Being Muslim and Working for Peace: Ambivalence and Ambiguity in Gujarat

Online supplement

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In my book Being Muslim and Working for Peace: Ambivalence and Ambiguity in Gujarat *(2012), I relied both on narrative interviews and psychometric tests to create an empirically grounded typology of Muslim peace activists in Gujarat, India. In contrast to the textual data, psychometric questionnaires produce quantitative information. These both enrich qualitative findings and should be interpreted in light of them. However, since numbers carry meaning without context, a series of aggregating transformations was necessary to facilitate proper interpretation. This supplement presents a number of more detailed remarks about these transformations, presents statistical raw data and contains the original interview guidelines and psychometric questionnaires (to the extent of copyright licensing permits). The following pages thus stand as an elaboration on what I have written in my book's second chapter.*

Contents

Sample Structure

Keeping in mind that these cannot imply any generalizable pattern, but only highlight the extent of internal diversity of my sample, let me first briefly characterize the sample of people I spoke with in Gujarat. I conducted sixteen interviews in Hindi/Urdu and five in English, of average 45 minutes duration in the state capital Ahmedabad and the semi-rural district Panchmahal; both localities were centres of violence in 2002 and, therefore, target area for many NGOs. In the final sample, nine interviewees were female and twelve were male, their average age in 2008 was 38 years (with a standard deviation of twelve years). One woman (a former Brahmin Hindu) was converted by marriage, all other interviewees were Muslims by birth. The average household size was between six and seven members, the average number of siblings lay between three and four. For the latter two indicators, both of which relate to socio-economic status, broad standard deviations suggest a wide variance within the sample. The educational background also varied broadly from illiterate activists to holders of multiple post-graduate degrees. Eight interviews were conducted in rural and thirteen in urban settings. Only ten interviewees were formally employed by NGOs, while eleven were grass root or volunteer activists.

Event Structure Analyses

Let me now detail the kind of statistical indicator generated with the software 'ethno-ESA', which I used to compile an 'event structure' (Heise, 1997; Labov, 2001) of my narrative data. ESA graphically arranges all events occurring in a narrative in their chronological order and links them wherever the interviewee themselves rhetorically established causality. By tracing the causal links as they wind through the structural web of events, the software calculates three statistical salience metrics for every single event:

1. Relative frequency—the first indicator—counts how often an event occurs in this run-down of events, divided by the total number of events (hence scaled like a percentage).

2. Priority—the second indicator—calculates how likely it is that an event is evoked when evokable (instead of entering an alternative branch); in other words, priority measures how indispensable an event is for the story's internal consistency (higher numbers indicate a higher priority).

3. Centrality—the third indicator—measures how many other events are linked to a particular event as precondition or consequence (also scaled from 0 to 100).

Although interviewees tried to present a coherent story, however, explaining 'occasions of exceptional trauma and holocaust' led, understandably, to 'a rupture of language' (Mayaram, 1997, p. 193) in many narratives. This rupture, which limited and at times broke causality, was not artificially bridged but preserved as a 'rhizomatic element' (Sermijn, Devlieger and Loots, 2008) in the chain of events, hindering overly smooth interpretation. At times, such ruptures were so deep that they tore narratives into several nearly independent parts.

In addition, interviewees' literal answers to the questions regarding religious beliefs and spiritual practices were manually collected and categorized by me. Beyond factual information, I paid special attention to structural content: stylistic devices like repetitions or grammatical ones like passive constructions help to identify relevant passages; word choice, dichotomic expressions, metaphors and other semantic specifics give insights into how people conceptualize and perceive their world. Finally, interviewees navigate the discursive context: they were naming and framing, convincing and denying, including and excluding while shaping their narrative of self. In all three dimensions—grammatic, semantic and pragmatic—answers transcended literality (Ryan and Bernard, 2003, p. 19). Both these categorical tags and the statistics generated from the event structure analyses were later combined with psychometric data to form the categorical index from which the final typology was computed.

Psychometrics

As written in the book, my psychometric toolbox consisted of three instruments. The first was the Giessen Test (GT; Beckmann, Brähler and Richter, 1991). The GT has already been applied successfully by an eminent Indian psychoanalyst in India and has produced interesting results in interviews with communalist rioters (Kakar, 1996), which made it particularly interesting for me. Due to constraints of time, only three (out of six) scales, highlighted in Kakar's study, were used: 'social resonance' (reflecting whether one experiences positive or negative feedback from others; p. 90), 'social permeability' (assessing openness to one's surrounding and sense of basic trust; p. 105) and 'dominance' (showing intrusive and aggressive desires; p. 125f). The 'depressivity' measure, which was also an important factor in Kakar's research, had to be dropped due to research–ethical restrictions on behalf of my host institution. The second part of my questionnaire provided a categorization ranking, reflecting that religion is only one among several aspects of being Muslim; the ranking asked for the relative importance of gender, language, nationality, caste and religion. In addition, nine other items helped to assess the intensity of identification with the religious ingroup itself; they were assembled from various sources, namely Zee, Atsma and Brodbeck (2004, p. 290), Ganguly, Jowher and Dabhi (2006, p. 65ff), Varshney (2002, p. 303ff), Schlösser (2003, p. 105ff) and Haslam, Oakes, Reynolds and Turner (1999, p. 813). Following the distinction by Jackson and Smith (1999, p. 121ff), four items enquire one's attraction to the ingroup; two items, the perception of the intergroup context; and three items, depersonalization and beliefs of interdependency. The last part of the questionnaire was a psychological inventory measuring tolerance towards ambiguity (IMA; Reis, 1996). Here, three scales were used, namely those dealing with 'social conflicts' (for obvious reasons, given the post-conflict context of Gujarat), with irritations of traditional (mainly gender-related) 'role models' and with 'new experiences' (which peace activists frequently encounter).

As the basic computational unit for the following metrics, values for scale sub-dimensions were calculated from GT and IMA items according to the instructions given in the test manuals (Beckmann et al., 1991; Reis, 1996). The items measuring ingroup affiliation, intergroup context assessment and depersonalization were aggregated using simple summation; the categorization ranking, finally, was inverted so that *higher*

numbers reflect *greater* importance. The resulting indicators were for pragmatic reasons treated as interval-level scaled, as is common practice in social psychology and quantitative sociology.

Without a controlled sample or test norms for India (which were not available at the time this book went to print), uniform or seemingly extreme answers cannot be meaningfully interpreted: they could simply indicate a shifted distribution in a different cultural context. For example, most interviewees only used the lower part of the scale, measuring tolerance towards ambiguous conflict (numerically represented by 1 to 3), while tolerance towards irritating role models seemed to be higher (numerically 2 to 6). This could have been an interesting and plausible finding, but with due caution, only variance inside each scale is interpretable. To reflect this restriction in later cluster computations, raw results were z-standardized; normalizing standard deviations that way at ±1 ensured that the empirical variance in each dimension is equally weighed, independent of actual scale use (numerically, 1 to 3 and 2 to 6 were both treated as –1 to 1). Further, each scale got centred at 0, so that positive values always indicate strong expression and negative values weak expression *compared to other interviewees.*

After this preparatory step, I calculated an intercorrelation matrix to aggregate closely associated psychometric dimensions and in order to clear some misty variance (table 1 and figure 1). This aggregation of variables only relied on conceptual considerations; other than in representative quantitative studies, measures to assess the reliability of differences beyond chance (such as statistical significance) were neither achievable in my research design nor relevant: I do not and did not intend to generalize beyond the confines of my sample.

Unfortunately, most correlations are low and when they are high, the remaining variance was still too important conceptually to allow its dismissal by aggregation. Exceptions are the sub-dimensions of depersonalization and ingroup affiliation in the identification intensity scale (correlated at 0.90): most activists with strong bonds to their ingroup experience group and self as one entity. This resembles what Brubaker (2004) terms 'groupness'—and as the remaining difference was conceptually unimportant to my research questions, both sub-dimensions were combined under this catch-all phrase (as expected, the sub-dimension 'intergroup outlook' remained statistically independent; cf. Jackson and Smith, 1999, p. 132ff).

After clearing some misty variance by aggregating *variables,* I resorted to hierarchical cluster analyses according to Ward (1963) to reduce the remaining variance comparatively strongly; unlike the first step of aggregation, these cluster analyses revealed similarities and differences between *cases.* Since a case-oriented approach retains a link to real persons behind the metrics, the creation of statistical artefacts was preventable by means of frequent cross-checks with relevant interview passages; out of several statistically possible cluster solutions, I finally chose those which were most plausible in light of qualitative data. Giessen Test dimensions (figure 2) and intensity scales and IMA scales (figure 3) were separately aggregated to maintain a reasonable ratio between cases and variables. Since interviewees frequently added comments to the identification ranking, and since statistics could only take into account the absolute position of an option but not their characteristical sequencing, the categorical ranking was not clustered by software but rather arranged manually.

**Table 1: Inter-correlation matrix of psychometric variables**

	Role	New	Conflict	Religion	Nationality	Language	Caste	Gender	Dominance	Permeability	Resonance	Ingroup	Intergroup
New	0.18												
Conflict	0.53	0.77											
Religion	0.02	0.46	0.32										
Nationality	-0.24	0.56	0.40	0.29									
Language	-0.08	0.42	0.34	-0.32	0.15								
Caste	-0.36	-0.27	-0.13	-0.34	-0.36	0.56							
Gender	0.05	-0.58	-0.48	-0.64	-0.10	-0.31	-0.17						
Dominance	-0.37	-0.37	-0.28	-0.18	-0.07	0.04	0.40	0.15					
Permeability	0.08	-0.66	-0.26	0.03	-0.34	-0.40	0.15	0.04	0.40				
Resonance	0.48	0.44	0.59	0.08	0.08	0.17	-0.17	0.26	-0.66	-0.12			
Ingroup	-0.15	0.10	0.10	-0.17	0.25	-0.09	-0.28	0.28	0.08	-0.33	0.01		
Intergroup	-0.21	0.06	0.00	0.52	-0.02	0.03	0.14	-0.49	0.42	0.29	-0.22	0.01	
Depersonal	-0.31	0.03	-0.05	0.00	0.34	-0.21	-0.37	0.16	0.11	-0.17	-0.17	0.90	0.18

Figure 1: Graphical overview of the correlation between the various psychometric variables
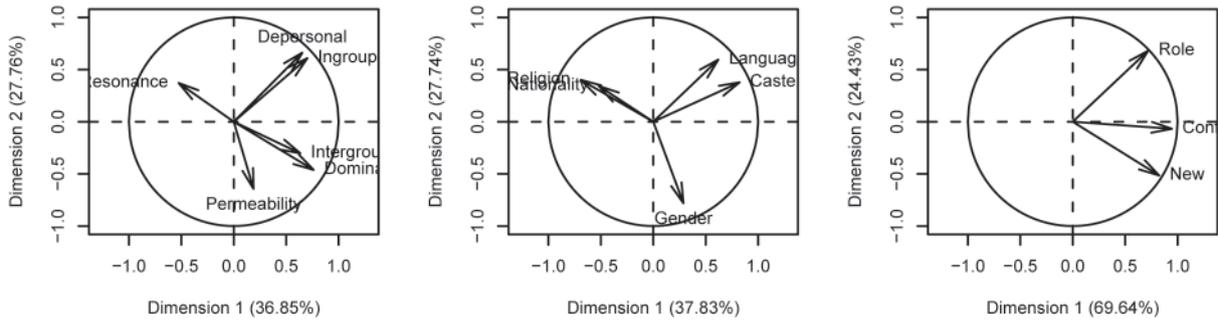

Note: Longer arrows pointing in similar (or opposite) directions are (negatively) correlated; short arrows cannot be interpreted. Axes represent linear combinations fitted for an optimal representation of the multi-dimensional correlation matrix in two-dimensional graphs; percentages show how much variance these aggregated 'dimensions' are able to reflect.

Figure 2: GT and identification intensity cluster solution with four clusters
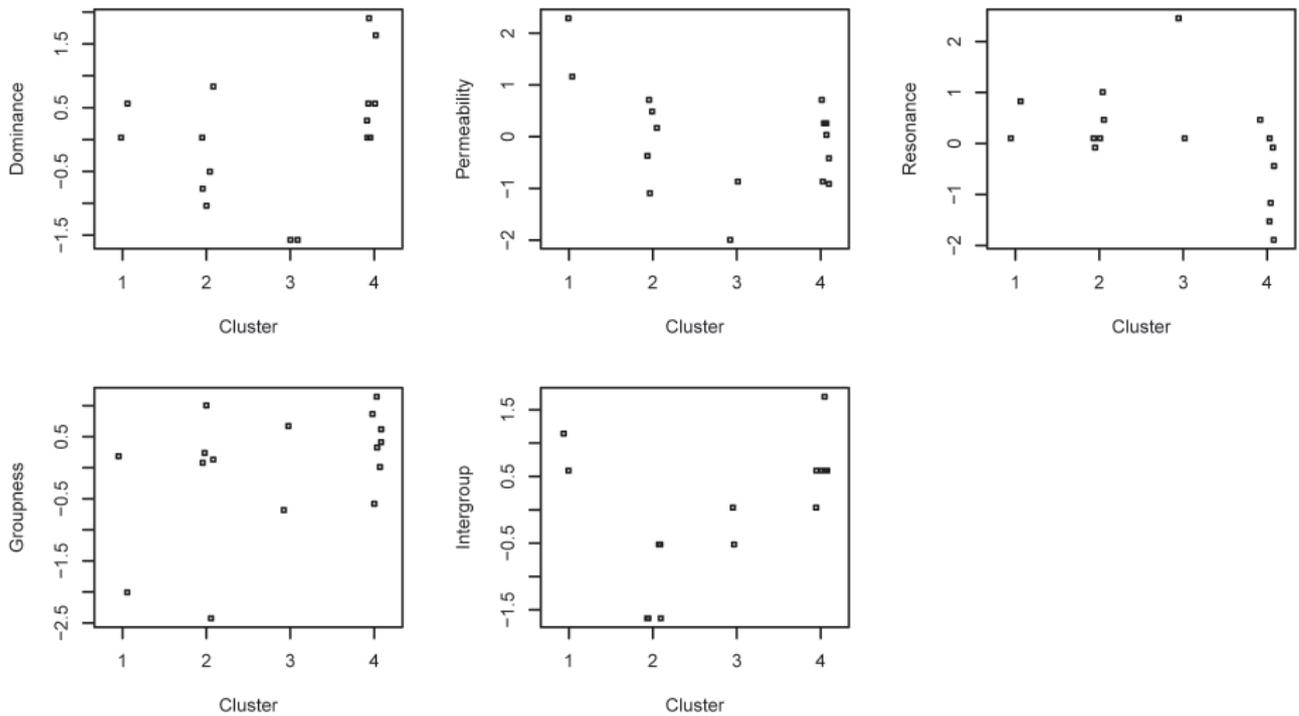
Figure 3: IMA cluster solution with four clusters
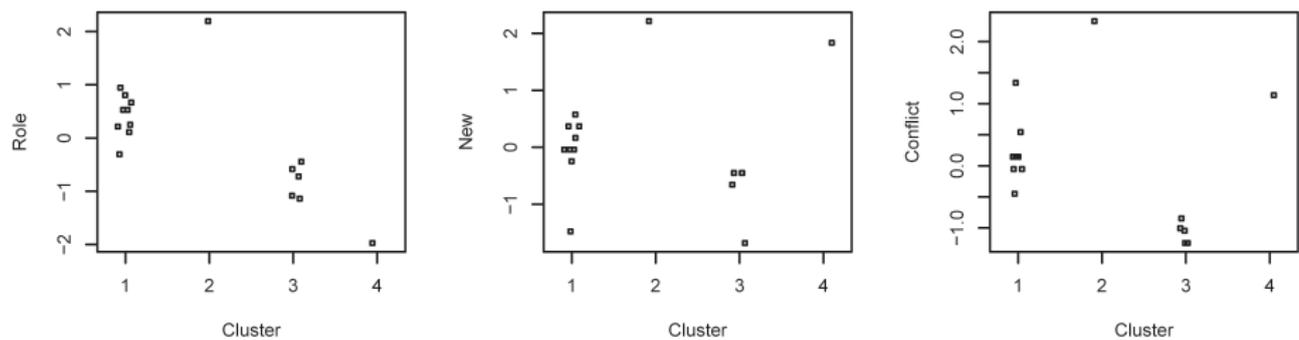
Typology Extraction

As a side effect, clustering of psychometric data changed the level of measurement, which in turn simplified later integration with textual data: each interviewee's continuous test results were aggregated under categorical labels for each cluster, breaking variance into disjunct blocks. These blocks became part of the categorical index during the extraction of my typology (see table 2 for an overview of the categories).

Table 2: Overview of the categorical index used for axial coding

Biography		
Success stories: classifies interviewees' exemplary success stories, revealing their respective personal understanding of 'peace activism' beyond streamlined NGO phraseology	**Event structure:** reflects the relative frequency, priority and centrality of interviewees' activism as compared to the influence of the 2002 riots and other events, classifying salience statistics from the event structure analyses.	
Lieblich, Zilber and Tuval-Mashiach (2008)		
Structure: combines the graphical characteristics of narrative event structures—its density, interconnectedness, rigidity, etc.—with questions about political context, moral rigidity and familial background in order to capture structural restraints and leeways of peace activism.	**Serendipity:** combines the causal consistency of narrative event structures—emphasizing creative beginnings as well as ruptures—with observations on the level of grammar—passive constructions, subjectivity, etc.—and attempts to assess the role of chance or notions of fate in ones' agency.	
Beliefs		
Beliefs: reflects interviewees' beliefs about the sacred, the worldly, and morality as well as their personal accounts of how (un)important which religious beliefs were for their activism.	**Practices:** combines interviewees' answers to a series of questions about their ritual practices.	**Ambiguity tolerance:** consists of the cluster solution of IMA psychometrics and reflects how well interviewees can tolerate ambiguous experiences.
Belonging		
Belonging: combines interviewee's assessment of how their community impacts their activism with the semantic they used when speaking about ingroup and outgroup and their account of changes in perception post-2002.	**Categorization:** reflects the relative importance of religion as compared to other modes of identification.	**Psychodynamic:** consists of the cluster solution of GT psychometrics and the identification intensity scale to catch the way interviewees identify with others.

Note: Keep in mind that this index—as an intermediate heuristic tool—drastically reduces complexity in order to facilitate typology extraction. It is not a comprehensive representation of my data. On the website for my book, you can interactively explore how the four ways of *Being Muslim and Working for Peace* relate to these index categories: http://gujarat.raphael-susewind.de.

To accomplish this extraction, the categorical index was arranged in a large matrix (rows are interviewees, columns index categories) and an improved Gower dissimilarity matrix of this index was computed to assess how dissimilar any case is from any other case *overall* (weighing in similarities and dissimilarities in all index categories). Another—fuzzy—clustering algorithm applied to this latter matrix grouped those cases which were internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous in a matrix of categories (Gower, 1971; Kaufman and Rousseeuw, 1990, p. 164ff and p. 235f; Kuckartz, 2007, p. 237ff).

After the final typology had been determined by choosing one of the statistically possible cluster solutions for the categorical index (based on conceptual and qualitative considerations), I then compared the averages of all scales for any given way of 'being Muslim and working for peace' with the averages

of the respective other three ways to extract the distinguishing psychometric characteristics of faith-based actors, secular technocrats, emancipating women and doubting professionals.

Only those dimensions of any given types' psychometric scales with a variance considerably and interpretably different from that of other interviewees were of interest for my analyses. Two measures were thus calculated to assess differences numerically: Hedges' g is a coefficient for the effect size or *degree* of deviation (values above 0.2 indicate a medium effect; cf. Hedges, 1981, p. 112ff), the p-value is derived from a non-parametric Wilcoxon test on variance equality, estimating the *clarity* of this deviation (lower values indicate higher clarity; cf. Bortz, 1999, p. 149f). Figure 4 contains those test results of the four types of 'being Muslim and working for peace' with an interpretable difference to other types of interviewees.

Figure 4: Psychometric test results per interviewee in comparison to all other interviewees (only those variables with interpretable differences)
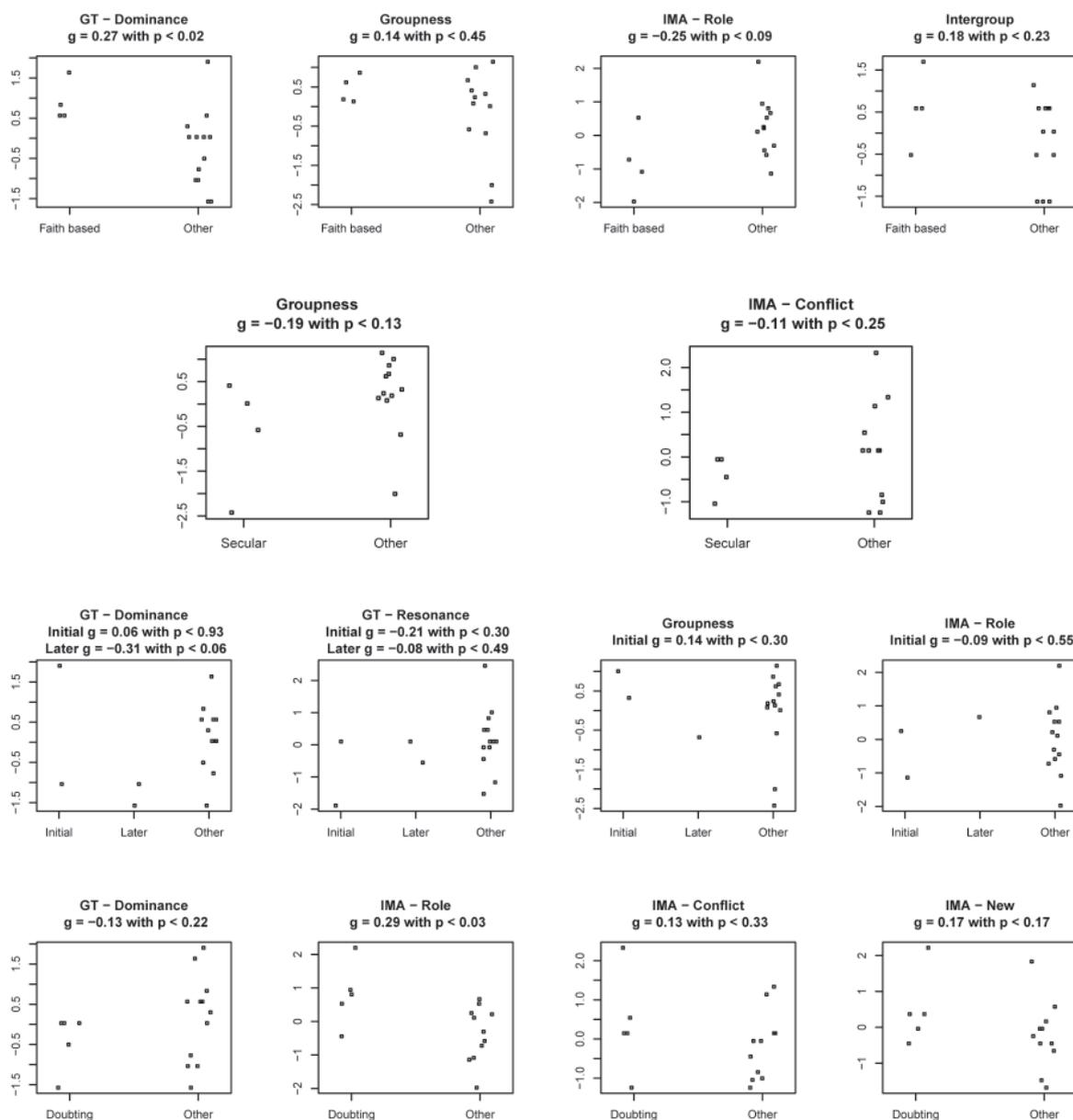
Note: First line of boxes: faith based actors, second line: secular technocrats, third line: emancipating women (in both initial and later stages of transformation), last line: doubting professionals.

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Interview Guidelines

First part: Biography of activism

- **Structure:** *your* own story, I will mostly listen

- **Focus:** please tell me the story of your political activities in the last ten years, with a focus on your peace activism

- **Timeframe:** 30 minutes

Please tell me how you became active for Peace.	बताइये आपने अमन के लिये कार्यकर्ता काम कैसे शुरू किया।
How did 2002 change your political life?	2002 के साल ने आपका राजनैतिक जीवन कैसे बदला?
How was your religion or community important for becoming a peace activist?	आपका धर्म या आपकी कौम आपके अमन के काम के लिये कैसे महत्वपूर्ण है?
Please tell me a story where you were successful in campaigning for peace.	एक कहानी सुनाइये जिसमें आप अपने अमन के लिये काम करने में सफल रहे हों।

Second part: Religious beliefs and practices

Preface

- **Structure:** your family, you and Islam, your religious life, society and Islam

- **Important:** everybody has their own understanding and experience. I am not interested in what the Islamic scholarship would answer, but I am interested in *your personal* answer.

- **Timeframe:** 30 minutes—please keep answers concise

A. Your family — आपका परिवार

1. Do you speak a lot about religion in your family?	क्या आप अपने परिवार में इस्लाम के बारे में बहुत बात करते हैं?
2. On which aspects of Islam the opinions in your family differ?	आपके परिवार के लोग इस्लाम के बारे में किन बातों पर असहमत हैं?

B. You and Islam— आप् और् इस्लाम्

1. What is the most important idea in Islam for you?	आपके लिये इस्लाम में सबसे महत्वपूर्ण क्या है?
2. When and where did you learn about Islam?	आपने इस्लाम के बारे में कब और कहाँ सीखा?
3. To what community in Islam do you belong? (Sunni/Shia)	इस्लाम में आप किस संप्रदाय से हैं? (सुन्नी/शीआ)

C. Your beliefs and praxis — आपके विस्वास और आपके अमल

1. Do you doubt whether some behaviour are Islamic or not? Which are these?	क्या आपको ऐसा लगता है कि कोई व्यवहार इस्लाम के अनुसार है और कोई व्यवहार इस्लाम के अनुसार नहीं है? ऐसे कौन से व्यवहार हैं?
2. Do you do the prayers? What do you feel then?	क्या आप नमाज़ पढ़ते हैं? तब आपको कैसा लगता है?
3. When do you visit the mosque?	आप मस्जिद कब जाते हैं?
4. Do you visit saint tombs? When?	क्या आप दरगाह जाते हैं? कब?
5. Which festivals and Eids do you usually celebrate?	आप ईद और दुसरे कौन से त्योहार मनाते हैं?
6. Do you visit temples or churches?	क्या आप मन्दिर और चर्च जाते हैं?
7. Should Islam be adapted to 'modern times'? How/Why not?	क्या इस्लाम को आधुनिक समय के लिये बदलना चाहिये? कैसे/क्यों नहीं?
8. What happens after you die? (How will god judge you?)	मौत के बाद इनसान का क्या होता है? (अल्लाह आपको कैसे आंकेंगे?)

D. Society and Islam— समाज और इस्लाम

1. How did your perception of Hindu and Muslim communities change after 2002?	2002 के बाद, आपकी नज़रियाँ हिंदू समाज के ऊपर या मुसलमान समाज के ऊपर कैसे बदला?
2. What are the duties of Islam and what are those of the state?	इस्लाम के कर्तव्य और सरकार के कर्तव्य क्या हैं?
3. Who should decide about religious issues? How?	मज़हबी मसलों में किनकी बात मानी जाती है? कैसे?
4. Should sharia be a source of legislation? The only source?	क्या कानून शारिआ के अनुसार बनना चाहिये? सिर्फ़ शारिआ के अनुसार?
5. Should there be different regulations for Muslims vs. other people—in India, in countries with majority Muslims?	क्या मुस्लिम के लिये और दुसरे लोग के लिये अलग-अलग कानून होने चाहिये? भारत में? दुसरे देशों में जहाँ मुसलमान लोग ज्यादा हैं?

Your questions? Thank you!

Questionnaire (English)

In accordance with the licence requirements of the psychometric tests, these instruments can't be given verbatim. Therefore only the second (middle) part of the questionnaire is reproduced here.

Part two: you and your community

Following, we would like you to rank different possibilities to describe yourself. We give you five possible ways; please number them with one to five, with one being what is most important for your self-description and five being the least important way to think about yourself.

———— I am a men/I am a women

———— I belong to a specific caste or caste-group

———— I am a Muslim rather than a Hindu

———— I am an Indian citizen

———— I speak Gujarati/Hindi/English as my mother tongue

Each of the following questions is phrased as a statement with which you might agree or disagree. You have six possible answers—please tick the answer which best describes your attitudes to the given statement. For example, if the statement is 'I think Gujarat is a nice place to live', and if you really like it, please tick 'agree fully'. If you are, on the contrary, doubtful, please tick 'disagree somewhat'.

		Agree fully	Agree	Rather agree	Rather disagree	Disagree	Disagree fully
1	I feel good about being a member of the Muslim community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	My own fate is strongly connected with my communities well-being	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Hindu–Muslim relations will improve in next ten years	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Being a member of the Muslim community is important to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	I would welcome an opportunity to work for the Muslim community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Hindus and Muslims often compete for jobs and power	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	I sometimes wish I would belong to another community	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	If the Muslim community suffers, I suffer as well	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	I think I am a good Muslim	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Questionnaire (Hindi)

In accordance with the licence requirements of the psychometric tests, these instruments can't be given verbatim. Therefore only the second (middle) part of the questionnaire is reproduced here.

दूसरा भाग – आप और आपका कौम

स्वयं के बारे में बताने के लिये नीचे पाँच सम्भावनाएँ हैं। एक से पाँच अंक को काम में लाइये और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण से सबसे कम महत्वपूर्ण बात पर अंक लगाइये।

————— मैं पुरुष हूँ / मै स्त्री हूँ

————— मैं किसी विशेष जाति का हूँ

————— मैं मुसलमान हूँ, हिन्दू नहीं हूँ

————— मैं भारत का नागरिक हूँ

————— मेरी मातृभाषा गुजराती / हिंदी / अंग्रेंजी है

नीचे कुछ वाक्य हैं जिसके द्वारा आपको सवाल पूछे गये है जिनसे आप सहमत या असहमत हो सकते हैं। छः सम्भावित जवाब हैं। आपको उस जवाब पर निशान लगाना है जो आपके विचार या दृष्टिकोण को चित्रित करता है। मसलन, यह वाक्य लीजिए "मेरी राय में गुजरात रहने के लिये अच्छी जगह है।" अगर आप पूरी तरह से सहमत हैं तो "काफ़ी सहमत" पर निशान लगाइये। अगर आप अनिश्चित हैं तो "कुछ असहमत" पर निशान लगाइये।

		काफ़ी सहमत	सहमत	कुछ सहमत	कुछ असहमत	अस. हमत	काफ़ी अस. हमत
1	मुस्लिम कौम का सदस्य होना मुझको पसंद है	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	मेरे भाग्य मेरी कौम की खुशहाली से जुड़ा हुआ है	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	अगले दस साल में मुसलमान – हिंदू संबंध सुधरेंगे	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	मुस्लिम कौम का सदस्य होना मेरे लिये महत्त्वपुर्ण है	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	मुस्लिम कौम के लिये काम करने का अवसर मुझको पसंद होगा	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	हिंदू और मुसलमान काम और प्रभाव के लिये प्रतिस्पर्धा करते हैं	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	कभी कभी मैं चाहता हूँ कि मैं दुसरी कौम का सदस्य हो सकता हूँ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	अगर मुसलमान कौम को तकलीफ़ होती है तो मुझे भी होती है	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	मुझे लगता है कि मैं एक अच्छा मुसलमान हूँ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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