Dipankar. 2012. *op.cit*

¹⁶⁸ Restorative justice is a theory of justice that stresses on repairing the harm caused by criminal behavior. It is best achieved through reconciliation, through cooperative processes that includes all stakeholders.

¹⁶⁹ Ahmad, Sara. “Sustaining Peace, Re-Building Livelihoods: The Gujarat Harmony Project.” *Gender and Development*, Vol.12 no. 3, Peacebuilding and Reconstruction, 2004, p. 95

creation of CARE India, was one such civil society initiative to resolve conflict and work towards enduring peace between Hindus and Muslims in Gujarat¹⁷⁰.

CARE has worked in India for more than 50 years and have a very good record of responding to situations of emergencies. Mainly arising from natural disasters in various parts of the country. Even a year before the Gujarat violence when Kutch was badly hit by an earthquake in 2001 and Odisha's super-cyclone of 1999, CARE had worked through forging multilevel institutional partnership, including both the central and the state governments, local NGOs, and community-based institutions. However, the idea inspired working in Gujarat – of a collaborative civil society partnership working for the mitigation of conflict and encourage and facilitate reconciliation – was new for CARE.¹⁷¹ Since it only dealt with the situations of natural disasters and confined to provide rehabilitation facilities. This was for the first time that it had to deal with a “disaster caused by human design”.¹⁷²

The proposal for initiating the GHP was brought up by the Assistant Country Director of CARE, Rick Henning. “It was decided that while immediate relief to the victims was of critical importance, CARE must look beyond just providing relief camps and rehabilitation facilities and conceive of the GHP as a holistic response of the civil society to the disaster and work at the community level.”¹⁷³ in order to reach out to the people directly. And social reconciliation was the framework in which the GHP had to work. Hence, a clear shift was visible in the working of many of the civil society groups because the domain in which such organisations would work required only timely assistance for goods and rehabilitation for the sufferers. But as problems change forms, solutions also need to be innovative enough to combat those problems. And therefore, one can view the endeavors of the GHP in the light of an innovative intervention by the civil society organisations.

“The GHP was initiated in May 2002, with financial support from the Royal Netherland Embassy (RNE). It aims are to provide emergency relief, rehabilitate displaced communities, restore livelihoods and facilitate social reconciliation in

¹⁷⁰ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.72

¹⁷¹ Ahmad, Sara. *op.cit*, p.95

¹⁷² The term is derived from T.K. Oommen, who defines such deliberate instances of communal violence as disasters caused by human design. Which affects the victims immediately but also have serious implication for the society as a whole.

¹⁷³ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.76

conflict-stricken areas of Gujarat.”¹⁷⁴ GHP’s orientation in conflict mitigation was more towards conflict transformation than merely its resolution. Oommen writes, what is specific to the GHP initiative is that relief and rehabilitation are seen as the stepping stones to reach to and initiate the process of reconciliation. They have to be in a sequence, relief provision comes first from which one cannot directly jump to initiate the reconciliation process by skipping the rehabilitation stage. And in the wake of an apathetic state bureaucracy, the civil society organisations had become all the more crucial and significant in providing solace to the victims of violence. And since Gujarat is a state that is dotted with NGOs engaged in range of developmental issues – health, education, and rural development and cooperatives it becomes imperative to look into the mode of works through which they could initiate the process of reconciliation. Oommen argues, Ahmedabad alone has 175 registered CSOs, and the figure is more than 550 for the entire state of Gujarat as per the data availed by the Planning Commission of India.¹⁷⁵ The presence of such a wide variety of civil society groups working for human rights and equality, makes it obligatory for them to work for the betterment of people suffered from human-created disasters.

Further, the peacebuilding approaches can be divided into two, namely; the ‘top-down’ approach and the ‘bottom-up’ approach. The bottom-up approach that includes the efforts and working of the civil society groups for peacemaking and peacebuilding at the grassroots level, has been less recognised as the top-down approach for maintaining peace and harmony has always remained the focus of discussions on peace-building. It is important to understand how people at the ground level respond in conflicting situations and engage in the process of reconciliation. “The most recent communal riots in Gujarat in 2002 left Ahmedabad city economically and socially paralysed for several weeks. The longer term consequences of this violence have been the erosion of mutual trust between the Hindus and the Muslims and for other forms of discrimination to emerge in the wake of violence”.¹⁷⁶ In such a context, it becomes very significant to look into how the CSOs have worked to rebuild the deteriorating trust between the two communities in the state of Gujarat and learn from efforts.

¹⁷⁴ Ahmad, Sara. *op.cit*, p.95

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p.81

¹⁷⁶ Varadarajan, Siddharth. “*Gujarat: The making of a Tragedy.*” Penguin Books India, 2002.

St. Xavier Social Service Society: Need of the Time

St. Xavier's Social Service Society (SXSSS) emerged from a 1960s outreach program of students and faculty members at St. Xavier's High School Loyola Hall, Ahmedabad. Throughout the years three major areas are of great importance to the workings of the SXSSS namely; education, organizing people's groups, and people's action to improve the quality of their lives. "To help people to help themselves", therefore, is the motto of the society.

Furthermore, St. Xavier Social Service Society is a Jesuit Social work organisation established in 1976 as a full-fledged organisation with the "objective of working towards the empowerment of Dalits and other oppressed sections of the society."¹⁷⁷ However, since its inception it has remained non-sectarian in its interventions and it has been keeping with the principle of inclusion of people irrespective of their religious, caste, class or gender identity. One of the reasons is that with the expansion of its membership in terms of people of different groups and identities, it can have expanded reach to the people. This organisation has an extensive history of relief and development work in Ahmedabad. The governing body of the society includes Jesuit priests with administrative responsibilities, diocesan staff, researchers and educators, not all of whom are Christian. It became registered with the Government of India in 1976 as a trust and society. It is also registered under the Foreign Contribution Regulatory Act (FCRA). The society is largely foreign-funded. However, occasionally it receives some aid from Government and some private donations from local supporters. The society has been working for the poorest communities in Ahmedabad. The society, beginning in 1992, started a well-planned outreach programme to register its presence in 20 other slum areas in Ahmedabad. And this outreach programme began with facilities of primary education and non-formal health services.¹⁷⁸

Over the years, the interventions have centered on the areas of education, health, empowerment of women, community organisation and environment.¹⁷⁹ The vision of

¹⁷⁷SXSSS page, accessed from: http://sxsss.org/Who_we_are

¹⁷⁸ Bock, J. "Local Capacities for Peace Project, Case Study: The Harmony Project of the St. Xavier's Social Service Society." *Collaborative Learning Project*, 1995, p., 3-5

¹⁷⁹ Moses, V. Fr. 2004. In *People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society*. ed. by Van Tongeren et.al, Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005, p.415

the society is “to work for more human and just society through the empowerment of the poor and marginalised people, especially women and children who are most vulnerable people in our society”.¹⁸⁰ The society’s activities, however, are not limited to the slum areas in which it has an established presence.¹⁸¹ It in fact, tried to cooperate with other local civil society groups in Ahmedabad to have reach to more people, particularly on issues of human rights and civil rights and equal citizenship.

“XSSS’s primary areas of intervention were the Muslim-populated Chalis surrounded by Hindu localities. These Chalis were sites of horrific riots during February 2002, when hundreds of homes were perished in arson, thousands lost their livelihood and a great number of people traumatised by the scale of devastation and were fearful of the threat of impending violence.”¹⁸² Which, consequently, increased the communal polarisation in the area? A great deal of apprehensions and resisted the very idea of living together and accommodating each other, by people belonging to different religious and caste communities, who were residing in Chalis.¹⁸³ The society’s activities involved many programmes, for instance the community Health Improvement Programme and Education programme initiated by the society with innovation especially targeting the children of the victims of violence, were initiated in many of the slum areas of Ahmedabad.

The areas of activity of the society earlier involved only human rights, activities focusing on women’s empowerment, environmental issues, health and education and also relief work in situations of natural disasters for instance floods. In fact, the conflict prevention and mitigation activities of the society took considerable staff activity to develop. As Fr. Cedrick Prakash (the director of XSSS) states, “designing and establishing a programme to help prevent violence was not a planned process. It rather began in 1991, when the society’s staff tried to answer questions about the causes of conflict in the slums”¹⁸⁴ This move of the society did not receive encouragement from any of its foreign funder although they provided moral support for the initiative. Since then, through an ordered form of procedures, the XSSS had worked for restoration of livelihood for the victims of violence and employed the

¹⁸⁰ Ibid

¹⁸¹ Black, J. *op.cit*, p.5

¹⁸² Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.157-8

¹⁸³ Ibid

¹⁸⁴ Bock, J. *op.cit*, p.7

promotive/ preventive approach largely in slum area where it already has its presence, and preemptive activities have been used in much wider fora.¹⁸⁵

“The organisation was in the forefront in providing critical relief and rehabilitation to the survivors of the 2001 earthquake in Kutch. It was also instrumental in the formation of citizen’s Initiative, a conglomerate of city-based organisations for better coordination of relief activities. And again in 2002, when violence rocked the state, SXSSS took initiative in bringing the like-minded people and organisations on the same platform- Citizen’s Initiative – for organising relief work.”¹⁸⁶

The Society under the Gujarat Harmony Project with the vision of ‘reconciliation from below’, several initiatives were carried out to encourage the involvement of the Hindu and Muslim residents of the Chalis on issues of common concern. For instance, after a series of meeting with the residents of slums particularly in Jalampuri ni Chali several peace committees were set up with adequate representation of men and women from both the religious communities. Which were given the responsibility of identifying, through conducting surveys, the beneficiaries for the rehabilitation package and also resolve local disputes before turning into a communal one.

Over time, the society acquired formidable image accredited by everyone, the local people the police as well as the civic bodies. The formation of Sabarmati Nagrik Adhikar Manch, a joint platform for all people dwelling in the Chalis on the bank of river Sabarmati helped people to stand against their displacement by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. And this common issue of concern brought the residents of the localities together including both Hindus and Muslims. “Youth groups were formed in several areas to take up developmental and civic issues at the community level such as common celebrations, cleanliness, night classes for labourers, etc.”¹⁸⁷ They were, thus, encouraged to resolve communal tensions at local level. Joint celebrations of festivals like Republic day were also encouraged in various slum areas to endorse the sense of equal citizenship and to make such a platform where people of different communities will come together to interact and make space for dialogue. In accordance with its initiative regarding education, the society decided to provide set of textbooks and notebooks to the riot-affected and needy students and children. It

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p.8

¹⁸⁶ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.157

¹⁸⁷ St.Xavier’s Social Service Society. Quarterly Report (January to March 2003), p.6

also provided fee support to around 1000 students and help them return to schools. The society also worked for building capacities of affected people especially women and young girls to pave the way for their economic independence. “The XSSS’s interventions, as part of GHP, were guided by the principle of ‘inclusiveness’”¹⁸⁸, wherein it identified the most vulnerable sections in need of support and reached out to them through its programmes. The society has also been given the communal harmony award in 2008 by the NRI Coalition for its endeavours to save and help the victims of 2002 violence.

The SXSSS is a Christian organisation which provided help to the victims of communal violence with an unbiased attitude. It had lesser chances of being influenced by external factors. Nevertheless, the organisation has members of different communities including the Hindus and Muslims, therefore, it offered a common platform to people who believe in peace than violence to come together and help the people in dire need and could help them cope with the prevailing conditions of fear and tension. The impact of its relief and rehabilitation workings can be seen on the lives of the victims, however the society could also succeed in changing the outlook of its volunteers. One such example I have come across is of Gaurang Raval who runs his own non-profit organisation ‘Sauhard’ for communal peace and harmony in Gujarat. Who was earlier a student at St. Xavier College and also a volunteer during the relief and rehabilitation work initiated by the society in the aftermath of the violence of 2002. Raval grew up in a small town of largely middle-class Hindu Neighbourhood in Vadodara. Although, earlier he was apprehensive of the Muslims, who were perceived ‘aggressive because they are meat eaters’. Such stereotypes made him believe in that. It was only after he joined the St. Xavier College and becoming part of the peacebuilding process of the SXSSS he understood that Muslims are no different and understood the importance of peace, harmony and love between the two communities. As a result of which, he now runs his own organisation that works for the same purpose of intercommunity peace and engagement.¹⁸⁹ The people who are reached through Sauhard are the youth of these communities, because if they understand the value of peaceful intercommunity relations today, there will be less tensions and clashes tomorrow. Here, we can see the

¹⁸⁸ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*

¹⁸⁹ Vandana. “2 people, 1 Mission- Transforming the youth to bring communal harmony”, 2018, accessed from: <http://commutiny.in/youth-work/communal-harmony-in-india/>

contributions of the peace society like St. Xavier, which could bring change in one's perspective for good.

Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA): Women as Peace-Makers

The Self-Employed Women' Association is an all-women cooperative that was founded in 1972 as a trade union based on Gandhian principles. It was initially established to pick up issues and problems that women labours and workers encounter in Ahmedabad's big and scattered informal sector as women, issues which had rarely been raised and paid attention to, in the larger union characterised by organised workers, generally male, in one kind of industry¹⁹⁰, and as already stated that the civic space could find its expression in the form of trade and labour unions in Gujarat from the very beginning. The term 'self-employed' includes a wide range of women workers. Such as home-based workers of textiles, quilt makers, patch workers, embroiderers, women traders and service providers, who are not counted in the formal sector. Being an all-women association SEWA members had to face numerous constraints imposed by the society and then further by their economic dependence. SEWA strengthened their position by offering livelihood opportunities through education and skill-building training. SEWA does not operate in Ahmedabad only; it has several working wings in different states in India. It had 14,64,506 members approximately in terms of all India membership and 7,34,729 members from Gujarat which was almost the half of the total membership across India.¹⁹¹ It encompasses people of different castes and religious groups. It is not just the sheer numbers that distinguishes the organisation, its multi-religious and multi-caste composition too positions it as one of the most articulate voices for caste and communal harmony. And having the legacy of Gandhian TLA, the working of SEWA acquires more significance. And as Ahmedabad city, Kheda and Anand district, Mehsana district, Sabarkantha district and Patan district were some of the worst affected areas during communal violence in 2002, where SEWA also had its membership base. It therefore worked in those areas where its members (including both Hindus and Muslims) were affected. According to their estimate, more than 1,25,000 poor women workers and their families were badly affected. Its organisers, grassroots leaders conducted a first-

¹⁹⁰ Ramnarain, S. "Women's Co-operatives and Peace in India and Nepal", *International Research Series*.

¹⁹¹ SEWA Annual Report of 2015 accesses from www.sewa.org/.../SEWA-ANNUAL-REPORT-2015-ENGLISH%20DT-12-8-2016.pdf.

hand assessment from 1st March onwards in the Ahmedabad city. The assessment was carried out by SEWA's trade committee leaders, campaign team and health workers, and bank leaders. This assessment focused on physical damage, damage to work, and damage to house, and household goods and a long-term rehabilitation were needed to be initiated. It provided services in 5 relief camps, out of 46, located in areas with strong SEWA membership. While they served all the badly affected families, their support base in those areas gave them access and credibility vis-à-vis the camps' residents.¹⁹²

The need to first rebuild the destroyed structures including both houses and livelihood. The special needs of women and children affected by the violence were to be fulfilled. The broken intercommunity relations especially between Hindus and Muslims had to be built in order to prevent such happenings in the future. SEWA workers, therefore, worked in many of the relief camps and provided basic goods such as food, clothes and medicines, along with which they also provided livelihood to women in the form of economic activities, for which the Gujarat Cooperative Federation provided the required material for production. The workers included both Muslim and Hindu women, who worked together to rebuild their lives.

SEWA in that way, is a self-help group, and off-late this growing phenomenon of women SHGs is becoming a reason for good change in communities. The factor around which such women associations are organised is the economic factor which brings women participants together irrespective of their identities of class, caste or religion. They are, in fact, seen as institutional models of peaceful-coexistence. At the grassroots level, they are forming a common ground and strengthening the forces of cohesion. SEWA's working can be perceived in this light, as it stresses on economic stability of its members, but also makes use of its capacity for peace process.

SEWA involved people from different areas, it also gathered "students of the Indian Institute of Management to conduct a survey and document the estimate of economic losses. Seventy-five teams of SEWA women also helped the District Collector survey housing losses. Senior SEWA leaders engaged the state and national governments and also informed them of the need for rehabilitation and the conditions in the relief

¹⁹²“Shantipath, Our Road to Restoring Peace.” p.13 accessed from www.sewa.org/images/Archive/shantipath.pdf

camps. The founder of the association, Elaben Bhatt was appointed by the Governor of Gujarat to the relief and rehabilitation committee of the state. The then Prime Minister visited the state and asked SEWA to develop a programme to help the widows and orphans.”¹⁹³ For which, they planned a comprehensive economic programme for widows, orphans and children of single parents- which they called “Shanta” or “a woman in peace”. Through which they helped around 231 widows by stressing on trauma-healing and providing livelihood, health care and insurance to them.¹⁹⁴ and while SEWA’s thrust has always been on employment, they realized that without social security services – healthcare, childcare, insurance, shelter and education – economic self-reliance is not possible. In fact, they saw social security as being integral to work and livelihood security. Therefore, they began their social security service provision from the relief camps themselves.¹⁹⁵ It therefore, contributed in peacekeeping process. It was in the early years of the 21st century, an all-women association took steps to rehabilitate the affected families during such a gruesome episode of violence. However, SEWA was being criticised by several other civil society groups for not vocally criticizing the ruling state government for their complicity in violence.

It was the efforts of SEWA and many other women-centric civil society groups through which victims of violence especially women and young girls were given opportunities to economically sustain themselves through training in various activities. Women have always been the worst sufferers in any conflict. And those sufferings could only be understood and felt by other women only. Given the context of post-violence Gujarat, SEWA which has membership base beyond Ahmedabad was able to address women-specific concerns. This self-help group did a commendable job in the relief work and making women economically sustain themselves. However, SEWA being the biggest women co-operative and a part of the TLA in Gujarat could not live up the expectations which were expected from it. It was criticised for not being vocal in questioning and criticising the existing government of the state which it was supposed to do with a widespread base in the Gujarat Society and being, the largest women co-operative which does not work only in Gujarat but

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ SEWA Relief Team. “Rebuilding Our Lives.” *Seminar*, 2003, 513.

also having working base in other states, it becomes obligatory for a group like SEWA to hold the government accountable for all the moves it undertook.

SAATH: An Effort of Reconciliation through Equal Development

SAATH is a non-governmental organisation, registered as a Public Charitable Trust with the Charity Commissioner, Ahmedabad in February 1989. In Hindi and, Gujarati the word Saath means, 'Together, Co-operation, a Collective or Support'. SAATH's mission is to make human settlements equitable living environments, where all residents and vulnerable people have access to health, education, essential infrastructure services and livelihood options, irrespective of their economic and social status. SAATH's one-stop, integrated services reach over 4,00,000 individuals in Gujarat and Rajasthan. SAATH caters to multiple needs of the poor by providing them with one-stop centres, through which they have access to services such as health, education, employment, microfinance and affordable housing. It engages institutions, corporations and individuals throughout the world as partners and supporters for the integrated development of India. Co-investment is a key feature of its approach, meaning community members pay a token fee for all of their services. Thus, SAATH empowers them as customers, not beneficiaries.¹⁹⁶ They ensure that the fruits of development are distributed equally and that is through maximizing the local participation of people on developmental projects. And this same holistic approach informs SAATH response to conflictual situations. And for the organisation, therefore, developmental concerns and peace initiatives coincide with each other, wherein SAATH's perspective, peace is rather a prerequisite for development. Oommen writes, "this inventiveness is remarkable departure from most other civil society organisations that have shied away from any intervention in post-Godhra Gujarat".¹⁹⁷ The NGO had provided relief to the riot affected people. SAATH members and volunteers and its enabling community-based organisations for example, Sakhi Mahila Mandal, Ekta Yuvak Mandal and Sankalp Mitra Mandal took steps for the relief of the victims very soon as the victims started taking refuge into the relief camps. The organisation worked and concentrated its endeavours particularly in some of the camps for instance in Jamalpur, Ramol, Juhapura, Saraspur, and Beharampura. The volunteers entered these neighbourhoods, and

¹⁹⁶ SAATH word press

¹⁹⁷ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.203

initially provided the victims with relief goods and food items and facilitated the formation and development of CBOs. Along with which, SAATH associated itself with the Citizen's Initiative- a collective initiative of various civil society organisations (NGOs in this context) to work for the riot victims.¹⁹⁸ It was very crucial in the face of no governmental assistance from the state and national government. SAATH under the ambit of GHP covered 2913 with the total number 6926 people, with almost same numbers of Hindus and Muslim.¹⁹⁹ The volunteers of SAATH even during the time of riots were active in many slum areas in Ahmedabad. And its various wings such as 'Sakhi Mahila Mandal', which was created as a self-help group and registered in 1996 had mainly Hindu women leaders, and its 'Ekta Yuva Mandal' having young men and women from various communities as its volunteers had strived for helping the victims by directly reaching out to them in the badly riot- affected neighbourhoods, distributing relief goods and then facilitating the formation and development of community-based organisations staffed by local members. Sara Ahmad asserts that the Hindu women of the Sakhi Mahila Mandal went to the Muslim majority areas during the time of high tensions between the two communities, that too with the vermilion and 'Bindi'²⁰⁰, these visible signs of Hindu identity made it very difficult for them to make the victims trust them. In fact, they were seen as 'the enemy' by many Muslim women in the relief camps and colonies, who even questioned their intentions for being there.²⁰¹ This was the condition that was prevailing in the violence affected areas and among the victims. The violent killings made both the communities to view each other as enemies. However, there were some incidents where many people and groups moved forward and helped the victims to settle down without paying much attention to their religious identity.

It was not that people only lost lives but also their home as well as their livelihood, because widespread arson and loot left victims socially and economically paralysed. And with increasing fallout of violence the trend towards 'ghettoisation' also grew between Hindus and Muslims. The next stage of SAATH's intervention, therefore, sought to work for integrated development of people irrespective of their ethnic identity, which was informed by the 'Integrated Social Development Programme' the

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p.204

¹⁹⁹ "SAATH: Initiative for Equity and Development." A Two Year Comprehensive Report, 2002-2004, p. 4-5

²⁰⁰ The traditional markers of a married Hindu woman.

²⁰¹ Ahmad, Sara. *op.cit*, p.98

already existing programme of SAATH. It chose to persistently work in certain areas such as education and health with more emphasis on women and girls' upliftment. SAATH's endeavours were to achieve reconciliation through integrated development initiative and making peace building an integral but intangible part of it.²⁰² The pre-school programme based on Montessori methods, known as 'Balghar', is also one such effort made by the ground level women leaders and members in the violence affected area to not only bring closer the children of the two communities but also their parents who share common issues of concern as parents cutting across the religious and cultural divisions.²⁰³ Such schools also helped the kids in getting over with fears of riots and their impact on their impressionable little minds.²⁰⁴ There are today around seven pre-primary schools set up by SAATH, which has provided opportunity to the poor children who live in slums to have access to education in the early years of their learning.

SAATH actually began working on livelihood creation in 2001, and also encouraged Public-Private Partnerships actively to scale projects. Further, in 2005, it associated itself with the AMC and American India Foundation and became their partner to start a creative employability-training programme, that was known as 'UDAAN', which focused on underprivileged youth population from 18 to 35 years of age. After the success of UDAAN, the government of Gujarat urged SAATH to recreate the programme in Gujarat's other major towns. And hence, in 2007, the programme was renamed as 'UMEED' that started with a centre of training at Bhramapura slum area in Ahmedabad. It offered job training and placement in different employment activities to underprivileged youth from weaker and vulnerable families from all over Gujarat. The community wise analysis of the programme exhibits that "the programme has penetrated well into the three communities of Hindus, Muslims and Christians. Nearly 76 per cent of the beneficiaries under UMEED have been Hindus, while the rest belong to the Muslim community. The programme has well targeted the youth of from all the communities alike, keeping in view the absolute numbers of these communities

²⁰² Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.206

²⁰³ Ahmad, Sara. *op.cit*, p.98

²⁰⁴ Oommen, T.K. *op.cit*, p.207

in the city, Hindus -84.62 per cent, Muslims- 11.4 per cent and Christians- 0.72 per cent as per census of India 2001.”²⁰⁵

Through its various programmes and efforts it integrated the two communities and tried to bring them together. Programmes such as community health programme , non-formal education programme; skill-imparting programme- for which SAATH collaborated with the Ahmedabad Women’s Action Group in 2004 and started a skill development programme to upgrade the skills of women such as that of tailoring, patch work, embroidery to make these affected women economically independent and confident; saving and credit programme; and physical infrastructure upgrading and environment improvement programme were such steps that were undertaken by SAATH. And in terms of implementation of these programmes, it adopted an inclusive approach. And to strengthen the intercommunity engagement and interaction extra emphasis was put to ensure the diversity at the level of CBO members as well as at the level of beneficiaries.²⁰⁶ And thus, facilitated the conditions for cooperation between the members of different communities.

Apart from above mentioned NGOs, there were various other civil society groups that worked for harmony and peace between the two communities, such as All Women’s Action Group (AWAG), that held session of workshops with Hindu women (since it is a group which stresses on wellbeing of violence affected women) and with Muslim women separately and tried to break the myths that are held among people vis-à-vis each other’s community. And then held a combined workshop that offered a platform for women to talk about their concerns and widely held prejudices for each other. Organisations like ‘SAMAERTH’ also invited women of these communities for celebrations of each other’s religious festivals and common national festivals.²⁰⁷ Other civil society groups such as ‘Aman Biradari’ and ‘Jan Vikas’ have also challenged the state authorities for their indifferent behaviour towards the victims of violence.²⁰⁸ This was one of the ways that many civil society groups at the grassroot level resorted to, to bring the two communities together.

²⁰⁵ “Livelihood for Urban Poor – case study of Umeed.” p.11,16

²⁰⁶ Oommen,T.K. *op.cit*, p. 206-208

²⁰⁷ Ahmad, Sara. *Op.cit*, p. 98

²⁰⁸ Chandhoke, Neera & et.al. “The Displaced of Ahmedabad.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 42, no. 43, 2007, p.13

Frequent CSO meets discussing about a variety of issues including the interreligious relations and intercommunity engagement to make people initiate dialogue with each other. The recent Civil Society Organisations meet in 2016 in Ahmedabad can also be viewed in this light. Moreover, it was not only that the civil society organisations that helped the victims, in fact, there were also many people who, during the peak of the violence and killings, risked their lives to save their Muslim neighbours from being killed by the furious mob. The event 'Karwan-e-Mohabbat' (Caravan of Love) was being held in Juhapura in Ahmedabad last year led by the former IAS officer and social activist Harsh Mandar to honour the courageous act of such people and to reach out to the masses to spread the message of unity and love. People like Prabhat Rathor, Bhatibhai Ghori and many others from different parts of Gujarat stood against hatred and helped their neighbours by giving them shelter in their own houses just to save their lives.²⁰⁹ These are some of the examples who made us believe there are many more who believe in love and peace than those who believe in hate and conflict.

Summing Up

This cannot be denied that there were also instances of intercommunity trust which was kept intact even during the high time of tension. The state of Gujarat, however, has not experienced any major incident of communal violence since 2002. Which seems to be a positive trend, but the state has also witnessed a pattern of communal violence, in which it remains peaceful for some years after any event of major communal violence. Although, the civil society groups have worked for peace and harmony in the society but that would not suffice until and unless the state also plays an active role in maintaining peace. Because, this vicious cycle of communal violence and residential segregation can only be broken by the intervention of the state. Nothing can be a substitute for state support and its intervention for a peaceful society.

This chapter, however, is an attempt to look into the responses of civil society towards resettling the victims and working for peace. The endeavours of people's group made it clear that there were more people who were working for inter-community peace than people who were up to disturb it. The important thing that such civil society groups have been actively demanding for, is the demand for treating the minority

²⁰⁹ Ahmedabad Mirror- Karwan-e-Mohabbat, September 2017

groups as equal citizens and not depriving them of their rights on the basis of their identity. Andre Beteille defines civil society as a representative of ‘open and secular’ institutions that are viewed as mediators between the state and the individual. For him, civil society is not perceived as a platform for participation such as voluntary associations and community bodies as it is generally understood. They keep the ascriptive identities of people aside and treat them in an equal manner.²¹⁰ In a democracy, equal treatment by the state is very crucial but if the state acquires a partisan role, the role of civil society becomes very important to hold the state responsible for its people and claim for their equal right of citizenship.

²¹⁰ Mahajan, Gurpreet. “Civil Society, State and Democracy.” *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 34, no. 49, 1999, p. 3471-72

CONCLUSION

This work has been an attempt to look into the roles that civil society groups play in situations of communal conflicts and violence, and how such instances of communal clashes create fissures in the society. This project takes up the case of Gujarat after the violence of 2002, and the changes that Gujarat as a society has witnessed in terms of Hindu-Muslim relations which have only worsened overtime. India as an independent state came into existence only after the violent episode of Partition in 1947, and since then, except for 1950s, communal violence has remained an evident feature of every decade. The introductory chapter has already discussed the major riots that have taken place in different parts of the country in great details, which have rendered the minority communities helpless. There are several reasons responsible for the eruption of communal clashes and riots.

The first chapter, thus, sleuthed into those various factors which contribute in triggering instances of violence, stressing on four major approaches to communal violence or ethnic violence in general, namely; the ‘instrumentalist approach’, according to which the political elites use ethnic identity or ethnicity (which also includes one’s religious identity) to serve their interests. Pual Brass, a proponent of this approach, also believes that in India Hindu- Muslim violence persists because it has a ‘functional utility’ for a wide group of people particularly the political leaders and elites. According to him, the riots are not spontaneous rather constructed, with a great deal of planning at various stages, and there is an ‘institutionalised riot system’, which operates to turn a petty issue into a large-scale riot and ensures hostility between the communities. Another approach that is the ‘institutional approach’, proposed by Steven Wilkinson also finds the role of political leaders and political competition, at the state level, very crucial in instigating violence but also having the capacity to prevent them, provided that suits their interest. In which, theory of ‘political competition’ and ‘electoral incentive’ has an important role to play. Another very important factor has been the ‘socio-economic reasons’, which contributed in creating tensions between the Hindus and the Muslims. The unequal capitalist development generated rifts between the two communities, manifestations of which were evident during the riots of Moradabad in 1980. The sense of deprivation among

Muslims vis-à-vis Hindus solidified their identity as a community that caused estrangement between them.

The phenomenon of communal violence is also seen from the angle of State's role, that becomes mandatory in order to understand the complex picture of it. The Indian Constitution defines the nature of the Indian state as 'secular', which is expected to be neutral and unbiased when dealing with religious issues. However, the state is seen as playing a partisan role in many of the episodes of communal violence, the 1984 anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and 2002 anti-Muslim riots are the prime examples of state's complicity in encouraging violence against the minority communities. These are approaches which have stressed more on reasons and factors causing ethnic conflicts or communal conflicts in particular. The more emphasis on problem lessens the prospects of peace. Therefore, to find out the factors which can contribute in maintaining peace and harmony between the two communities, an approach talking about the prospects of peace is required, and that is where the 'civic engagement' approach proposed by Ashutosh Varshney offers a distinctive perspective to understand this issue. Varshney's approach focuses on the significance of people to people interaction and engagement in containing ethnic violence. According to him, the chances of ethnic violence are high where there is no or low level of inter-ethnic interaction. It is an approach which brings in the people factor to the forefront. This chapter, therefore, kept Varshney's work as a reference to further dig in the role of civil society organisations in situations of communal violence and how recurrence of communal violence adversely affected the inter-community relations in Gujarat. Varshney's work, despite all the shortcomings, makes us heed to the endeavours of people who, in their limited capacities, have contributed in bridging 'social capital' between the two communities. Other approaches have been state-centred, which are also known as 'top-down' approaches, whereas the civic-engagement approach is a 'bottom-up' approach, which does not completely sideline the role played by the state agencies in maintaining peace but it brought up the role of civil society which was until recently was under-researched.

The second chapter has dealt with the phenomenon of residential segregation in Gujarat in the face of instances of recurring communal violence. Which has contributed in widening the divide between the two religious communities and soured

the inter-community relations over time. The districts of central Gujarat have always been the centre of communal conflagration, usually targeting the Muslim minority in the State. During the violence of 2002, the Muslim and Hindus left their places of 'mixed population' and headed towards Muslim majority and Hindu Majority areas respectively. Various districts like Ahmedabad, the highly riot-prone city in Gujarat have clear cut demarcations of Hindu-Muslim residential areas, along with which Vadodara, Anand, Sabarkantha, Panchmahal, in fact, Surat and Kutch, too have segregated spaces of living that has reduced the possibility of any dialogue. The related phenomenon of 'Muslim ghettoisation' is a consequence of increasing suspicion between the people of Hindu-Muslim communities. The structural specificities of many cities, in terms of exclusive living, have also made it easy for petty local issues to transform into statewide communal riots and creating and widening divides in the society of Gujarat.

Various fact finding and commissions' reports have found that majority of riots in post-independence India have been politically motivated where the complicity of the police and other state agencies could be seen. Episodes of communal violence have deteriorated the social fabric, by leaving no room for inter-community engagement. And, hence, have strengthened the prejudices held by people vis-à-vis each other's community. In a context where the state becomes hostile towards a section of its population, some respite is only expected from the people inspired by the true spirit of humanity and working for peace and harmony in the society, that makes civic engagement and dialogue possible.

The third chapter, therefore, has been an effort to pay close attentions to the workings of some of the civil society groups in situations of communal violence. But before that, it grappled with issues regarding the very concept of civil society and its presence in India in different manifestations since independence. It takes up the case of three civil society organisations working in Gujarat, they are the St. Xavier's Social Service Society, a Christian organisation which has been an active participant in relief and rehabilitation works. Since its inception, it is committed to empower the oppressed and backward groups of the society through providing education and health facilities. In the aftermath of violence of 2002 and even during that, it worked in various Chalis to resettle the lives of the victims. The other being the SAATH group,

which also, like SXSSS, worked as part of the Gujarat Harmony Project. It works for the 'integrated development' and in post-violence it used the same approach to resettle the victims of violence. The third case study is of the 'Self Employed Women's Association' known as SEWA. It was chosen to actually analyse the role of women in post-conflict management as well as in conflict prevention. For SEWA, being the largest women organisation in Gujarat committed to Gandhian principles of peaceful co-existence and non-violence, it seemed obligatory to respond in such an alarming situation. Focusing on the contributions of the civil society groups, the chapter also has brought up instances of individuals who have done their best for keeping the trust between them and their neighbours of the other community alive. Needless to say, the civil society is made up of people having different leanings, also comprising 'uncivil elements', but the groups based on the principles of democratic society, equal citizenship and secularism, make up the true spirit of civil society. In the end to conclude, Taking-up from Ashutosh Varshney's approach of civic engagement, this work has tried to look at the potential of people's effort in peacebuilding and inter-religious harmony in a communally torn society, where the fear of violence persists and residential segregation becomes the norm. although, their workings have been confined to relief and rehabilitation, but they have also worked towards reconciliation in their own ways between the two communities. And since justice is the prior condition for reconciliation, the role of the state is very crucial, that is needed to be unbiased and neutral, along with efforts of people working for harmony and peace in the society. So that, the multicultural richness of India does not decay.

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