# CHAPTER 6

**PATTERNS OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE IN VIJAYAWADA**

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CHAPTER VI
PATTERNS OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE IN VIJAYAWADA

The typical characteristics of the provincial city were outlined in the previous sections. In this chapter it is proposed to describe the various incidents of collective violence over the last five decades. The patterns in which these incidents express themselves are analyzed through brief discussions of specific events. These patterns are then classified into various categories. Each classified pattern is linked to the provincial characteristics of the city discussed in the earlier chapters. Earlier, some clues regarding the way in which provincial treats lead to violence, were provided. These will be discussed in greater detail.

The typical economic structure of Vijayawada is shown as a major cause for several incidents of violence and for promoting criminal groups. It is stated that collective violence is an outcome of the way in which the provincial rich classes in Vijayawada, strive to achieve and maintain their dominant status and power. Vijayawada's importance as a political centre is also linked to some of the violent incidents. Likewise, the various political movements in the city were not only a basis for violent conflicts, but conversely, these conflicts resulted in Vijayawada becoming a centre for some of the movements. These came about as leaders of groups took up leadership of movements to develop state and national level networks, to compete with local opponent groups, and to achieve social mobility and political power.
One of the aspects of collective violence observed in Vijayawada pertains to the fact that there are a wide variety of incidents of violence and a wide range of groups are involved. Major incidents of rioting or large scale clashes have occurred nine times since 1952. The most common form of collective violence has been attacks by one or more persons'property by a small group hostile to the target of attack, the incident lasting not more than a few minutes. For our purposes even attacks by small groups (sometimes two or three persons), are also considered as collective violence whenever there is a collective interest behind the incident. Sometimes, it may be in the interest of a single individual, but it is portrayed as being in the collective interest, and acquires importance and justification for that reason.

The definition of collective violence developed for this thesis is as follows.

"Collective violence is physical force indulged in by two or more persons, acting on behalf of themselves or on behalf of the collective unit or group to which they belong; the force is targeted against persons or property belonging to another group.

The approach adopted in this thesis is not the usual manner of explaining the patterns by grouping and measuring the incidents by statistical means. The method of analysis is in the main qualitative and descriptive.
A list of various incidents of collective violence was obtained through archival research, interviews with key informants and from newspaper reports, police records etc. The earliest known incidents date back to the 1920's. Details regarding the incidents were obtained from various sources. These were then classified in various patterns pertaining to types of violence, reasons for violence, targets of attack etc. In the course of explaining each pattern and linking them to the provincial characteristics of the city, a few incidents are elaborated upon for illustrative analysis.

The linking of the concept of provincial city of collective violence has been arranged around three major thrust areas.

In the first place, collective violence in Vijayawada is explained as an outcome of the typical structures and processes pertaining to social, economic, demographic, cultural and physical aspects of the city.

Secondly, conflict is explained in terms of migration of different groups to the city. Conflicts are seen to arise as groups strive for upward mobility. The processes of establishing/maintaining/retaining social and economic dominance generated distinct patterns of collective violence.
Thirdly, a variety of often contradictory strategies are adopted to achieve mobility and dominance. The dominant rich peasant class displays an ideological and moral flexibility in their support for various conflicting ideologies, movements, and institutions. This attitude along with a large illegal economic sector not only creates a basis for criminalization and violence, more importantly, it blurs the distinction between what is legitimate and illegitimate; other groups in emulation of the dominant castes began to adopt extra legal means in their own struggles for mortality as well as in everyday life. Thus collective violence became a part of the existing norms of behavior and is no longer regarded as a deviant phenomenon. In a provincial city illegal acts are both 'normal' and normative.

Traditionally, sociologists have discussed collective violence as spontaneous, irrational and deviant phenomenon, as a response to "unstructured situations," occurring "outside established institutions."¹ In the light of data presented, this chapter will reconsider some of these perspectives. In the process some theories pertaining to issues of rationality and legitimacy, with reference to violence, will be discussed. Authors such as O.M. Lynch, E.P. Thompson and others who stressed on cultural influences both on patterns of violence, and more importantly on the reasons for violence will be referred to.²

Instead of explaining violence as an outcome of frustration, of deprivation etc, this chapter considers the issues in the light
of some sociological approaches such as that of Smelser. Smelser gives greater importance to structural determinants in explaining collective behaviour in general and "hostile outburst" in particular. There is also an attempt to support the arguments of Charles Tilly regarding the contexts of competition/ contention between groups as a prerequisite for collective violence to occur.

One of the thrusts of this thesis is to show that collective violence in Vijayawada is reflective of and an outcome of the large scale illegalities in the city's society, politics and economy. In this context the following brief note attempts to show that Vijayawada has a high rate of crime as compared to larger cities in the state such as Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam.

CRIME IN VIJAYAWADA

Comparison of data for the period 1976-1991 of the three large cities of Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada) reveals that Vijayawada has a comparatively higher crime rate than cities larger than itself. Scholars have shown that there is no concomitant relationship between city size and crime rates. This has been because there have been several exception of smaller cities with higher crime rates. It is being argued here that Vijayawada is one such exception.

As Table 6.1 shows, the crime rate per one lakh population is very high for Vijayawada for all the four years given in the Table.
As of 1991, the rate stood at 407.65, much higher than Visakhapatnam (335.30) and Hyderabad (252.22). Out of fourteen categories for which data is available for 1976, Vijayawada has higher comparative rate only in two categories. In contrast, in 1991 Vijayawada had a high rate in as many as 9 categories. In the case of murder, counterfeiting and cheating, Vijayawada had very high rates. Thus there has been an increase in the rate of most crimes in Vijayawada over the last two decades. One of the arguments of this thesis is that those who participate in collective violence are also those who flout norms and participate in criminal activities in everyday life. The data shows that the city has a high rate of criminal activities. Since there exists common elements in patronage as well as participation in criminal activities and collective violence, the data enables us to make the above linkage. It is also argued in this thesis that the values and norms of the dominant peasant class encourages illegal activities. The crime rate data provides further evidence for this proposition.

With reference to the data on riots, it is found that there is a fluctuation in the incidence of rioting in Vijayawada. The rate changes from high to low in the period covered in comparison with other cities. This could be because riots and collective violence in Vijayawada are related to the activities of separate groups and communities, and political activity of the rich peasant class. Not being a seat of government, collective violence related to anti-government protests are few in Vijayawada. In contrast these
are likely to be higher in capital cities like Hyderabad. Moreover, it is stated in this thesis that in Vijayawada most violent incidents are related to long term conflicts between specific pairs of groups. In large cities, one time, small scale incidents of collective violence are likely to occur in greater number. These do not take on the form of continuous endemic violence between social groups. Such kinds of isolated incidents are fewer in Vijayawada. This explains the lower number of riots annually reported in the case of Vijayawada.

HISTORICAL AND TEMPORAL PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE

In this section it is proposed to draw insights from the distribution of collective violence over time and the reason for occurrence of the incidents at a particular time. A study of the way in which patterns of violence have occurred historically as well as the timings of the incidents provide clues regarding many aspects of collective violence. They reveal the way in which the evolution of Vijayawada city and socio economic changes over time led to corresponding changes in the types of Collective violence. A historical survey shows that collective violence evolved from street brawls and lumpen violence to political and caste conflicts; it explains how the not unusual phenomenon of criminal gangs become enmeshed with politics, caste and struggles of different groups for social mobility. The incidents of collective violence have tended to bunch together during certain periods. The period 1920-1993 has been divided into five periods. The periods have been divided on the basis of the following considerations.
First, continuous incidents of collective violence occurred during a particular period.

Secondly there has been some kind of continuity and connection linking many of the incidents that occurred during the period.

Thirdly, there were significant differences, in each period in the type of violence or the evolution of a new type of violence in each period. There were usually a high proportion of conflicts between one set of groups in each period.

The history of collective violence in Vijayawada has been divided into the following five periods (i) 1925-42 (ii) 1946-52 (iii) 1962-75 (iv) 1979-88 (v) 1989-93.

1. 1925-92:

During this period the city was mostly confined to the east of the railway track. Towards the end of the period small settlements in the new city developed in Gandhinagar and Governorpet. The period was characterized by street brawls and criminal activities by lumpen elements that is often seen in newly urbanizing societies. This occurred especially in the Kothapeta area and Nagaras were the main persons involved. They were also involved in distribution of illicit liquor. There were several killings over petty incidents among the Nagara community in this period.
A Nagara liquor contractor was responsible for several murders before he was himself killed.\textsuperscript{12} Appalaswamy, a labour contractor and Chitti a lumpen youth were drawn into politics by the Kamma led Justice party, who from 1920 onwards made several attempts to capture power in the municipal council.\textsuperscript{13} The Kammas in their bid to capture power from urban castes such as Vaisyas and Brahmans, in Vijayawada, used groups led by Appalaswamy and Chitti to intimidate voters and rig elections during elections to the council and the provincial legislature. The first major incident of collective violence took place during provincial elections in 1926.\textsuperscript{14} After several other clashes, in 1933, a major incidents occurred as Appalaswamy's man attacked Congress councilors during a municipal session.\textsuperscript{15}

After the decline of the Justice party, the lumpen groups joined the Congress party and began to launch attacks on the emerging communist party.\textsuperscript{16} The Communists proved stronger in restricting lumpen activity in Kothapeta. They also clashed with young men who launched assaults on the communists "for infringing local customs,"\textsuperscript{17} especially for involving women in public activities. These men belonged to religious sabbas and bhajan mandalis.\textsuperscript{18}

2. 1946–53:

This period mainly witnessed violence between communists and others including other political parties as well as agents of the
state. Throughout the 1940s, the Communist party had launched struggles against landlords in the surrounding areas. In 1946 the party launched the Telengana armed struggle in the neighbouring state of Hyderabad ruled by a native prince—the Nizam. Vijayawada was the base for the movement. The party was banned in 1948 after independence, and as part of efforts to crackdown on the movement, the Indian state entered the fight against the CPI. It is stated that Congressmen in the City collaborated with agents of the state in attacking communists. Between 1948 and 1951, when the movement was withdrawn, at least five activists were killed in the city. At that time that was widespread support for the CPI from Kamma peasants and Brahmin politicians in the city played a significant role in assisting the state in fighting the CPI.

In 1948, in the aftermath of the assassination of Gandhi, the CPI clashed with RSS activists attempting to foment rioting in Vijayawada. The RSS itself was banned in 1948 but its activists are said to have also collaborated in attacks on communist activists at that time.

In December, 1952, as part of a movement for a separate Telugu speaking state, P. Srimulu fasted unto death in Madras city. Congressmen were divided over the issue. But the CPI fully supported the movement, as the party and Kamma peasants felt they would be in a greater position to capture power in a smaller Telugu speaking state. After Srimulu's death, violent outbursts occurred across Andhra. Vijayawada was the centre for training
youth to agitate for a separate state. After initial attacks on police, crowds partially destroyed the railway station and looted goods from several goods trains stranded in Vijayawada. There were also a few isolated attacks on Congressmen. This was the City's first major riot, characterized by large scale looting but very little physical violence and arson.

3. 1962-74:

This period marked the emergence of gangs and of organized criminal activities. It also saw the beginning of patronage by Kamma entrepreneurs to gangs for help in their illegal activities. This was especially seen in violent incidents in the context of land grabbing, slum eviction and illicit liquor distribution. This period saw the intensification of political violence. A split in the CPI led to large scale attacks on rival activists of CPI and CPI(M) in 1964-66. The Congress, supported by erstwhile Kamma supporters of CPI joined in the fight, against the CPI and CPI(M).

Inter and intra gang violence accounted for a large number of deaths including those of Venkataratnam and Radha, who split after working together in Communist led trade unions. Followers and kin of these leaders continued to fight well into the 1980s. Gangs took control of trade unions. Attempts to resist led to violent attacks especially in the case of transport unions, based in Gandhi Nagar. This was the period when Kapus migrated in large numbers to the city. Many recruits to gangs came from their ranks. By
this time gang leaders had got allied with the CPI, CPM or the Congress and gang rivalries became political rivalries. Attempts by Kamma patrons to eliminate those gang leaders who were becoming powerful, further intensified collective violence.

Two major riots occurred during this period. A movement for a steel plant in Andhra degenerated into a congress faction fight in the city. Local Kamma leaders led attacks on public property as well as on the followers of Sanjeeva Reddy's faction. In 1973 likewise, Kamma peasant leaders in Krishna District along with others came out of the Congress in protest against land reforms. They took advantage of the Telangana agitation and its outcome to demand a separate Andhra State. There were clashes between the factions and with the CPI which opposed separation. Local Kamma businessmen provided support for the movement. A move to prevent a procession by the State chief minister led to a major riot in December, 1973.

4. 1979-88:

In this period gang rivalries intensified and rival gangs sought the support of political parties. The rising aspirations in the face of blocked mobility led Kapus and other lower castes to mobilize under the leadership of gang leaders. Kammams dominated TDP, a newly launched party in 1982 and approached gang leaders to join their party as they had a strong support base in the city. This led to politicization of rival caste groups, as gangs found it
beneficial to assume leadership of their respective castes. Thus for the first time, caste, politics and gangs became openly linked together. Continuing clashes culminated in the killing of Ranga Rao, a Kapu MLA leading to widespread rioting and looting in Vijayawada mainly directed against the Kamma community and the Telugu Desam party.

The period saw a proliferation of gangs, an expansion of illegal enterprises and of consolidation of Kamma leadership in different spheres, especially in politics.

5. 1989-93:

After 1988, with the killing of Ranga Rao, Vijayawada ceased to be dominated by just two gangs, both representing rival caste groups and politised parties, Ranga Rao's gang broke up into several units. His wife and brother control two units. Both have been elected legislators. A few other major gang leaders have also been killed. Gangs are still involved in illegal enterprises and working for business patrons during this period. However Kammas no longer have the kind of control over gangs, that they used to possess. They however continue to lead almost all political parties. There has also been a tendency for political parties to distance themselves from some gangs, though the process is not complete.
Vijayawada emerged as a centre for the Kapu caste to launch their movement for mobility, through political and constitutional means. The proliferation of small gangs continue. There has been no let up in inter gang violence leading to killings.

In 1991, after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, there was an attempt to repeat attacks on Kammams and TDP activists. Slum dwellers attempted looting in several areas. However, the violence was on a small scale, due to prompt police action and lack of popular support for violence.

During this period faction fights within the Congress at the city level continued. Political conflicts between the TDP and Congress and CPI and Congress leading to violence, also occurred. While Kapu and Kamma gangs do collide, conflicts also occurred between rival Kapu and Kamma led gangs.

The survey of collective violence over time reveals that violence on an organized basis first started with the migration of rich Kammams into the city in the 1920's. Throughout the five periods, the Kamma community in one way or another, as patrons of gangs, as political leaders and as entrepreneurs were involved in violence.

There has been at least one major bout of rioting in each period, except the first period. Issues of regional or national significance became important reasons for violence mainly because the dominant castes found them useful as a means for mobilization.
While caste has always been important in contentions for power, it is only by the 1980's that gangs, politics and caste fused - laying an effective basis for caste based conflicts.

A study of different periods also reveals shifts in the spatial patterns of violence keeping pace with the spatial growth of the city. This will be explained in the course of this chapter. In the first two periods, there were only a few groups involving in collective violence. From the 1960's there has been a proliferation of all kinds of conflicting groups.

It will be shown in the following pages that differences across time are also reflected in mobilization of groups for violence, in the nature of participants, in the targets attacked and in the reasons for violence.

The major incidents of collective violence that have occurred in Vijayawada between 1928 and 1992 and that are taken up for discussion in this chapter are presented in a brief manner in Table 6.1.
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<th>DETAILS</th>
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<td>1928</td>
<td>Intimidation of voters and rigging by Justice Party supported lumpen gangs led by Appalaswamy, during provincial elections.</td>
<td>Old Town</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 30, 1933</td>
<td>Attack by a group of about fifty persons on Congress councillors during a municipal session. Attack allegedly organized by two Justice Party supported councillors. Five persons seriously injured. Several beaten up.</td>
<td>Municipality building</td>
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<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Attacks over a long period by CPI activists on lumpen gangs in several areas, both as a response to general anti-social activities as well as specific attacks on CPI women activists.</td>
<td>Kothapeta Governorpeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30 &amp; 31</td>
<td>Clashes between CPI and RSS cadres as RSS activists attempted to foment riots in the wake of Gandhi's assassination. CPI was trying to prevent rioting.</td>
<td>Gandhinagar Governorpeta parts of old town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948-51</td>
<td>Five CPI activists killed in different incidents involving attacks by the police acting in collusion with the Congress Party.</td>
<td>Mogulrajpuram Governorpeta old town.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16</td>
<td>Attacks by some CPI and Congress</td>
<td>Old town</td>
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1952

Cadre as well as common people on public property, on the police and on some Congress leaders, in the wake of the fast unto death of P. Sriramulu. Large scale looting in railway station and from goods trains.

1964-66

Hundreds of hutmets and houses belonging to CPI and CPI(M) activists destroyed in arson and destruction by rival groups. Attacks also allegedly by Congress activists and by gangs at the behest of builders.

31 October to 2 November 1966

Rioting by crowds demanding location of a steel plant in Andhra. In Vijayawada, rioting is targeted by one congress faction against another. Attack public property and persons of opposing faction.

1968

Clashes spread over a long period between rival transport unions. One union was affiliated to the CPI led by C.Venkataratnam and V. Radha. The other was led by radical communists. One killed, several injured and property destroyed.

January 16, 1969

V. Poornachandra Rao, a Kamma Faction leader and Panchayat Samiti President of Kankipadu, killed by a rival Kamma faction.
1970

Attacks by Radha's gangs on residents of Giripuram slums allegedly at the behest of some prominent local builders. Attacks repulsed by slum residents with the support of radical communist activists.

July 13 1972

C. Ventakaratnam, a CPI leader municipal corporator, trade unionist and gang leader killed by a gang led by Radha, his erstwhile confidant. CPI(M) activists also allegedly involved in the attack.

24 December 1972 2 January 1973

Riots as part of a movement for a separate Andhra State. On 24, December attempts to stop a procession by the chief minister led to rioting, physical clashes and destruction of public property. 8 Person killed in police firing.

On 2, January, a bandh (general strike) turned violent resulting in destruction of property and physical clashes with CPI activists opposing separation; 10 killed in police firing.

July 1974

Attacks on CPI activists and their homes, and party offices in several areas as retaliation for killing of a gang member belonging to Radha's gang.

July 4 1974

Munuswamy, a gang activist of Radha's
group, killed by nine members of a CPI affiliated gang in retaliation for a murder of one of their members.

V. Radha, a gang leader and four of his associates killed partly in retaliation for attacks on CPI activists and for becoming a threat to the city's business elites. Attack coordinated by CPI activists and prominent businessmen.

D. Gandhi, a gang leader, former associate of Radha and current rival of his brother Ranga, killed by Ranga's group during students union election. 3 others injured.

4 killed as part of clashes between rival gangs.

2 killed and 11 injured in an attack by a group of 11 persons belonging to Nehru's group. In retaliation about 100 persons attacked and set on fire property of rival group.

Clashes between Congress and Lok Dal workers as rival procession came face to face. Several, including two ministers injured.

P. Dasaratharam, an editor of a so-called 'Yellow Journal' killed allegedly by Congress supported gang for writing exposures on ruling political leaders.
March 18
8 persons injured in clashes between rival TDP and Congress activists and associated gang members municipal elections.

March 22, 24, 25 1987
Clashes between police and pan shop owners during raids against pornographic literature and sale of yellow journals.

May, 17 1987
M. Sobhanadri, a prominent gangster, member of V. Ranga’s groups, killed allegedly by D. Nehru’s gang as a sequel to earlier clashes during municipal elections in March, 1987.

March, 10 1988
D. Murali, brother of Nehru and a youth leader of TDP, killed by a group of ten persons allegedly at the behest of Ranga.

March, 12 1988
Attacks on building and property of Congress activists and members of Ranga’s gangs in the wake of the funeral procession of Murali.

December, 28 1988
V. Ranga, a gang leader and a Congress MLA, killed by a group of about forty persons allegedly belonging to the Nehru gang / TDP.

December 26-31 1988
In the wake of Ranga’s murder, rioting and looting by Congress activists, Kapus, Ranga’s gang members, as well as ordinary people.
Major bout of rioting on 26th, followed by continuous stray incidents for the next few days. Violence is mainly targeted against the Kamma community and other opponents of Ranga, the police and the state.

March, 25

K. Venkatanarayana, an CPI leader, corporator and allegedly a gang leader, killed by a 9 member rival Congress affiliated gang.

Krisna Lanka

April 1, 1991

One killed and five injured in clashes members of the Reelli community and Muslims and subsequent police firing.

Wynchpet

May 21 & 22

Rioting and looting in the wake of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, former prime minister of India.

S.N. Puram, Payakapuram, Ajitsingh nagar

Attempt to repeat 1986 pattern by targeting Kamma and TDP leaders. Ordinary people involved in attempts to loot. In some areas, attacks on each other by Congress affiliated and rival gangs.

Krishna Lanka

Bandur road

Pezzonipet

10, July

G. Venkateswara Reddy, Ex CPI(M) leader and a gang leader and two of his associates killed by a rival TDP affiliated gang.

Patamata

Source: Police records, newspapers, key informants. References are given in the relevant places in this chapter.
TYPES OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE:

In Vijayawada violence occurs between gangs, political parties, caste groups and others. Violent conflicts take the form of riots as well as small scale attacks on specific targets by small groups which do not qualify to be called riots. These types of violence occur more frequently then riots. However, there is much greater linkage between the different kinds of violence on the one hand, and between violent conflicts and non-violent political behaviour, on the other, when compared to a metropolitan city. Attacks by small groups on a reduced time scale, on small or large targets constitutes a distinct feature of the patterns of collective violence in Vijayawada.

An analysis of types of attacks and violent conflicts provides insights into the patterns of collective violence in the city, the ways in which they are different or distinct, and their relation to the provincial traits of the city. An analysis of Vijayawada's history reveals that it has experienced all the different types in the repertoire of violence from street brawls, feuds, violent protests against the state to caste conflicts. Violence related to rebellions, strikes and gang wars.

1. Rioting:

The Indian Penal Code treats minor clashes between groups, or violence by small groups of a limited nature, also as rioting. In
this thesis however, only incidents involving large scale loss of property, arson, destruction and looting with or without loss of lives are being treated as riots. Since 1952, there have been ten such incidents. Most of these involved attacks on property and person directed either at the government (central and state) or rival political parties / caste groups. Only on three occasions did looting accompany rioting. In all other cases rioting involved destruction of property owned by government / rivals belonging to a political party or other groups. Except in 1988, there were little or no attacks on persons during rioting. This contrasts with the frequent occurrence of small scale incidents of collective violence involving murder – the distinctive feature of Vijayawada. Most riots involved prior planning and involved groups of people systematically indulging in violence. Only twice in 1973 and March 1988, did procession or rallies became transformed into a rioting mob.

2. Group Clashes of a minor nature

There have been several incidents of groups clashes of a minor nature. These did not involve looting, arson or destruction of property. Nor did they lead to loss of lives. They resulted in minor injuries to a few persons. These clashes were witnessed throughout the 1980s and came about as a result of rival processions clashing. These processions were mainly a show of strength between rival gangs and film fan clubs. However a strange feature of Vijayawada has been that processions and rallies did not
necessarily or even frequently result in violence. This is all the more strange if one consider the fact that as an important political centre and the high levels of political participation and activity, processions are almost an everyday feature in Vijayawada. 56

3. Violent clashes Between small groups:

The major form of collective violence in Vijayawada is an outcome of clashes between small groups belonging to political parties, gangs/trade unions, and factions within parties. Many of these incidents are part of a continuous sequence of events involving often fatal attacks one or more rivals. This type of violence has claimed the majority of lives in the various incidents of collective violence. This type usually does not involve attacks on property. There have been over a hundred such incidents since the 1920's. Details are available for around fifty such incidents. Whether these involves caste groups, businessmen, trade unions or political parties, the actual participants were usually gang leaders and activists. These gang members are active in trade unions, in politics and in illegal economic activities. 57 This type of violence is an outcome of gang rivalries as well as of trade union rivalries, political / electoral conflicts, business disputes and faction fights. The close links of gangs with the larger society and the linkages between participants in these types of incidents and large scale violence is typical of Vijayawada. Since usually the same group of persons constitute the business elite, political
leaders, caste elders and patrons of gangs, there is a tendency for criminal activities, politics economic activity and violence of various levels to mesh together.

4. Organized Attacks on communities

Yet another type of violence observed in Vijayawada pertains to attacks on a neighborhood or community by a small groups of persons. This has been seen especially in efforts to evict slum dwellers by builders using gangs.\textsuperscript{58} Even in other cities the role of gangs and mafia and of builders in slum eviction is well known. In recent years, the role of builders has been observed during communal riots in several cities. However, in Vijayawada slum evictions by builders using gangsters is usually an independent phenomenon. This was observed initially in the 1960s and early 1970s and later in the latter half of the 1980s.\textsuperscript{59} Only in 1964-66, did these attacks take advantage of political violence to forcibly attempt eviction of slum dwellers. The kind of sustained large scale violence against slum dwellers is perhaps unique in Vijayawada. These incidents usually take the shape of large scale fire "accidents"; wherein thousands of huts "catch" fire and are destroyed.\textsuperscript{60} In recent years, attempts to remove the slum on hill slopes has taken the shape of engineered landslides.\textsuperscript{61} In the early 1970s, attempts to clear one of the oldest and largest slums -Giripuram involved direct physical violence.\textsuperscript{62} One of the city's prominent Kamma builders was allegedly behind these incidents using Kapu led gangsters. The slum residents fought battles supported by
radical communists. These slums are usually located in areas where land value has increased greatly owing to development of nearly lands for residential and commercial purposes. Most of these slums are located close to the areas where a majority of Kammans live or carry on their business activities.

5. Clashes between agents of the state and social groups

Clashes between the and various social groups has been another feature of Vijayawada. This is a normal feature in most cities during demonstrations and strikes. As an important political centre and the base for a number of social and political movements, Vijayawada has always experienced a number of protest movements directed at the state. Therefore police violence against movements led by various political parties, factions and others has been more, just as there have been more attacks on the police. From the 1952 riots to the incidents in 1988, police have been made targets. This has been for two reasons. First the police are identified as agents of the state against whom a particular movement in mobilized. Secondly the police is viewed as being against particular group or is projected as having failed in its duty of giving protection to the citizens. There have been several cases of police firing beginning from the 1960s during riots resulting in deaths ranging from two in one instance to around twenty in the 1988 riots. Suppression of political movements has also meant arrests and killings of participants by police even in non-riot situations. This was first seen at the height of the communist
movement when the police and congress activists allegedly caused the death of at least five activists in 1947-50, in different incidents.

The ability of the dominant classes to influence the police has resulted in clashes between the police and various other groups. For instance violent conflicts took place between the police and street hawkers, police and pan shops selling "yellow journals" etc. Gang leaders who led these struggles against the police built up a base to fight dominant caste political and business elite.

6. Political and Electoral violence:

Violence between political parties and between factions within parties, has usually taken the form of rioting or small scale killings of one or more persons by a small groups belonging to the rival party or faction. At other times as in 1964-66 and 1974, it led to large scale attacks on communities/ neighborhoods supporting a particular party - in this case CPI, CPI(M) and congress.

Vijayawada is a 'pioneer' as far as electoral violence and political violence is concerned. In 1927, the first electoral violence took place. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Justice party and congress workers clashed. Later, members of the Justice party political machine joined the congress to fight communists.
recently TDP, CPI and congress workers have clashed both during municipal and legislative elections and during other times. However by the general standards of electoral violence, Vijayawada has not experienced much collective violence during elections, even though it was a pioneer. Incidents are scattered and occasional. Since rival gang and political leaders exercise strong control over certain localities there is little opposition by rivals in that locality. Threats of violence seem to be effective in achieving the desired goals in most cases, rather than the use of actual violence.

7. Brawls, Feuds etc.:

Tilly uses the term "competitive action to refer to those actions which result in street brawls, feuds,"contention among communal groups within small, local political systems" etc. This kind of phenomenon usually occurs at the early stages of industrialization according to him while these kinds of phenomena occurred among the Nagara community initially in the 1920s and 1930s, they were fairly widespread among all communities by the 1940s. In the early 1940s, communist activists clashed with such groups and succeeded in greatly reducing the power of lumpens, rowdies etc. By the 1960s brawls and feuds involving the lumpen as well as the city elites began again and continues to this day. Sometimes these incidents degenerated into larger incidents involving large groups. Contrary to Tilly's view, this type of violence has not subsided. Greater urbanization and evolution of
more complex and organized forms of collective action and violence has not diminished the occurrence of "competitive violence".

To sum up, Vijayawada seems to be having a much larger variety of collective violence. Other cities tend to have a predominance of 'modern' forms of violence such as large scale riots, strikes, demonstrations, rebellions etc. Tilly, in his study of collective violence in Europe spread over two hundreds years discerns a shift towards large scale, more highly organized forms of collection action which lead to violence. In Vijayawada however, traditional and simpler, small scale forms of collective violence not only continue to persist but constitute the major type of collective violence. As an important political centre, the city continues to as a base for major political movements. However, violence resulting form such movements usually result in destruction of property or looting. Loss of lives in large scale rioting in on a much less reduced scale, compared to a metropolitan city. The number of persons killed in police firing during such incidents are also lower, comparatively. This is in sharp contrast to the greater number of killings or attacks on persons during small scale incidents. This is explained as an outcome of the deliberation and planning that goes into collective violence in Vijayawada. The motives and goals in many incident are very clear. In incidents involving murder, the motive is clear - to prevent a person or group from carrying on his activities which are detrimental to the interests of rival groups. In large scale riots, the motives are more amorphous - to punish a symbol of hatred, or to register a protest, or to assert one's rights.

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The predominance of small scale incidents, the absence of large scale loss of lives during riots, and the presence of a large variety of types of violence are the main features of the patterns of collective violence with reference to the types of violence in Vijayawada.

The large number of small scale incidents of violence leading to the killings of one or more persons represents a continuation of the exercise of traditional means of domination by the newly migrated rural rich. Many incidents were at the behest of the rich peasant class settled in and around Vijayawada. Similar incidents constitute retaliatory and imitative responses to such incidents. The patronage of gangs by the peasant class and the leadership of large scale political institutions and movements results in a carry over of violent incidents from small to large scale events. The complete domination of all spheres of activity by the provincial rich class leads to the emergence of violent behaviour at different levels in society - social, political and economic.

TYPES OF GROUPS INVOLVED IN COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE

A wide variety of groups involved in collective violence has been a distinct trait of Vijayawada. The different kinds of Conflicting groups such as castes, political parties and gangs have usually had multiplicity of memberships. Where the same
individuals or not simultaneously members of different groups, it is usually the case that smaller groups such as gangs or political factions usually are allied to or enjoy the patronage of larger groups such as political parties or caste groups.

The very large number of corporate and amorphous groups in the city is due to the high degree of politicization, the political importance of the city and most importantly the way in which various groups, but especially the Kammans have attempted to achieve social mobility, economic status and political power. Initial and continued attempts since the 1920's by the Kamma community to forge a united front in their various endeavours has led to the emulation of the 'Kamma' model of social mobility, through mobilization and formation of various kinds of groups. 73

Other cities also have gangs. They also have conflicts between political parties. Caste conflicts in the Indian context however have not generally occurred in metropolitan cities. What is distinct about the provincial city is that the emergence, vitality and the close inter-connections between various kinds of groups is a consequence of the factors discussed in the preceding paragraph.

Over a period of more than sixty years, Kammans have acquired leadership and patronage of almost all kinds of groups. 74 Resistance to this dominance has led to different types of violence. This resistance itself has led to repression and counter attacks and has
had severe consequences in terms of continuous bouts of collective violence. In the course of this dominance and resistance, other groups, hitherto not involved have also been drawn into the incidents of violence. This occurred as conflicting groups in order to gain a larger support base, through violent and peaceful means coopted other kinds of groups, such as trade unions, political parties and social organizations into the conflicts. 75

Table 6.2

TYPES OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: 1926-1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Violence</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riots</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Clashes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized attacks on specific targets</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIOLENCE BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Conflict</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caste Conflicts</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gang Violence</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political conflicts</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Police Records, Newspaper reports and Key informants.
The table is a summary of Table 6.1.

An outline of some of the major groups involved in collective violence is provided in the following pages.
1. **GANGS:**

Gangs are a ubiquitous phenomenon in Vijayawada. Most gang members have membership in or are allied to political parties, caste associations, trade unions, youth/student organizations and fan clubs. Inter and intra gang violence were the most frequent form of violence with almost one death every two months.\(^76\)

Contrary to some sociological writings, gangs in Vijayawada are not 'elementary' organizations which "spontaneously" emerge.\(^77\) In the city, they are highly complex organizations with proper leadership structures and well defined roles. Nor do they conform to the image of being "rough and ready" and taking delight in violence for its own sake.\(^78\) Collective violence among gangs are calculated and planned acts flowing from the nature of the activities they are engaged in. At least one scholar has stated that gangs are far less violent than they are projected to be and that violence is not the critical reason for their existence.\(^79\) In Vijayawada this is partly true. The major cause of their existence is not just lumpenization and unemployment. If this was so they would be easy to control. The economy in Vijayawada encourages the existence of gangs. Their main purpose is to actively participate in and support the illegal economy and those aspects of the economy that need their participation. This includes functioning as collection agents for financial organization, protecting establishments from rival gangs, controlling labour.
etc. Illegal activities such as gambling, prostitution etc are also controlled by them. Illegal sectors in the economy such as black marketing manufacture of substitute products without a license, piracy, illicit liquor - all require their support. Since most of these activities are owned by dominant caste individuals, they became patrons of these gangs. Settlement of various sorts of disputes is a major activity with many gang leaders operating openly from offices set up for this purpose. Gangs have members from the urban poor in the slums as well as from among the middle classes. The major gangs have their own student/youth organizations and fan clubs, through which recruitment is done. Full time gang workers receive regular wages depending on the nature of the work.

Gangs are a feature of all cities. The large size of the illegal sector, especially in the context of a small urban economy, with the absence of industrialization, means that in a provincial city the gangs are much more powerful. They are not "economically marginal". On the contrary, they are central to the city's economic structure and thus wield much more influence in the absence of countervailing pressures from the formal economic sectors.

Gangs are also coopted into the political machine. The migration and entry of Kammas into urban politics coincided in the 1920s with the cooptation of lumpen gangs into the political process. This process has continued into the 1990s.
Most gang leaders belong to Kamma, Reddy or Kapu castes, while members belong to different - castes mainly lower caste groups and scheduled castes. Till the 1970s, there used to be two or three major gangs with several minor ones. Since around 1980, at any particular time there are around ten major gangs with minor ones at the level of the municipal ward.

Most gangs have a geographical limit within which they operate. This territory is usually delimited on the basis of the political support they get; the support from the dominant castes in the area; and the patronage of the elite, whether they be businessmen or politicians.

Collective violence results from intra gang conflicts, conflicts; between gangs over various issues, conflicts between gangs and their former patrons, and their participation in economic, social and political activities.

2. POLITICAL PARTIES:

In an earlier chapter, outlines of the different political parties were provided. The importance of Vijayawada as a political centre and the high degree of politicization in the city was emphasized. From the beginning conflicts within a political party for leadership and between political parties have been a basis for violence. Caste groups and business elites have tended to operate
via political parties to further their interests. Between 1920-50, political conflicts reflected conflicts between traditional business groups such as Brahmins/Vaisyas and Kammams. In the 1980s, conflicts reflect the aspirations of rising lower class groups whose mobility was blocked by both Kamma and Vaisya commercial groups. 85

Every major political movement which has led to violence in Vijayawada has been influenced by the Kamma community. In 1988, riots against the Telugu Desam party represented a reaction to the large scale use of violence by the Kamma community in their efforts to maintain their dominance. By the early 1980s, the Kammams had acquired leadership of all major parties in the city. Violence then was an outcome not of Kamma faction fights, but of the assertion of independence by the gang leaders from their erstwhile patrons. 86 As gang leaders cum politicians become more independent and responsive to the grassroots, they clashed with the dominant community, reflected in attacks on political parties, rival gangs and rival caste groups.

The Justice party, Congress, CPI, CPI(M), Jan Sangh, and Telugu Desam party have been the main participants in collective violence against each other in the period 1920-1993. Factions within the Congress have also fought often resulting in major outbursts of violence, especially in 1966 and 1973 and minor incidents throughout the 1980s and upto 1993. 87

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3. TRADE UNIONS:

Vijayawada has a large number of trade unions. Almost each sector of the economy is unionized. The city’s status for a long time as an important communist centre and the attempts by various political parties to create a base in the city are responsible for this high degree of unionization. Also, the city’s entrepreneurs have attempted to control the work force through support for trade union activities. These unions are also an important base for gangs and political parties. Hence, the apparent contradiction in Vijayawada of a low industrial base and high degree of unionization.

In the 1960s, frequent violent incidents involving unions in the passenger transport sector, were primarily a result of attempts by gangs to gain control of the unions. Though there were a few incidents in the 1980s of trade union related violence, by and large over the last five years, gang influences on trade unions seems to getting reduced. This is because of the death of some leaders and the successful entry into electoral politics of some others. The entry of some radical communist parties has also weaned away several unions from the gangs. Though there were several successful large scale demonstrations by communist supported workers in the transport sector these never become a cause for collective violence.
Paul Hirst is of the view that criminal economic enterprises generally "recruit labour from the industrial reserve army and the lumpen proletariat", who are "subject to coercion" and do not enjoy labour rights.¹ This is true of Vijayawada. Their inability to fight for rights may be one reason, why from time to time, gangs rebel against their patrons. These are thus related to more open forms of trade union protests.

4. BUSINESS GROUPS:

Groups of businessmen while not constituting formal groups, act collectively in promoting illegal activities. In Vijayawada, they have acted together against rival business groups, in patronizing gangs, in intimidating or eliminating gangs and their leaders who threatened to become independent and powerful. Unlike in metropolitan cities, criminal enterprises are central to the economy. Not being able to openly enjoy state protection, they develop their own "repressive apparatus". ² Thus business groups have directly contributed to collective violence by using gangs in the illegal economy and using them to suppress workers protests in the legal sectors. The support for gangs has led to growth of various forms of violent and illegal activities and behaviour, further contributing to collective violence.
5. YOUTH GROUPS/STUDENTS UNIONS/FAN CLUBS:

These kinds of groups have multiple memberships in gangs and political parties. Most film actors are open supporters of either the TDP or the Congress. Hence memberships in parties and fan clubs overlap. The major gangs set up youth organizations as fronts for public activities. Like wise, two major students unions in Vijayawada are controlled by gangs. These youth and student groups are both front organizations as well as avenues for recruitment into gangs and politics. They also represent successful penetration of gangs into social institutions. Since the 1970s, conflicts between youth groups have also been a reason for violence. Fan clubs have fought among themselves; they have generated violence as part of celebrations in cinema halls, student unions rivalries were the context for at least one major killing of a top gang leader. In the 1980s, both during riots and specific, small scale violence, youth and students in association with gangs were at the forefront in incidents of collective violence.

Thus in Vijayawada, the types and number of groups involved in collective violence are large. A large number of gangs function in alliance with caste associations, parties, trade unions and business groups. Collective violence over a period of time has brought the different groups together such that violence between two groups of the same kind translates into conflicts between other types of groups. Distinctive of a provincial city,
Caste groups directly and indirectly influence collective violence between different groups. Another typical trait is that violence between political parties is not just for electoral reasons but reflects contentious struggles between larger groups in society. The same applies to violence involving gangs.

Participants in Violence:

Traditionally sociologists have held that participants in collective violence are anti-social, irresponsible elements, deviants who act spontaneously; and are part of the marginal, disorganized population. Later studies by historians and sociologists have shown that riot participants are often ordinary citizens who act deliberately, and perform planned acts of violence. In the case of Vijayawada, the majority of the incidents constitute small scale planned attacks on selected targets by a small groups of around ten or less persons. Hence in such cases, much of sociological literature may not be relevant since they are based on studies of large scale rioting. However, even in the case of large scale riots, patterns in Vijayawada show distinct characteristics with reference to participants in collective violence.

Actual participants in violence include common people, party activists, members of student/youth organization, members/leaders of gangs. They belong to a wide range of castes and occupation groups. Business and political elites with rare exception do not
directly indulge in acts of violence. Elected representatives with a previous record of crime and violence, however have often been involved in incidents of collective violence.

The participants in violence depends on the types of violence and the groups between whom conflict occurs.

1. Gang leaders and activists

In inter gang violence, gang leaders and activists constitute the main participants. Some of them may be affiliated to a political party. The Congress, TDP, CPI and CPI(M) are the major parties which includes gang members as their party activists. In metropolitan cities, while there may be links between political parties and gangs, the kind of direct involvement of gangs leaders in party politics, that is observed in Vijayawada is rarely seen.

2. Political leaders/activists

As already mentioned earlier, there have been many elected representatives in Vijayawada against whom cases of murders and rioting are registered. These include municipal corporators, a former Mayor and MLAs. There are usually gangs leaders and party activists. Political elites from the upper castes however do not directly involve in violence except in rare cases.
3. Common people

Rioting has usually involved party and gang activists and has been a result of careful planning. Occasionally, ordinary citizens have also been involved. In 1988 for instance street hawkers constituted the riot participants. They were protesting the killing of Ranga, the MLA who had fought police attempts to evict them. Rioting has never involved ordinary citizens protesting spontaneously on any issue. Rioting has usually involved planned attacks by party and gangs members. Even on issues of public concern demonstrations/strikes have only involved those participants who either indulged in or were targets of attack.

4. Class and occupational background.

Looting which has accompanied rioting and general strikes have however involved ordinary citizens. When looting occurred in consonance with violence, arson and destruction as in 1988 and 1971, the looters belonged to the lower classes, usually slum dwellers. Construction workers, transport workers and mutha labour have been the main participants in looting. When looting is unaccompanied by violence, however, the middle classes also seem to have been involved. In 1952, looting was peaceful, orderly process, in the absence of police, who after being attacked, early in the day, went off the roads.
The lower caste/lower class looters from transport/construction sectors constitute the oldest (second and even third generation) in migrants. However they have experienced little social mobility. On the other hand their employers who migrated later, acquired mobility in all aspects. Hence there seems to be a class aspect in this context, especially when one considers the fact that high value retail stores and upper caste/class households have been the targets of looting. In 1988 and 1991 the Kammas were the main targets for looting.

5. Caste background

The activists in gangs and political parties belong to all castes. However, there seems to be an upper caste bias, when one consider the CPI and TDP. Leaders of these parties, and in gangs supporting them are mainly Kammas and Reddis, while activists belong to wide range of lower caste groups. In the case of the Congress party and affiliated gangs, participants in violence belong to Kapu and other lower castes. A few upper castes including Brahmins have also been observed in these gangs. However all gangs and political parties usually have Kamma patrons and leaders.

In a metropolitan city, on the other hand, gang members usual belong to minority communities or lower castes.
6. Participants belong to the mainstream

Participants in violence do not come from the wholly marginalised, deprived sections of society. While they may be economically poor, in political terms, they have access to political leaders through whom they obtain small loans, house sites etc. Most members of gangs are professionals, who work full time on gang activities and receive regular wages. Many are also active in politics, in student or youth organization and film fan clubs. Some of the leaders of gangs also come from middle class/upper class families. The majority of leaders and activists however are lower class migrants. Some of them through participation in gangs and political activity have achieved high social and economic mobility.

7. Participants are organized

Participants are not disorganized groups acting out their frustration. Both small scale violence and riots involved highly organized groups acting in a planned manner. As far as leadership definition is concerned, even in the riot situation, leadership is not vague, amorphous and sporadic; leadership plays a well defined role in targeting hostility towards selected objects. In 1988, small groups spread out to different localities destroying private and public property in an orderly way. In 1973, hostility was directed towards a government procession. Only after the police firing, did the leadership lose control. Earlier in the mid 1960’s leadership roles were clearly
defined in attacks on political rivals (between the CPI and CPM) and within the Congress party.

Aspects of planning strong leadership definition, and organization in the incidents of collective violence in Vijayawada point to another trait. Blumer stated that the acting crowd "lives in the momentary present". It has "no established organization, division of labour, recognized leadership, set of norms and no body of rules to guide its behaviour". Yet in Vijayawada it can be seen that groups during riots have an existence prior to and after the incident of collective violence groups are well organized group, with a leadership structure and well defined roles. Acts of violence are not random acts, but are guided by a set of rules.

Groups involved do not lack self control as proposed by some authors. In targeting objects of hatred, they were careful not to target others in the vicinity. Nor can their behaviour be termed anti-social. Often the violence is anti-authority and anti-dominant class. Moreover, when the norms of the dominant classes themselves support illegal acts, the anti-social acts conform to the dominant set of norms.

In Vijayawada violence is not a result of the loss of "critical understanding" by groups. Violence is seen as a reasonable and legitimate response to situations. As Tilly states, violence is often effective. Groups in Vijayawada often
indulge in violence as a means of making a claim on other groups or the state, to assert their rights. While dominant groups have often resorted to murder of rival leaders especially from other castes who have threatened their position, non Kamma groups have come to view violence as the only means of resisting attacks on their rights, on their attempts at social mobility. Thus violence is not due to lack of critical understanding on the contrary it is an outcome of a clear understanding of the use of violence.

In Vijayawada, participants in collective violence are also associated with visible manifestations of violence and illegal acts in every day life. Participants in riots and large scale attacks on persons and property are usually political activists and gang members who in everyday life are associated with criminal activities of various kinds, especially in the illegal economic sectors.

In other cities also especially in the case of communal riots, gangs are involved in violence. But as some authors have shown they are not the main participants nor do they initiate violence. They join the riots after it has begun.

In the provincial city of Vijayawada participants in violence are more organized, disciplined and conscious of their actions. They have a clear understanding of their goals and are rational in their behaviour. They belong to a wide variety of
castes and occupation groups. But professional political activists and gangsters are the main participants. Participants openly identify with political leaders and other elites. Most participants have been coopted into everyday processes of illegal actions in the economy, polity and society by the rich peasant class. Thus violent behaviour for most participants is a legitimate form of expression, part of the existing normative system of the provincial city.

TARGETS OF ATTACK - PATTERNS OF SELECTION

In consonance with the views expressed earlier that collective violence in Vijayawada have greater planning and organization it is proposed to show in this section that there is a greater degree of target definition in situations of collective violence in a provincial city. Depending on the causes of conflict, persons and property belonging to a rival caste or political group, gang or other rivals are targeted. It is proposed to explain by outliving the various patterns of selection of targets, that group membership and nature and reasons for hostility play a significant role in target definition. More importantly it is seen that collective violence in Vijayawada are not simple outbursts of anger arising out of frustration and deprivation, which are directed at the easily available, nearest targets. Riot participants as well as those involved in other types of collective violence select their
targets with deliberation. Feelings of hostility and anger are filtered through rational analysis of causes of events that provoke violence, and of the role of various individuals, groups and institutions in the events leading up to the precipitating factors for violence. The way in which events are interpreted by various interested parties and the manner of mobilization also impinge on the selection of targets.

1. Authority structures as targets

In almost all the cases of major riots - in 1953, 1966, 1973 and 1988, government offices and agents of the state (police) were made the targets of attack. In all these events the state was seen as the perpetrator of an injustice, as withholding certain benefits or concessions demanded, or as colluding with certain communities or groups in perpetrating injustice. Depending on whether a movement or riot is against the state or central government, property of either institutions are targeted. The party in power and the activists of the party have also been targets of attack. In 1973, a Congress faction fighting for a separate Andhra state attacked a procession by the ruling faction resulting in rioting. In 1988, the ruling TDP and its office and leaders were targeted for their alleged role in the killing of the Congress MLA, V. Ranga Rao. Through their role in denying rights/concessions/demands, authority structures become symbols of hatred. However, there are others who also become symbols of hatred and become the targets for attack.
2. Targets as symbols of hatred

Hostility and hatred may flow directly from a precipitating cause or it may be the result of a long standing conflict, in which case, the precipitating factors confirms the reasons for hatred and hostility. In the wake of long standing conflicts between the Congress party and the CPI, throughout the 1940’s, the Congress activists resorted to attacks on their symbol of hatred from around 1947, following a ban on the CPI and police crackdown on their activists. In 1966, a movement for a steel plant in Andhra, became focused on the rival faction led by Sanjeeva Reddy, then a union minister. This followed long standing conflicts between Reddy and Kamma factions which was at least two decades old. Likewise in 1988, there had been a long campaign against the Kammas and TDP, by the Congress and Kapus. Without this campaign and without the inflammatory speeches of the Congress leaders in Vijayawada, it is doubtful as to whether the violence against Kammas and TDP activists would have reached such an intensity.

In the case of inter gang violence, disputes over long period with reference to jurisdictions, illegal activities etc. lead to hostilities resulting in attacks and counterattacks. These along with killings of activists breeds hatred which culminate in attacks on gangs leaders. Similar is the case with political parties, as victory and loss in elections and other political activities over a period of time results in each

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political party and faction becoming a symbol of hatred for the rivals. In the 1988 riots widespread hatred and hostility among all sections of society towards Kammars was observed. In finding out the reasons for this hatred, the outline for this thesis emerged, especially ideas pertaining to the provincial class - the Kammars, their complete domination over all spheres of society, their means of achieving mobility and power and their general impact on a provincial city.

3. Role of Revenge / Retaliation in defining Targets.

Identification of perpetrators of a perceived injustice or wrong also helps to define a target. Frequently the selection of targets depends simply on retaliating against a rival group which has inflicted injuries on the aggrieved group. This is a frequent reason for inter gang and inter-party violence. This is seen in large scale violence involving CPI, CPI(M) and Congress in 1986, in CPI - Congress clashes in 1973 and in TDP-Congress conflicts in 1988 and 1991. Some groups take advantage of riots to take revenge on rivals who have nothing to do with the current bout of violence. Past enmity was one of the causes in 1964-65, 1988 and 1991. Some Congressmen were also targeted in the primarily anti-TDP riots in 1988. These were leaders of a faction opposed to Ranga Rao whose killing sparked off the riots. These leaders had been politically opposed to the leadership of Ranga Rao. Likewise street hawkers in Besant road targeted shops whose owners had got them evicted in 1983.
Revenge for past killings is thus an important aspect in selecting gang leaders and activists for attack. This is the reason for 'bunching' of attacks between rivals sets of groups within a few weeks or months. Long hostilities lead to physical attacks. Retaliations and counter attacks follow resulting in several murders and attempted killings within a few weeks.

4. Selection of targets - persons and property.

In the different types of collective violence that has occurred in Vijayawada, both property and persons have been targeted for attack, destruction and looting. Sometimes looting has accompanied arson and physical assaults, at other times they have occurred independently. All three aspects discussed earlier impinge on selection of targets for physical assaults and murders. In protests against authority structures, generally government servants have not been attacked. However members of the ruling party including those holding elected positions have been attacked. The exception of course is the police, who as agents of the state often bear the brunt of the attacks. While normally in any protest or demonstration police and crowds clash, in a situation where police collusion with a rival groups is suspected, police are singled out for attacks. This became explicit in the 1988 riots, though evidence exists for earlier riots also.127
In the case of selection of targets for attacks on property, in addition to the aspects discussed earlier, other patterns can also be observed. These patterns apart from revealing how targets were selected also provides insights into the reasons for violence for for hostility.

i. Attractiveness of merchandise:

A majority of the attacks on retail outlets in 1988 were concentrated in Gandhinagaer and Governorpet, especially in Besant Road and Eluru Road which link the two areas. To a lesser extent attacks on retail shops were also focused on Bandar road and in Patamata. This was because a major proportion of Kamma owned shops selling high value consumer goods are located in these areas. Reports form various sources revealed that wine shops, shops selling electronic goods and textiles were the main targets, both for arson and looting.

ii. Property as symbols

Some kinds of property were attacked due to their ownership by groups to which rioters were opposed. This included hotels, cinema halls, film distribution companies, factories etc. Since Gandhinagare is the home of the Telugu film industry it became the major focus for attacks on cinema halls and distributors. Being close to the railway station, bus station, and markets the area also has a number of hotels. Thus these also became
targets. It may be mentioned that only Kamma owned establishments were attacked, while others were spared. 128

iii. Targets which are more exposed

It has been stated till now that collective violence in Vijayawada is generally well planned and organized with clear target definition. However, occasionally, some rioters have spilled over to tangential targets. In major thoroughfares for instance, small grocery stores and pan shops have also been destroyed or looted. In a small scale riot in March 1988, a funeral procession of a slain gang leader turned riotous. 129 However, only a few shops identified as belonging to members of rival groups were attacked, since these were on the procession route. The rest of the city was peaceful.

iv. Targets with easier access.

In cases of looting especially, it has been observed that areas closer to some major slums have been targets of attacks. This occurred mainly in the new city. This was observed in Gandhinagar, Eluru road, Bandar road and the northern localities of Vijayawada. Slum dwellers from nearly slums mainly participated in attacks on households and shops, mainly with the intention of looting. 130
A survey of the patterns for selection of targets indicates, that only rarely as in 1984-85, were the poor targets for attack. In all other cases, persons and property of the authority structures, dominant classes/castes, high value consumer retail stores, upper class hotels and cinemas were the targets of attack. In Vijayawada the level of target definition is very high. The provincial rich Kamma community is crucial in defining targets, either as targets for attacks or providing leadership roles in influencing rioters to choose targets.

The dominant class has had little compunction in resorting to illegal means and violence in realizing their goals. Hence, in Vijayawada other groups have also had little hesitation in resorting to violence. Violence has come to be viewed as legitimate and justifiable for protecting one's interests and for retaliating against rivals. As the state and police have intervened in favour of one or another group, violence by most groups has become 'normative', a structural response to situations.

SPATIAL ASPECTS OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE

Historically, shifts have occurred in the spatial aspects of violence. These shifts paralleled the growth and development of the city. Changes in the location of incidents of violence can be observed in the different historical periods discussed earlier. It is shown in the following pages that first a
continuous shift in areas experiencing major bouts of violence is itself distinctive of Vijayawada. Secondly, these shifts are linked to the growth of the provincial city itself, to the migrants who settled in the newly urbanized areas as well as the major gangs who carve out sections of the city which fall under their control.

1. Historically, there has been a tendency for collective violence to spread to areas towards the eastern parts, from the old town located to the west of the south-north railway track. This paralleled the growth of the city from the west to the north/north east. Prior to 1940, most incidents be they street brawls, group clashes or political violence, occurred in the old town or one town. At this time, there were very few settlements east of the railway track. Gradually from the 1940s, as areas like Gandhinagar and Governorpet developed, these became a centre for violence both by lumpens, as well as incidents involving communist activists. Gandhinagar continued to be a centre for all kinds of violence. The reasons for this will be explained later. From 1960 onwards, major slums located on the banks of the Krishna river and adjoining the railway track, such as BhaskaraRaoPET became a major centre for criminal activities and violence. This occurred as gangs, political parties and trade unions developed a base for themselves in these areas. While these have slums existed since around 1900, the large scale migration of Kapus to these localities in the 1950s and 1960 and their recruitment mainly by Kamma leaders into political parties.
Map No 6
LOCATION OF VIOLENCE IN DIFFERENT PERIODS: 6000 - 1000 BC

These maps show the location and extent of violent crime during various periods. Violent events were more frequent in areas where population density was high.
trade, unions and gangs, made the slums a fertile ground for crime and violence and group clashes. In the 1970s and 1980s, in addition to Gandhinagar and Governorpet, newly developed areas, especially Kamma residential areas such as Patamata and Gunadala and areas adjoining Eluru Road became centres for collective violence. Krishna Lanka, a residential area for rich Kammas and poor Kapus as well as other castes also became a major centre for gangs, and for violence. 133

2. The spread, historically of collective violence to newer areas in the western part of Vijayawada also reflects the linkages between immigration and collective violence. Prior to 1940, most of the migrants, essentially poor migrants settled in the one town area and in a few slums in the emerging new town. The one town area, especially areas like Kothapeta became a centre for lumpen activities. Many Nagaras played a prominent role in these activities. Political conflicts also centred on this areas as both the Justice party (between 1920-35) and the Congress party recruited many of these lumpen youth into their parties. 134 The area was also a centre for several illegal activities such as production of illicit liquor and bootlegging - Nagaras were prominent in this. The beginning of communist activity from the mid 1930's further intensified political conflicts. Among the local people, Nagaras were some of the first to join the CPI. A Narga is hold to be the first martyr from the city during the crackdown on communists in 1946-50 in the aftermath of the Telangana struggle. 135
From the late 1930s and 1940s, both Kammans and Brahmins began to settle in the emerging new town, in areas like Gandhinagar, Governorpet and Mogulrajapuram. These areas also became the centre for political activities as party offices were located in these places and leaders and activists also settled in these areas. Thus these areas saw conflicts between communists and their opponents including agents of the state.

As many migrant workers began to work in other areas of the city, they in turn also became locations for violence. For instance transport workers unions in Gandhinagar came under the control of some gang leaders. Strikes and violent conflicts between rival union leaders were witnessed during the early 1960s in Gandhinagar. 136

By 1970, areas like Patamata and Gunadala had developed from agricultural areas to urban settlements, part of Vijayawada urban elongation. These were predominantly rich peasant residential areas. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, these two localities with Mogulrajapuram, Krishna Lanka, Gandhinagar and Governorpet were the main centres of violence. 137 These were the areas where new types of economic activities promoted by the rich community were located. Illegal economic activities and various criminal gangs were also concentrated in these areas, all located in the eastern half of the city. Thus over period of time parallel with urban growth and migration, the entire range of collective violence shifted from the western half to the eastern half of the city.
3. The settlement pattern of the city and the location of slums has also influenced the spatial occurrence of violence. Collective violence in Vijayawada is not an inner city problem. It is not an outcome of ghettoisation. While some major slums are centres for violence, these are not erstwhile elite or middle class areas which have decayed. These have originated as slums and stayed as such. Slums have been centres for small scale incidents of violence, for street brawls etc. They have not been centres for rioting except in rare cases as in 1964-65. Compared to central areas of the city and elite residential areas, violence in slums have been on a smaller scale. It was mentioned in an earlier chapter that central areas in Vijayawada have not decayed, the middle classes and elites continue to live there.\textsuperscript{138}

In Indian metropolitan cities, generally the newer parts of the city have not experienced frequent violent incidents.\textsuperscript{139} In Vijayawada, centrally located commercial and residential neighbourhoods are the major centres of violence. In addition some elite neighbourhoods in Patamata at the eastern end of the city are also major centres for conflicts.

Slum dwellers have actively taken part in rioting and looting. Most gang and political activists reside in slums near Gandhinagar, Krishna Lanka and in other slums located on the bank of the Krishna river. This has provided easy access to the major thoroughfares and commercial areas during riots. Also as canals parallel the main thoroughfares, residents of small slums along the canal berms have also usually participated in looting during riots.
SLUMS AND VIOLENCE

SLUMS PRONE TO CONFLICTS
SLUMS PRONE TO ATTACKS
SLUMS WHOSE RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE IN RIOTING/LOOTING

Slums targeted for attacks are near elite residential areas.
In slums prone to group conflicts, conflicts are mainly between gangs.
Slum residents participating in rioting/looting live near main avenues.

Source: From a map provided by the Urban Development Authority, Mumbai.
Different types of violence have tended to be concentrated in specific localities. Some areas have experienced all types of violence. These patterns are influenced by the selection of targets for attack which are based on the causes of violence and the persons/groups involved. Rioting has occurred in both upper class residential and commercial areas as well as localities where government offices and institutions are located. Where rioting is targeted against the Kamma community and activists of the Telugu Desam Party, rioting occurred in Krishna Lanka, Patamata and Gunadala and in Bandar Road, Eluru road, Besant Road, Gandhinagar and Governorpet-areas where Kamas own commercial enterprises, hotels, cinema Halls etc. 140

Rioting against agents of the state have been directed mainly at the railway station, and at office buildings in Gandhinagar and Governorpet and at the buildings situated on either side of a particular stretch of the Bandar Road. 141 Small scale incidents of violence involving killing of one or more persons have occurred in Gandhinagar, in and near Mogulrajapuram, Gunadala, Patamata and Krishna Lanka. 142 They have also occurred on the two main roads of Vijayawada-Bandar road and Eluru road, or on streets leading off these roads. Generally incidents have occurred as victims were travelling along these roads. Many victims or their assailants are connected to Telugu Desam or Congress parties whose offices are located off these roads. Many gang leaders also have their 'offices' in the areas mentioned above. 143 Most of these areas are under the control of the major gangs in Vijayawada. These are also either the residential areas
for rich Kammams or commercial areas where they have their businesses. Most Kamma patrons of gang leaders and the gang leaders themselves reside and operate and carry out their illegal activities in these areas.

Table 6.3
Destruction due to Fire Accidents in Vijayawada 1964-66

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>In Vijayawada City</th>
<th>In the slum areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Number of Incidents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House Destroyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Thatched</td>
<td>1316</td>
<td>1002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Tiled</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Terraced</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Number of Incidents</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House Destroyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Thatched</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Tiled</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Terraced</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Number of Incidents</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>House Destroyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Thatched</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Tiled</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Terraced</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These fire accidents were actually a result of group conflicts.

Table 6.4.
Locations of Rioting and Looting in the December 1988 riots

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations of Gang Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gandhi Nagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Governorpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Suryapet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Krishna Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Patamata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Gundala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Ring Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Bandar Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Kluru Road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations of Rioting and Looting in the December 1988 riots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bandar Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kluru Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ring Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Besant Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Canal Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Gandhi Nagar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Governorpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Gundala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Krishna Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Patamata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Hanumanpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ramavarappadu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Street brawls, not involving prior planning, but sometimes an offshoot of previous enmity has tended to occur in slums in and around Krishna Lanka and in slum and non slum areas of Kothapeta and Gandhinagar.\textsuperscript{144}

Krishna Lanka in particular and the slums adjoining it, lying between the river and the Bandar canal have been the center for various criminal activities and violence since the 1960s. For over a hundred years people belonging to all castes settled in this area. Kapus are in a large number. Amidst the slums, rich Kammas involved in the construction and transport sector also live here. These areas have a very dense population. The combination of high density, coexistence of different caste groups, poverty and criminal activities have created a volatile situation in this area. Bhaskararaopet was notorious for crime and violence, until the entire slum population was relocated in 1979.

Kothapeta, as mentioned earlier saw lumpen activities as far back as the 1920s and 1930s. Even today it continues to be a center for such activities often resulting in street brawls resulting in violence. Muslims who live in this area have had comparatively greater mobility due to their association with the prosperous transport sector in Vijayawada. Occasionally, members of other communities in the area pick up quarrels with a Muslim over a trivial issue which turns into group clashes.\textsuperscript{145} However, thus far, these incidents have been of a trivial nature.
Kothapeta and Gandhinagar have experienced another kind of violence between clashing groups of film fan clubs. Most fan clubs are located in the two areas. Occasionally their rival processions have clashed leading to injuries to several persons. In Kothapeta most fan clubs consist of political activists and some of them are caste based organization supporting an actor of their community.146

Gandhinagar area in Vijayawada experienced and continues to experience the entire repertoire of violence observed in Vijayawada. Since a number of government offices are located here, and violence related to anti-government protests have occurred here. Rioting directed at Kamma owned commercial establishments have been observed. In 1988, street hawkers joined the rioters targeting Brahmin and Vaisya retail shops also due to the latters' role in evicting them. Small scale gang and political violence has occurred. Violence by film fan clubs on rival clubs and in cinema halls is a common feature. Street brawls occur from time to time.

Gandhinagar with its prosperous commercial establishments, especially the film industry being located here, has been a strong base for a number of gangs. These gangs find sustenance from a large number of small slums in the area whose residents are some of the oldest migrants to Vijayawada.147 Clashes between rival gangs resulting in murders has been observed often since the 1960s. Due to the presence of a large number of cafes,
lodges and cinema halls in Gandhinagar, and the functioning of numerous fan clubs in this place, at any time of the day or night, there is always a large idle crowd in some of the streets of Gandhinagar. Thus scope is created for small incidents to be transformed into collective violence. Much of this idle crowd actually work full time for gangs, for fan clubs or provide protection to the large commercial establishments. They also include pimps, pickpockets, black marketers of cinema tickets etc. Thus scope for large scale illegal activities is also a reason for drawing gangs into Gandhinagar. As too many gangs attempt to organize and profit from these activities, it inevitably leads to conflicts.

In conclusion, in Vijayawada the patterns of violence with reference to space are distinct in many ways. Slums are not a major location for riots and murders involving political parties, factions and gangs. Central areas in the city, elite residential areas, upper class shopping avenues, major arteries and administrative areas are the major focus of collective violence. The old city has been free of major bouts of violence since around 1950. Earlier it was the centre of various kinds of violence collective violence in Vijayawada occurs in those areas where the provincial rich community reside or operate from and provide patronage to gangs in carrying out their own illegal economic activities.

Most of these issues regarding the spatial aspects of collective violence discussed above are to be clearly observed in
the 1988 riots. Since this event is more recent, much more information could be obtained directly from key informants. The magnitude of these riots are of a very high degree and along with the 1973 riots constitute the most violent events in the city's history. A brief description of the 1988 riots is presented in the following pages which also provides illustrations for many of the issues outlined in this chapter.

THE DECEMBER 1988 RIOTS

THE EVENT:

In the early hours of December 26, 1988, V. Ranga Rao, a Congress (I) M.L.A was killed in an attack by an armed mob of around forty persons allegedly led by his rival T.D.P. M.L.A D. Nehru. As a sequel to the murder, Vijayawada city witnessed widespread rioting, looting and arson for the next two days followed by intermittent incidents over the next one month. The rioting spread to towns and villages in the neighbouring districts. Rioting was targeting selectively against the Telugu Desam party and the Kamma community. In the city, agents of the state and other opponents of Ranga Rao were also made the targets of attack.

THE BACKGROUND:

The rivalry between Ranga Rao and Nehru dates back to a decade. The two groups had worked together in the early 1970s.
under CPI patronage for elite patrons of the city in criminal activities. Even after splitting from their CPI leader, they had been together. After the death of Radha, Ranga Rao’s brother, in 1974, the two groups were together until 1978 when they split as a result of personal disputes. Caste disputes were not a cause for the split and came to the fore much latter Ranga Rao was allegedly behind the killing of D. Gandhi, brother of Nehru. From the early 1980s, both started involving themselves in politics. Nehru joined the TDP and became an MLA in 1983. Ranga Rao was elected a municipal corporator on the Congress ticket in 1981.

From 1983 onwards, when the TDP won the state assembly elections, the Congress party had begun to project the TDP as a “Kamma” party. Nehru, as well as opponents of Ranga Rao in Vijayawada began to use official power against Ranga Rao and his followers. Finding himself implicated in various cases, he began to project himself as a leader of Kapus. In this endeavour he was supported both by the Congress party and by prominent members of the Kapu community in the region who were attempting to build a political base for themselves. A majority of urban lower middle class Kapus striving for social mobility constituted a ready support base. Thus there came about a meshing of rival caste mobilizations, political conflicts and gang rivalries.

In 1985, both the leaders were elected to the legislature on rival party tickets. In 1988, a younger brother of Nehru was killed, allegedly by Ranga Rao. In May and July 1985, the TDP
and Kapunadu organized massive public rallies in Vijayawada as a result of which political and caste rivalries intensified in the region and in the city in particular. It had also resulted in greater mobilization of rival political and caste groups and gangs. In such a situation, the killing of Ranga Rao allegedly by Nehru sparked off violent rioting in Vijayawada between various groups.

THE RIOT:

The rioting lasted for about a week from Dec. 26, 1988. Major part of the arson and looting occurred on 26th and 27th with isolated incidents on the subsequent days. Three major strands can be identified in the rioting.

First, the riot was directed against the dominant caste who were identified as Ranga's opponents, as the major obstacle to Kapu social mobility and who were believed to have colluded in the killing of Ranga Rao. Houses, property and shops belonging to the dominant caste members were identified for arson, destruction and looting. Hence a major part of rioting occurred in elite residential areas in Krishna Lanka, Mogulrajapuram and Gunadala; in upper class commercial areas and shopping arcades such as Eluru Road, Prakasam road, Bandar Road, Ring Road and Besant road. The film industry, largely owned by the Kannada community were targeted in Gandhinagar, the centre of the Telugu film industry. In the old town where few dominant castes
operate, rioting occurred in Canal road, from where a few Kamma operate their transport business. Dominant caste leaders in the TDP as well as in other parties like CPI and BJP were also targeted. Some non-Kamma leaders in the TDP were also attacked for the party's alleged role in the conspiracy.

The second strand involves attacks on those who were identified as opponents of Ranga Rao or against whom he had fought or led movements. Thus the property of G.S. Raju a local Congress leader and industrialist came under attack. He was a consistent opponent of Ranga Rao within the party and as city Congress president had even expelled him from the party for a brief period. Likewise, the local police who were seen to be partisan in "harassing" Ranga Rao were also attacked. The police who were assigned the task of protecting him, not only failed in their task; they were believed to have conspired in his killing. The transfer of over 156 Kapu policemen from the city who it was believed were helping Ranga in various ways was seen as a blatantly partisan act and as preparation for the attack on Ranga Rao and his followers.

During his lifetime, Ranga Rao had also taken up many cases of police 'atrocities' on persons who had committed petty offences. He had created a following among the urban poor, protecting them from police 'harassment. These persons were also an important constituent of rioters and looters. Similarly Ranga Rao had lead a popular movement of street vendors, protesting
their eviction from a major commercial thoroughfare—Besant Road. These people joined in rioting, targeting shops belonging to all communities in Besant Road who had got them evicted.

The third strand of violence pertains to the involvement of ordinary people, mostly in looting. These occurred mainly along the main arteries of the city such as Bandar Road and Fluru Road and in Krishna Lanka. Slum dwellers living alongside these roads, by the canal berms were mostly involved in looting. In Krishna Lanka, elite residential areas are surrounded by slums and lower class localities. The dominant caste residences were targeted for looting by local residents.

In the old city there was an attempt to loot the bullion and jewelry shops by ordinary people. However they were beaten back by the traders with support form the police. However, the old city was largely spared of rioting and destruction. This was because the major targets of attack such as TDP activists and the Kamma community had almost no base here. The spatial location of rioting was thus determined by the selection of targets for attack. Hence most of the violence was concentrated in particular areas of the city east of the railway track.

Though rioting was a response to a particular event by Ranga Rao's killing it cannot be said that they were spontaneous reactions. The ground was prepared by rival political, caste and criminal groups over a period of ten years and more. Not only

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did the actions of rival groups intensify hatred and hostility towards each other; in the immediate aftermath of Ranga Rao's death, state and national leaders made speeches instigating the people against the dominant caste and the TDP and by spreading rumours. There are also evidence to argue that much of the violence was organized and pre-planned. This is evident in the relative targeting, the organized movement of mobs moving from place to place and in the kind of statements made and actions of political leaders supporting Ranga Rao.

The December 1988 riots thus shows several features of collective violence typically observed in Vijayawada. Violence was mainly pre-planned and organized against previously selected targets. Mobs and groups of riot participants had clearly defined leaders who directed the movement and behaviour of rioting groups. The groups involved included gangs, political parties and caste groups which have traditionally been playing significant roles in collective violence in the city. Finally rioting occurred mainly in commercially significant and elite residential areas as has always occurred in the history of Vijayawada.

REASONS FOR VIOLENCE

In this section it is proposed to discuss the different reasons for the occurrence of incidents of collective violence in Vijayawada. In outlining the reasons, the various causes for
conflict between different kinds of groups, leading to violence, are also stated.

1. Patronage for gangs

The major reason for violence is of course the patronage given to various gangs by Kamma business and political elite. The involvement of gangs in illegal economic activities, political battles and in various social and political movements is a major cause for the different kinds of violence in Vijayawada. The continuous patronage to gangs generates its own momentum as they fight among themselves and on behalf of their patrons for supremacy.

2. Intra group conflicts

Conflicts within a group, be it a political party, a gang or some other group is frequently a reason for collective violence. In the case of gangs, intra group conflicts result mainly from disputes regarding leaderships and control, and regarding sharing of income and resources. Since the early 1960s, this has been a major reason for incidents involving killings of rival gang leaders and members. When gang leaders were also political activists, it led to splits and conflicts within parties also. Likewise, as in the 1960s, when gang leaders like C.Venkataratnam were also trade union leaders, conflicts for control of unions resulted in collective violence, in this case
in transport unions.\textsuperscript{149} Splits in gang in the late 1970s resulted in the two groups joining rival political parties and espousing the interests of rival caste groups—Kapu and Kamma. Splits in the communist party in Vijayawada came about mainly as a result of conflicts between rival gangs within the party. Likewise, faction fights within the Congress, both for reasons of power and caste interests resulted in major riots in 1966 and 1973.\textsuperscript{150} Rival gangs whose leaders hold political positions within the Congress continue to clash even now.\textsuperscript{151}

3. Inter group conflicts

Conflicts between different kinds of groups was also a cause for violence. The first instance of large scale group clashes were between the Justice party and the Congress in the 1920s and 1930s. From the 1940s, conflicts between the CPI and Congress began which last to this day. There were a series of violent conflicts among CPI, CPI(M) and the Congress in 1964-66. Since 1982, there have been incidents of collective violence between the TDP, Congress factions and the CPI. Most involved gang leaders within the parties. Some incidents revolve around political activities and elections. Clearly articulated conflicts between caste groups first occurred between Kammass and Brahmins/Vaisyas.\textsuperscript{152} Since 1983, Kamma-Kapu conflicts resulted in many conflicts including the December 1988 riots.
Conflicts between gangs over jurisdiction, over settlement of disputes, and over control of various illegal activities has been a major reason for small scale, specific calculated attacks since the 1960s.

Business elite, especially Kammans, have sometimes acted as a group in violent incidents against groups/gangs which have threatened their position. Violence against persons or groups who pose a threat to continued power and status is thus another reason. This reason is also applicable to rival gangs and gang leaders, and to political rivals within a party.

4. Violence as a means of mobilization

Violence is often used as a means for mobilization. In Vijayawada, groups and crowds involved in collective action do not necessarily indulge in collective violence. Conflict and violence itself is a motive for collectivities to form. Violence is planned in order to mobilize a following. In 1973, the riots were part of a deliberate plan to mobilize the separatists by disrupting a government procession opposing a separate Andhra. In 1988, the violence following Ranga Rao's killing articulated and united Kapu interests in a much better way than was possible earlier.

Even in the case of inter gang violence, violent action against opponents is also means for mobilisation, for creating greater solidarity in one's group.
The need to prove loyalty to a cause/party/group is linked to the process of mobilization of a support base. When there were doubts regarding Ranga Rao’s Kapu lineage, he led a fatal attack on a non-Kapu youth who wanted to marry a Kapu girl. Another youth was severely beaten up for this reason. Similar attempts were allegedly made by D. Nehru in the case of marriages involving a Kamma and non-Kamma, to prevent such marriages. These are just some violent examples of a larger process of mobilization. Just as Kammamas took part in every social and political movement to mobilize support for themselves, they also backed violent action, both rioting and selected killings in order to eliminate threats, create solidarity and mobilize support for their leadership.

Some of the reasons for collective violence are linked to the precipitating factors. In the absence of such a factor collective behaviour may have taken a non-violent form. These precipitating factors are discussed in the section on targets of attack.

A discussion of the causes of violent conflicts reveals that the rich peasant castes play a significant role in outbursts of collective violence. The intensity of violence between political groups and the continuity in this type of violence is unique to Vijayawada. Other cities have not had such intense conflicts between various political parties. The domination of all parties by the dominant caste in Vijayawada and the attempts by other
groups to resist its domination is one reason for continuous collective violence. The attempts at mobilization and group solidarity by various groups also lead to various protest movements which take a violent turn. In addition, the means used by Kamma entrepreneurs to maintain their illegal economic enterprises by using gangs, further generates collective violence. Ultimately, since the 1920s, the struggle by different groups to achieve mobility using whatever means possible and to acquire political power led to contentions among them. As dominant groups began to use illegal and violent means in their political struggles, violence, for all other subordinate groups became the "only reasonable and self preserving response."

"Hostile outbursts" were legitimized by "generalized beliefs" which encouraged illegal acts and violence by powerless groups.

At the beginning of this chapter it was stated that the views presented here differ from those perspectives which see collective violence as spontaneous outbursts of anger, deriving from frustration and hardships. The view presented here also differs from those who are of the view that collective violence episodes go against social norms, that they are unstructured responses to situations and they constitute deviation from "normal politics." In contrast, in outlining the reasons for generalized riots as well as specific calculated acts of intimidation and violence, this thesis emphasizes that collective violence is a product of the political system. Episodes are based on rational evaluations of the situation. They constitute
"effective means of entering or remaining in political life". Collective violence arises "when a group acts to defend or extend their own interests against others". Far from being a simple response to stimuli such as stresses and strain, these constitute compulsive and self conscious activity. As E.P. Thompson puts it in accounting for incidents of collective violence, one has to adopt the perspective of "moral economy". Collective violence is a result of anger, frustration etc., However, these are modified by "custom, culture and reason". Violence involves legitimizing notions grounded upon beliefs regarding traditionally existing norms, rights and obligations of the different parties and groups of society. Following Tilly, it is argued that collective violence arises out of struggle to acquire or maintain established places in the structure of power in the context of a provincial city.

One of the reasons for collective violence pertains not only to political struggles for power, but also the role of articulation of interests in generating violence and the utility of violent political action in generating group solidarity. As dominant groups devise and implement a variety of means to maintain its dominance, the group itself begins to lose legitimacy. On the other hand an ideology develops among the masses that perceives offensive, non conformist, illegal social and political behaviour as legitimate. In such circumstances, violence becomes a part of normal everyday political processes."
How do the patterns of violence observed in Vijayawada tally with patterns observed by scholars writing on collective violence? The earlier discussion showed that the norms of violence practiced by the dominant peasant class has legitimized violence as a means of achieving group goals among all communities in the city. Thus, to a certain extent it can be stated that there exists a "sub-culture of violence" in Vijayawada. However, though many groups are involved in incidents of violence, the total number of people actually participating in violence is quite small when compared against the city's population. Thus the presence of a sub-culture of violence does not mean that all or a majority of the citizens are violent. The limited generalization that can be made is that groups do not hesitate to use violence in conflicts and in their struggles for various goals. Violence is not seen as illegitimate and is often resorted to even when other non-violent means have not been exhausted.

Much of the data in Chapter IV tend to support the arguments put forth by scholars like Thompson, Lynch and Tilly. It has been seen that violence is often resorted to by groups which wish to maintain their entrenched position in the city's power structure. Collective violence incidents were usually an outcome of previous political activity, as Tilly suggested. They were not spontaneous; on the other hand they were well organized, methodical acts with clearly delineated goals. Thus it can be said that collective violence in Vijayawada supports the "rioting
as rational action”, thesis of Thompson and Lynch. However, unlike in the cases studied by these scholars, violence in Vijayawada were not a part of popular movements; though on occasions popular grievances did exist, they were articulated by criminal elements, political parties or caste leaders to achieve the goals of a small clique within the larger groups. Hence popular grievance instead of turning into anti-state movements became directed against other social groups. This aspect is an outcome of the typical ways in which the dominant class has inevitably attempted to hijack popular movements and by doing so suppress them / use them for their own ends.

Writers like Tilly and Mason have attempted to formulate typologies and categorize the various kinds of collective violence that occur. In Vijayawada it has been seen that almost all kinds of collective violence including insurrectionary anti-state violence, large scale riots, organized small scale attacks, conflicts between political groups and criminal elements, have occurred. Smelser includes all these under the rubric “hostile outburst”. An important aspect of the concept of collective violence as used in this thesis, is that hostile beliefs lead to violent forms of collective behaviour.

An overview of these aspects as well as other aspects pertaining to the patterns of collective violence is presented and discussed in the conclusion. In the process, these patterns are placed in the context of the provincial characteristics of Vijayawada, described in the earlier chapters of this thesis.
Notes to Chapter VI

1. For examples see Milgram, 1960, pp. 685. Also see Chapter I for a brief discussion.

2. For a discussion of their views see Chapter I.


5. Data obtained from National Crime Records Bureau. Table is give in the appendix Table 8.7.


7. See the views of Spencer outlined in Chapter I.

8. Table 6.7 in the appendix.

9. Field notes; see also Janashakti, 1988, pp. 10-12.

10. Field notes. Lakshman Rao, a Nagara leader provided a very illuminating discussion on these aspects.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Field notes. Interviews with Lakshman Rao and Mahbub Adam. See also Washbrook, 1977, pp. 245-251 and Baker, 1975, pp. 120.


15. Minutes of the Council meeting, 30. April 1933.


17. The term is used by Tilly in Tilly, . . . pp. 249-250, 1975.


19. For details see Sundarayya, 1977.

20. Ibid.


22. Field notes; see also Vissalendhra, 1962, pp. 5-7, and Sundarayya, op. cit., pp. 500.

23. Kaleswara Rao was one of these.

24. Field notes. Interviews with Satyanarayana, a trade union leader.


28. Field notes; see also Prasad, 1981.
29. See Table 6. 3 for details, as well as Chapter V.
30. For details see Chapter III.
31. See Janashakti, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
32. Ibid. Most locally prominent politicians use gang leaders.
33. Radha was killed during one such attempt; see Chapter III.
34. For details see Hanumantha Rao, 1990, pp. 248.
35. Ibid.
37. Field notes; discussion with CPI leaders.
39. Field notes. In this case it was V. Ranga Rao.
40. Field notes. It found open expression when the Congress party Kepa led gangsters against the TDP which it portrayed as a Kamma party.
41. See section on “1988 Riots,” this Chapter.
42. See section on illegal enterprises in Chapter IV. For a description of the rise to dominance of the Kamma in the political sphere, see preceding Chapter.
43. Both were elected in the 1989 elections - his wife from Vijayawada East and his brother from Vuyvuru in Krishna district. The brother lost in 1994.
44. See Table 6. 1.
45. This has been attempted by the Congress party with reference to the gangs controlled by the wife and brother of Ranga Rao.
46. Field notes; for details regarding the movement see Shatrughna, 1994 and Srinivasulu, 1994.
47. Table 6. 1.
48. Field notes. Some of them are listed in Table 6. 1.
49. This became very clear during the 1973 Jai Andhra movement.
50. See Spatial Aspects of Violence, this Chapter.
52. These are listed in Table 6. 1. Where rioting occurred after a gap of several days, but pertained to the same reason/cause, these have been counted separately.
53. These were in 1952,1986 and 1991.
54. See details of these incidents in Table 6. 1.
55. Field observation. Also interviews with Ganapati Rao.
56. This is very apparent to any visitor even on a fleeting visit to the city.
57. Field notes. See section on Gangs below in "Types of Groups".
58. These occurred during 1964–66, in 1970 and a few minor incidents in the 1980s.
59. See the incidents listed in Table 6. 1.
60. Such incidents occurred as recently as in 1982.
61. Field notes. These occurred near Moghulrajapuram, on the south side of the Gunadala hill.
62. Field notes. Interview with Ganapati Rao, a radical communist whose party opposed the attempt.
63. Ibid.
64. This feeling was very prominent during the 1988 riots.
65. Interview with a police official who led raids against pornography.
66. On this see Chapter V.
67. For details see Chapter V.
68. There are several known incidents when such threats seem to have worked.
70. See Chapter III.
71. A notable incident of a street brawl turning into a riot took place in 1982.
72. Tilly, op. cit. "Conclusion".
73. See Chapter III, section on Kama, for a description of this model. See also Ghosh, 1988, for a brief description of a peasant caste model of mobility.
74. This has been outlined in Chapter V.
75. This explains the common membership of different types of groups and the effect of conflicts between one set of groups translating into conflicts between other sets of groups.
76. See Ramanujam, 1989.
78. Ibid, 359.
79. Ibid.
80. For details see Chapter IV.
81. Field notes. Based on information obtained regarding the patterns of working of the gangs.
82. Hirst, 1973, pp. 53.
83. The intensity of the process climax during the 1988 riots and subsequent incidents of violence.
Field notes. Information collected from various sources regarding gangs currently operating.

This is the reason for the prominent role of Kapus in the politics of Vijayawada in this period.

This was the case of all non-kamma gang leaders.

The 1966 and 1973 incidents are discussed in Chapter V for details of incidents in the 1980s see Ganesh-Ramesh, 21-29.

Field notes. Discussions with trade union leaders, especially of the AITUC.

Field notes; see also Janashakti. Most prominent gang leaders in the 1970s and 1980s had their initial baptism in transport union conflicts in the 1960s.

These were mainly by rickshaw pullers and Road Transport Corporation workers.

Hirst, op.cit. pp.52.

Ibid, pp.53.

Field notes. Interview with Ganspati Rao.

This was D. Gandhi, killed during students union elections in 1979.

Field notes. Based on an analysis of participants in various incidents in the period.

For a discussion on this see Milgram, op.cit. and Chapter I of this thesis.


Field notes. Based on knowledge obtained regarding affiliations of various gang leaders.

Field notes. The Mayor was A. Basuulu of the CPI(N), and the MLAs included V. Ranga Rao and D. Rajasekhar.

Field notes. See "1986 Riots" below.

Field notes. Discussions with key informants.

Ibid.

For a description see Prasad, 1981, pp.51-52.

According to some reports they mainly consisted of Vaddaras and other low caste groups.

Field notes. Based on an analysis of past and present leaders and current activists in the parties.

Field notes. Discussions with a few activists.

Field notes. Discussions with a few activists, and others.
108. Field notes. The exceptions are the leaders of the larger gangs.


110. Ibid.


112. Ibid.

113. Lupsha, op. cit., pp. 301-305 for some views on this.

114. This was very clearly seen in the 1988 and 1991 riots.

115. Lupsha, op. cit., pp. 311.


117. This aspect is very clearly perceived and articulated by the groups.

118. See comments of Spencer on these aspects in Chapter I.


120. See "Jai Andhra movement", Chapter V.

121. See below, "1988 riots".

122. See Chapter V.

123. Ibid.

124. See Table 6. 1 for a brief description.

125. Field notes. See description in Table 6. 1.

126. This was the faction led by G.S.Raju. For details see Chapter III.

127. This was the case even in 1952.

128. The discussion here pertains to the 1988 riots.

129. See brief description in Table 6. 1.

130. Field notes; see map no. 11. These have been observed in the 1988 and 1991 riots.

131. See discussion in Chapter II.

132. For a description of this slum see Rao and Rao, 1994.

133. Field notes. The area was the base for V. Bhega Rao and several gangs continue to operate from here.

134. See Chapter III for details.

135. Field notes. His name was Appa Rao.

136. Field notes. These were between CPI affiliated union leaders and rival gangs/ unions.

137. This is evident from a perusal of the localities where violence occurred, listed in Table 6. 1.

138. Chapter V.

139. On this see Naidu, 1992. This trend however seems to be changing in the post-Ayodhya (1992) bouts of rioting.
140. See Table 8. 4. Also see map. no. 9.

141. This was observed during violence in 1952, 1966, 1973 and 1988.

142. Field notes. Conclusion based on incidents listed in Table 6.1, as well as from data on other minor incidents.

143. Field notes. Information obtained during field work.

144. See map. no. 9.

145. One such incident which became a major group clash, occurred in 1992.

146. Field notes. Based on an analysis of fan clubs and their leaders.

147. Field notes. These slums are mainly located along the banks of the Eluru canal adjoining Gandhinagar.

148. The following description is based on details obtained from interviews with key informants, newspaper reports, Forum for Democratic Rights, 1989, and Ganesha Ramesh, 1988.

149. Field notes. Interviews with trade union leaders.

150. See description in Table 6. 1; also see Chapter V.

151. Conflicts occur mainly between gangs led by the wife and brother of Ranga Rao, erstwhile MLA and gang leader killed in 1988.

152. See Chapter V; see also Suryanarayana, pp.138-145.

153. This was the major reason for the murders of the Vangaveeti brothers in 1974 and in 1988.

154. See Chapter V.

155. This is reflected in the successful mobilization of the Kapus in the post 1988 period.

156. Field notes. Ranga Rao was not only of mixed Kapu/Kammal origin, he was also married to a Kamma.

157. Field notes. Interview with some informants who mediated in these cases.


161. Ibid. pp. 85

162. Ibid.

163. Thompson, 1971, pp. 76

164. Tilly, pp. 86.

165. Ibid.

