

**PATTERNS OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE IN A PROVINCIAL CITY**

**THE CASE OF VIJAYAWADA**

**A Thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad  
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**By**

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This is to certify that I, D.Parthasarathy have carried out the research embodied in the present thesis for the full period prescribed under the Ph.D ordinances of the University.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge no part of this thesis was earlier submitted for the award of the research degree of any university.

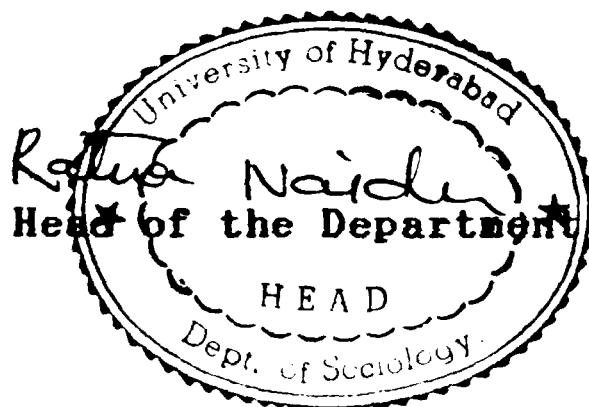
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**CHAPTER 1**  
**PROVINCIAL CITY AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE:**  
**THEORY, CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGY**

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# CHAPTER 1

## PROVINCIAL CITY AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE

### THEORY, CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGY

#### RESEARCH PROBLEM:

This thesis seeks to explain the phenomenon of endemic violence between different kinds of groups in the city of Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. Violence between and among gangs, political parties and caste groups has been observed in Vijayawada for over fifty years. Since the early 1960s this phenomenon has been more virulent and has expressed itself more frequently.

This thesis attempts to relate the occurrence of collective violence in Vijayawada to the distinct character of the city. Vijayawada is characterized as a *provincial* city. The provincial city is profiled in terms of its physical, demographic, social, economic and political attributes. Thus, the problem to be investigated also involves developing the concept of a provincial city through a study of Vijayawada. Collective violence is then explained as a typical phenomenon arising out of the city's provincial characteristics.

The following issues are addressed in studying collective violence in the context of the provincial characteristics of Vijayawada.



What are the patterns in which the incidents of collective violence express themselves? Who are the actors and groups involved? What are the issues and methods used for mobilizing people? What are the precipitating factors? Why do the conflicts express themselves in different forms? How do the rivalries change from inter gang rivalries to caste or political conflicts?

Further, issues relating to the provincial city constitute part of the main research problem to be investigated. The questions here are:

In what way are the incidents of collective violence related to the social structure of a provincial city? What are the distinct characteristics of a provincial city?

#### HYPOTHESIS:

The hypothesis of the thesis was formulated after initial field work. In trying to understand the background of the city of Vijayawada by studying various aspects, it was observed that a particular caste group in Vijayawada having a rural-agricultural background, dominated all aspects of the city. This rural rich caste was dominant in the economy, politics, various social movements, education and in the professions. In speaking to several key informants regarding violence as well as general aspects pertaining to the city, hostility to this dominant group could be clearly discerned. Moreover, this group was always involved either as the aggressor or as victim in the majority of the cases of violence over the last fifty years.

The hypothesis of this thesis is that the patterns of collective violence - targets of attack, types of groups and participants involved, locational aspects, attitudes towards conflict resolution etc.- in a provincial city are different from patterns observed in larger metropolitan cities. As already stated conceptualization of the attributes of the provincial city is a major task in this thesis. The structure of the provincial city acquires its typical form from its susceptibility to large scale illegalities in the economy and the violent and conflictual styles used by groups in their struggles for social mobility

#### Methodology:

The thesis describes Vijayawada is a provincial city - a city that owes its growth and distinct traits to, and is dominated by a provincial rich class with a base in agriculture. This class has tended to use distinctive methods in their attempts to achieve and maintain social mobility, social status and political power. This tendency itself has been a major factor in contributing to collective violence. Resistance by rival groups striving to adopt similar means in struggles to maintain or achieve their status/mobility, has intensified the patterns of collective violence in Vijayawada.

Rival struggles for mobility and status, in the context of the kind of particular strategies and techniques introduced by the dominant caste for this purpose, had an impact on institutions, structures and processes in specific ways. These

in turn generated the distinct patterns of collective violence observed in Vijayawada.

There were three major steps involved in researching into the problem. The first was to describe the various facets of Vijayawada city so as to outline the attributes of the concept of a provincial city. The second was to describe and explain the various patterns of collective violence observed in Vijayawada. The third step was to link the patterns of collective violence with the provincial characteristics of Vijayawada. Actual research, involving both field work and secondary research was carried out simultaneously with regard to the first two aspects.

In trying to describe these aspects, the basis of the thesis is less on quantitative techniques to prove the dominance of the peasant class, but focusses more on the qualitative aspects of the phenomenon. Thus the methods of research did not involve survey type of research nor did it involve collecting quantitative data to show numerical dominance of the peasant class in various sectors. The emphasis was on showing the way in which a small proportion of the city's population-the rich peasant class, emerged dominant and influenced the different aspects of the city in significant ways. The importance of this

influence on collective violence was kept in mind, while describing the impact of the peasant caste on various aspects.

In studying the patterns of collective violence, initially data pertaining to all known incidents of collective violence over a period of fifty years was collected. Different patterns were identified based on available literature and from the data obtained. The incidents of violence were then grouped under the different patterns. Analysis was done based on the linkages of each pattern to the provincial characteristics of the city.

The attempt in this thesis is not to develop a comprehensive typology of cities as the classics have done<sup>1</sup>. This requires a much more complex and comprehensive exercise. Nor is an attempt being made to develop an ideal type of a provincial city. This requires a comparative study of more cities with similar characteristics in order to abstract the ideal typical features of this type of city. This exercise is beyond the scope of this study. This thesis attempts through the case study method, to develop a profile of the provincial type of city. This is done in the hope that such an in depth description will enable the identification of cities with similar traits elsewhere in India.

While not attempting a typology, the thesis however distinguishes between a provincial city and the type which is well known as a metropolitan city. The distinguishing features of

a provincial city are outlined in page 20; the differences of these features as compared with the metropolitan city are outlined in tabular form on page 240.

The initial reason for taking up this topic pertained to the endemic incidents of violence in Vijayawada. In attempting to explain this phenomenon, it was necessary to understand Vijayawada as a live ecological complex. The thesis found linkages between significant aspects of this complex and collective violence. In describing the distinct characteristics of Vijayawada, the thesis found it useful to develop and describe the concept of provincial city. The endeavour in this thesis is to do an intensive case study of the city of Vijayawada so as to elicit a descriptive analysis of the structure of a provincial city and its culture. Thereby the real causes for the endemic collective violence can be explained.

R.K. Yin describes a case study as "an empirical enquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context, when 1). the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which 2). multiple sources of evidence are used"<sup>2</sup>.

After initial survey of the literature and preliminary visits to the field, the research problem and hypothesis were formulated. Based on these, certain research questions were formulated. These were then made a basis for preparing a list of data to be collected. The following is the list.

1. Demographic structure of Vijayawada -occupational structure, migration, caste - changes over time.
2. Economic background of the city - impact on space, migration and social structure.
3. Urbanization, land use patterns, slums.
4. Nature of the class and caste structure, identification of dominant class/castes, their background, economic activities and political behaviour.
5. Political history of the city - analysis of elections, parties and local politics.
6. Background information on riots, group rivalries, murders, personalities and groups involved, and conflict prone areas.
7. Patterns of crime and violence historically in the city.
8. Cultural characteristics typical of Vijayawada.

The case study was carried out using a number of techniques of research.

The research design and analytical strategy of the case study reflected the descriptive and exploratory nature of the study. A descriptive framework was developed for organizing the data. Different sources of evidence were made use of.

These included:

1. Archival records: police reports, census records, newspaper reports etc.
2. Documentary evidence: published and unpublished books, articles, existing studies of the same site etc.

3. Interviews: informal and focused interviews with key informants.

4. Observation, both direct and participant observation.

Both qualitative and quantitative information were collected. The quantitative data pertains to demography, economic structure and urbanization in Vijayawada. These data were collected from secondary sources such as census reports, government reports, archival material and studies by social scientists.

Information pertaining to violence, conflicts, riots were obtained from police records, municipal records, newspapers, and inquiry commission reports. Information on riots, group rivalries and acts of violence were also obtained from primary sources. This involved focused and informal interview with several categories of informants. These included:

1. Political leaders and activists of various parties, including those involved in violent conflicts.
2. Police personnel.
3. Newspaper editors and reporters.
4. Student/ youth leaders.
5. Others.

Social anthropological techniques such as participant and non-participant observation were used apart from informal discussions with key informants in order to obtain information regarding the cultural aspects which are characteristic of

Vijayawada and which are a part of the larger social and political culture promoting violence in the city.

A survey was carried out for the study of the dominant families in Vijayawada's society, polity and economy<sup>3</sup>. This was done through informal discussions both with members of these families as well as with other key informants. The aim of this survey was to study the migratory status, class and caste status, business interests, political activities and networks of these persons and their families. The limited aim of this exercise was to draw insights from a description of the above aspects. The sample being too small, no attempt was made to do detailed statistical analysis of the data obtained.

The first chapter of the thesis states the research problem, outlines the methodology, and develops the theoretical basis for the two concepts used in this thesis - provincial city and collective violence. The second chapter deals with the historical demography of Vijayawada. Migration, occupation structure, patterns of urbanization and land use are the aspects that are covered in this chapter. The third chapter traces the evolution and changing status of various communities in the city. The distinct economic structure and entrepreneurial behaviour and the political aspects of the city are discussed in the fourth chapter. In the fifth chapter, the cultural roots of violence are discussed by presenting data pertaining to cultural forms and social and political movements.



The sixth chapter presents and analysis data pertaining to the diverse patterns of collective violence in Vijayawada. The concluding section in this chapter presents in summary form, the types of collective violence that are likely to occur in what is conceptualized in this thesis as a provincial city.

#### PROVINCIAL CITY AND COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: CONCEPTS IN THE LITERATURE

The two main concepts that will be used in this thesis and that require conceptual development and definition are "Provincial City" and "Collective Violence". Since the concepts are located within various theoretical paradigms which determine the way in which they are applied to field situations, there will be brief discussions regarding the theoretical perspectives behind the concepts being used.

Various writings by authors in related areas are reviewed. Those ideas presented by them which are useful for formulating the concepts used in this thesis are highlighted. The concepts provincial city and collective violence were developed based on available literature as well as from field observations which are described in the later chapter.

## THE CONCEPT OF PROVINCIAL CITY

Extensive survey of the literature revealed that the word provincial and the term provincial city has not been adequately conceptualised or developed by sociologists.

Bryan Roberts is the only scholar to actually use the term "provincial city" along with "provincial region" and "provincial economy"<sup>4</sup>. The local economic activity of the provincial cities have a relative autonomy and the small scale sector is the dominant form of industry in the Peruvian cities he studied. Industries are labour intensive and are characterized by a heavy dependence on personal and kinship relations<sup>5</sup>. In studying provincial cities and their economies Roberts progressed from a position of viewing the cities as having stagnant economies, to seeing them as being more dynamic, relatively autonomous and even being able to "affect and limit the impact of the dominant economic forces in the country"<sup>6</sup>. Since Roberts accepts the view that capitalism has completely penetrated all sectors, he states that the provincial city has passed the stage where it was dominated by the rural rich. These have now moved to the metropolitan cities and it is mainly the poor and the lower middle class who constitute the enterprising class in the informal sector<sup>7</sup>. In India, the rural aristocracy landlord class continue to be dominant as in the case of Vijayawada. Roberts does not explicitly define the concept.

The term *province* is defined as "a territory at some distance from the metropolis" by the Oxford dictionary<sup>8</sup>. It defines *provincial* as "narrowness of interest" and *provincialism* as "attachment to one's own province and its interest, before those of the nation or state"<sup>9</sup>. The Webster's dictionary refers to *provincial* as "characteristic of the inhabitants of a province, of narrow interests or thought"<sup>10</sup>.

It may be mentioned here that the term *provincial* is not being used in this thesis in a pejorative manner. The term is used to refer to the geographic, economic and migrational aspects of Vijayawada.

Historians such as Washbrook have used the term *provincial* to refer to life in the provinces - the administrative divisions in the presidencies during British rule<sup>11</sup>.

He specifically discusses "provincial politics" that is, the style of political activity which is distinctive of the provincial elite - the rich peasant class who migrate towards towns in search of opportunities for investment, power and prestige<sup>12</sup>.

Writing on the evolution of a distinct political structure in the provinces of the Madras presidency in early 20th century, Washbrook states that changes in "economic and administrative conditions" produced a distinct style of peasant participation in politics where they used all kinds of issues to mobilize

themselves<sup>13</sup>. The development of power centers in the capital of a provincial region such as Madras, meant that local level politicians and landlords had to enter into alliances, form new types of political associations and engage in new forms of political activities, in order to preserve their power and status at the level of village, town or district. This involved taking up a variety of issues which could be used for mobilizing a base for the rural and small town elite in the provinces<sup>14</sup>. Using the examples of the nationalist movement led by the Congress and the non-brahmin movement led by the Justice Party, he discusses the "Emergence of Provincial politics" in the Madras presidency. It may be stated here that the beginning of collective violence and groups rivalries in Vijayawada can be traced to the entry of the Justice Party, led by rich Kamma Zamindars and landlords into the political fray in Vijayawada in particular and more generally in Krishna district and in the rest of the province<sup>15</sup>.

S. Harrison also writes about the rise of a provincial elite at regional levels who "exercised profound influence on Indian political life"<sup>16</sup>. In charting the cultural consequences of the emergence of this class he mentions the development of vernacular, wherein the "language of farm" became the "language of factory and literature"<sup>17</sup>. Lacking cosmopolitan polish" and in the context of rising literacy, "pulp culture" spread through "pulp writers, who addressed themselves to millions of new literates", in the vernacular<sup>18</sup>. He also discusses the way in which provincial elites "drew motive from regional caste factors"

in the Andhra movement for provincial autonomy<sup>19</sup>. The development of the Krishna Delta as a centre for communist activity is also explained as a consequence of the way in which rich Kamma peasants in the delta area used the communist movement to create a base for themselves in opposition to the Congress.

The communist leadership since the 1950s was based in Vijayawada and the city continues to have considerable communist presence. Evidence collected thus far has shown that the support of the Kamma caste to the communist party of India has been an important factor for the involvement of the CPI in incidents of collective violence<sup>20</sup>.

The debates on the farmers movement in India in the 1980s also led to a focus on the "provincial classes", their aspirations and style of politics.<sup>21</sup> The term was used to refer to the new rich agricultural classes which is becoming dominant in social, political and economic fields and it increasingly resorting to violence to maintain its dominance. Balagopal states that over period of time rural wealth was transferred to urban areas and invested in finance, transport, trade, construction, films agro-based industries and "in the marketable profession" such as medicine and law<sup>22</sup>. This process resulted in "a gradual consolidation of a class of rural-small town rich", a class of the provincial rich constituting mainly absentee landholders<sup>23</sup>.

Having outlined the few pointers available from the literature towards the development of the concept and based on the descriptions obtained from field work, the major feature of a provincial city may be describe as its dominance provincial city is its dominance by a rich peasant class which has migrated to the city.

In Vijayawada the provincial rich class that is dominant is a particular caste- the Kamma caste. M.N.Srinivas' concept of dominant caste is being used to refer to this caste in Vijayawada. Srinivas used the term to refer to a caste in a rural setting which has numerical strength, high ritual status, large land holding and it increasingly taking to western and non traditional occupations and education<sup>24</sup>. This definition is being used in this thesis with some modifications to fit the urban setting. In a city, where there is a much larger number of caste groups, it is not possible for any one caste to be numerically dominant. The rich peasant caste in Vijayawada is thus one of the caste groups with a large numerical strength.

Originally belonging to the Sudra category in the varna system the Kamma caste both due to its improved socio economic status as well as attempts at Sanskritization today occupies a high ritual status, next only to Brahmins and Vaisyas<sup>25</sup>.

As far as land holding is concerned, a high percentage of the rich peasant class in the city continue to have direct and indirect links with land holdings in the villages. More importantly, in the city itself, this class holds much of prime real estate in Vijayawada. It has a dominant position in the economy, by virtue of its control over large sectors of the economy including trade, services, transport and industry<sup>26</sup>.

In the next few chapters, it is shown that this class has also successfully aspired for and achieved a significant positions in Western occupations, and has played a pioneering role in promoting western type of educational institutions. In various other aspects, such as leadership of social/ political movements, impact on cultural patterns, political behaviour and spatial aspects of the city, the rich peasant class has raised itself to the status of a dominant caste in an urban setting. The nature of this dominance and its impact in terms of continuous incidents of collective violence, are described and analysed in the subsequent chapters.

In Vijayawada not only do dominant caste individuals occupy most of the power positions, but, as Dube puts it in his study of "Caste Dominance and Factionalism", "unity and concerted action in terms of caste interest" can be clearly discerned.<sup>27</sup> Factions within the dominant caste have been a minor feature of Vijayawada's political history. Even when dominant caste individuals have belonged to different political parties or

patronised rival gangs, they have tended to exercise power "in the interest of the whole group or at least a significant part of it."<sup>28</sup>

Thus what is being suggested here is that the domination of the city by a provincial rich class having a base in agriculture tends to have an impact on the social and political structure of the city. This impact translates itself into adverse consequences, that is, it makes the social structure conducive to collective violence. It is in this context that the observations by Max Weber on the city has relevance for this study.

Weber argued that cities are linked to processes that are beyond themselves and stated that cultural values constitute the primary variable for the study of the city<sup>29</sup>. Patterns within the urban community are to be explained by focussing on the social structure and social power. The nature of the society and economy in which the city is situated and the class dominating the city therefore become important factors in the study of the city.

Historians such as Bayly have expressed similar ideas, referring to cities as the creation of elites<sup>30</sup>. He states that elites and dominant classes have a stake and interest in "local cities", which result in the persistence of traditional values and attitudes as well as rural forms of social organization, such



cities have comparatively little industrialization and is characterized by a large tertiary sector.

On somewhat similar lines Sjoberg refers to the important political, religious and education functions of the "pre-industrial city"<sup>31</sup>. Such cities mainly function as an "entrepot" for trade situated as they are in an agricultural hinterland. Vijayawada, situated in an agriculturally rich delta region is also an entrepot for the regional agricultural produce Pahl, criticizing, dominant western definitions of cities, states that settlement types are less important as compared to class and life-cycle stage of the residents in explaining urban characteristics<sup>32</sup>. In developing countries, he points to the continuing persistence of social networks, patron client relationships and community power structures in the urban areas.

Mcgee uses the term "peasant style of production" to refer to economics in third world cities having non capital intensive industries and a predominance of the service and tertiary sectors<sup>33</sup>. He also mentions the significant impact of migration in forming the distinctive nature of cities.

Scholars working in the area of urban studies have formulated several typologies of cities based on the nature, function role of the cities that are being classified "Primate cities" (Jefferson, 1939), "Political intellectual centres and

economic centres", (Pirenne, 1946) " Patrician" and "Plebeian" cities (Weber, 1958), "orthogenetic" and "heterogenetic" cities (Redfield and Singer 1956) and "preindustrial and industrial cities" (Sjoberg, 1960) are some of the classifications that have been evolved by urban sociologists. Several other types have also been developed by scholars working on cities. The conceptual attributes of the provincial city as an urban type have however not been clearly elucidated. In India there have been a large number of city studies, since the early 1950s. when the Govt. of India sponsored a number of studies on cities. Since then, there have been a large number of studies which have been of a survey type, focusing mainly on demographic processes and socio-economic background of the city's residents<sup>34</sup>. There have been few studies which have combined in depth socio-economic description with sociological explanations of phenomena such as communal violence, political behaviour etc. Over the last few years, a few such studies have been attempted for cities like Hyderabad, Surat and Bombay, apart from other small towns<sup>35</sup>. In this context, this thesis attempts to develop the concept of provincial city through a detailed study of Vijayawada, and link it to processes of collective violence observed in the city.

For the purposes of this thesis the various characteristics of the provincial city may be listed as follows<sup>36</sup>:-

1. It is situated away from the metropolitan areas of a country.
2. It is situated in a rural, agricultural hinterland.

3. It functions as an entrepot, a centre for export of agricultural produce.
4. The economy of the city is largely based on trade and commerce.
5. It is centre for the investment of surplus generated in the rural economy.
6. Investments are made mostly in sectors producing quick profits and requiring less investment in capital goods.
7. Where capital investment is high, there is less scope for recurring costs. Eg. Cinema Industry.
8. Investments are mainly in transport, communication, construction, services and entertainment industries.
9. Very few manufacturing industries exist. Even these are mainly in the small scale sector.
10. Majority of the working population are employed in trade, commerce, transportation and services sectors.
11. Migrants have a dominant position in economy, society and policy.
12. A large section of the work force also consists of migrants.
13. Though the city may have had a history of urbanization in the past, it owes its present growth and importance to the rise of a rural rich class, their migration and their investments in the city.
14. The city is highly politicized.
15. It is centre for various kinds of political and social movements.

16. It has a distinct culture of its own that is a unique mixture of the typical culture of rural rich and the nouveau urban culture. This culture reflects the cultural traits, ideas and values of the city's elite.

These being the criteria that can be employed in identifying a provincial city, a definition will be provided at the conclusion of this chapter following a discussion of the concept of collective violence.

#### THE CONCEPT OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE:

A brief description of the nature of violence in Vijayawada will now be presented followed by a discussion of the various conceptualizations of collective behaviour and collective violence. This will serve to put in context those ideas from scholarly contributions which are highlighted for the purposes of this thesis.

Attacks on property and person have taken various form over the past fifty years in Vijayawada. Sometimes as in the 1980s, conflicts occurred between Kapus and Kammas, culminating in large scale rioting in Vijayawada and other cities in coastal Andhra. In the 1960s and continuing upto the present, there have been a number of attacks on each others activists between the Congress and the Communist Party of India. The last decade has seen a number of violent conflicts between factions belonging to the

Congress (I) , CPI, CPM and the TDP, between factions of a singleparty as well as between members of non-party groups, gangs and others. One feature that has been persistently observed in Vijayawada historically is violent conflicts between organized criminal gangs. How does one study the diverse types of violence that has been occurring? Are they political conflicts? Or do we label them as caste conflicts? Are they the usual "gang wars" that occur in cities throughout the world?

Close observation showed that though caste was a persistent factor all along, it was never a basis for mobilization and targeting for attacks until the 1980s. Likewise political issues have never been at the core of the conflicts. How then does one label the phenomena under study? Can we term them as "inter-group conflicts?" While actual animosities between groups do exist, the incidents do not usually involve members of two groups fighting it out. While incidents of rioting are to some extent spontaneous, they usually take the form of one group targeting another which at that time is usually at the receiving end; likewise all other incidents are carefully planned attacks on one or more member of a group by members of a hostile group. That is, most incidents of violence usually involve a single collective unit attacking the person and property of a hostile opponent group.

After a survey of the literature on group behaviour, crowds gangs, riots and violence, the term "collective violence" was

selected to categorize the incidents of violence observed in Vijayawada.

A brief discussion of the classic sociological works on collective behaviour will be presented in order to throw light on "collective violence" and to evolve an appropriate definition of the concept.

Herbert Blumer was a pioneer in the field of collective behaviour in the 1930s. He defined the term as "primitive forms of human interaction" that constitute the "antecedent conditions for social unrest, crowd behaviour, social movements etc."<sup>37</sup>. For Blumer, collective behaviour are the mechanisms whereby people are led to act collectively by "breaking through established rules and realities of group life"<sup>38</sup>. He lays stress on the spontaneity of collective behaviour and their emergence under conditions of unrest, the absence of established rules and of organizational features. Collective behaviour "operates outside the governing framework of rules and culture." Examples of collective behaviour are crowds, public, the mass, riots, stampedes, etc<sup>39</sup>.

One of the seminal contributions to the theory of collective behaviour is that of Smelser. He agreed with previous writings with reference to the characteristics of collective behaviour such as spontaneity, distinct methods of communication and absence of institutional aspects. However, he sought to provide

a definition which would limit the scope of the term to specific form of collective behaviour<sup>40</sup>.

Smelser defines collective behaviour as "purposive behaviour in which people are trying to reconstitute their social environment on the basis of certain kinds of beliefs" which is termed "generalize beliefs"<sup>41</sup>. He then proceeds to explain the various processes that influence the emergence of collective behaviour. In specifying the different forms of collective behavior, he writes about one type that is relevant for our study. This is the "hostile outburst" which is defined as "mobilisation for action under hostile belief"<sup>42</sup>. The definition includes riots, organized conspiratorial attacks, as well as uncoordinated brawls. To fit the definition, "the participant in an outburst must be bent on attacking someone considered responsible for a a disturbing state of affairs"<sup>43</sup>. An important aspect of Smelser's views is that hostility is a component of the beliefs that lead to hostile forms of collective behaviour.

Ralph Turner in his works on collective behaviour defines it in terms similar so that of Smelser. For him collective behaviour is group behaviour that is spontaneous, unstructured and unstable and not rooted in usual cultural or social norms<sup>44</sup>. In a later article, he warns against too much emphasis on spontaneity, unpredictability and discontinuity from social norms. He states that given the complexity of the social structure it is not always possible to recognize some aspects of collective

behaviour. Sometimes they do have continuity with conventional behaviour and they can occur as part of institutional phenomena, he states.<sup>45</sup>

Robert Park differs from other scholars in explaining collective behaviour as a "normal operation of society"<sup>46</sup>. He defines the term as "the behaviour of individuals under the influence of an impulse that is common and collective, an impulse in other words, that is the result of social interaction".<sup>47</sup>

Most works on collective behaviour use crowds, mobs and riots and examples in analyzing the phenomena. the classic works on crowds are those by LeBon, G. Rude and Canetti<sup>48</sup>. These works as well as those by psychologists like Allport and Freud place emphasis on the collective unconscious and on stresses and strains in the social structure, a sense of deprivation, frustration etc<sup>49</sup>, that is, irrational factors which influence the violent behaviour of groups and collectivities. The recent riots in India have raised doubts about such approaches, by exposing the selective and planned nature of violence. A tradition of research does exist which sees rioting and collective acts of violence as rational behaviour. Thompson's classic study of the "moral economy of the crowd" on 18th century England explains the rationality of "spontaneous" riots<sup>50</sup>. Lynch in his study of the 1978 riots in Agra uses this approach to state that urban violence in Agra had "an element of rationality and deliberation" and was "orderly and culturally normative"<sup>51</sup>.



Both Lynch and Tilly warn against viewing riots as an outlet for individual frustration and reaction to deprivation and injustice.

E.P. Thompson was one of the pioneers in proposing the thesis of "rioting as rational action"<sup>52</sup>. He and subsequently other authors rejected the "spasmodic view" of popular history<sup>53</sup>. They argued that riots are not irrational and spontaneous phenomena, and that "culture plays a significant role as an independent variable", behaviour during rioting is seen to be "modified by custom, culture and reason"<sup>54</sup>. Violence is portrayed by these scholars as a studied response to perceived denial of rights. Collective violence arises whenever any group faces danger of a loss of rights and is supported by beliefs which legitimate violence. In such cases violence provides a unity of purpose and cohesiveness to the group. As Lynch puts it in his study of Agra, violence is a "cultural construct and idea"<sup>55</sup>. This perspective is useful in studying Vijayawada. It will be shown that the means used by a group to maintain its dominant status and struggles to achieve and maintain social status and political power in the face of similar mobilizations by rival groups, are an important contributor to collective violence in Vijayawada.

These ideas are also reflected in Charles Tilly's pioneering work on collective violence in Europe. In his classic studies on

"collective violence", Tilly states that actors who participate in collective action include "the outcaste and the privileged, the successful and the ineffectual"<sup>56</sup>. "Collective action" is used by him to cover a wide range of behaviour - both legal and acceptable and illegal. While not providing a precise definition of the term he does give a working definition. Collective violence applies to "events that meet some minimum criteria of size and damage to persons and property, with international events excluded"<sup>57</sup>. He gives importance to the factions involved in the struggle for power and to the effect of political activity in explaining collective violence. Collective violence is a tactic which effectively establishes and maintains a group's identity... may possess a normative order... and frequently evolve with peaceful political action"<sup>58</sup>. Tilly rejects descriptions of collective violence which state that they are irrational outbursts. For him they are "purposeful" actions which "flow out of routine political life"<sup>59</sup> and constitute "an effective means of entering or remaining in political life". Violence arises when one group "resists the claims being made by another". As we shall see in the case of Vijayawada, these observations provide an accurate picture of the causes and patterns of collective violence in the city.

In his historical studies, Tilly observed shifts in collective violence towards large scale more highly organized forms. He identified three different types of collective violence during different periods<sup>60</sup>.

1. Competitive violence, before 1700, expressed itself in feuds, brawls between neighbourhood youth and destruction targeted against those "who infringe local customs".
2. Reactive violence describes "defensive, backward looking", violent action between people and Government during 1700-1850. These are seen during grain riots, violence against taxes, against capitalist development etc.
3. Proactive violence, from the 1850s onwards refers to groups attempting "to control or influence the state". The groups are "formally organized", are "special purpose associations" and have "clearly articulated goals".

These types are used in a later chapter as a basis for describing patterns of violence in Vijayawada.

In his writings on ethnic violence in Sri Lanka, Spencer studies the methodical and organized nature of violence. He shows that collective violence is often an extension of "violence in everyday practice" and that violence in everyday life is itself associated with "circumstances which encourage flouting of the institutions of everyday controls"<sup>61</sup>. As will be shown later, in Vijayawada also it is precisely those who are involved in violence, and illegal etc in every day practice who are also the participants in collective violence.

James Manor, based on a detailed and thorough going study of collective violence incidents in India has proposed a five fold

typology of collective violence. His categorization is based on the identification of groups between which conflicts take place.<sup>62</sup>

The five types are:

1. Insurrectionary violence and reaction by agents of the state.
2. Non-insurrectionary violence between agents of the state and social groups.
3. Violence between social groups.
4. Violence involving political parties.
5. Criminal violence between groups of organized criminal elements.

Though Vijayawada is a small city, it has experienced a wide range of incidents of collective violence described above. The city has observed violence between criminal groups, political parties and factions, social (caste) groups as well as insurrectionary and non-insurrectionary violence between agents of the state and social groups.

Several others have also written about collective violence but without explicitly defining the term<sup>63</sup>. An attempt at defining the term "Collective Violence" was made at a seminar in New Delhi held at the Indian Institute of Public Administration, which is useful for this study. The seminar defined collective violence as "application of physical force by a group for a particular interest, on another group with a projected goal in sight".<sup>64</sup> The seminar included in its definition those incidents which does not appear to be collective, but represent a collective

interest. The opposite is also true in Vijayawada where individuals find it easier to mobilize people ostensibly for a cause and to precipitate violence through followers. The outcome is collective violence.

The subculture of violence thesis (Wolfgang and Ferracuti) posits that violence results from "adherence to a set of values which supports and encourages its expression".<sup>65</sup> Both the proponents and opponents of this theory dealt with high rates of homicide in some cities in the American south, and did not apply it to collective violence.<sup>66</sup> However it is possible to extend this theory to cities like Vijayawada with high rates of collective violence. Some of the aspects of the subculture of violence thesis are being incorporated while reflecting on the cultural aspects of collective violence in Vijayawada.

There is considerable literature on factions starting with Dube's pioneering work on the relation between "caste dominance and factions."<sup>67</sup> However, in Vijayawada what is more obvious is violence between a number of different kinds of groups, rather than endemic violence between one set of factional groups. It is observed that even the groups involved in long standing conflicts are not strictly factions, but gangs whose conflicts are conflicts of interest. They are thus not conflict groups.<sup>68</sup> Also in Vijayawada there is much overlapping in the memberships of different groups. Moreover unlike factions both corporate and non-corporate groups are involved in conflicts in the city.<sup>69</sup>

The gang has also been the focus of many classic sociological studies. Thrasher's study of more than a thousand gangs in Chicago portrays how gang behaviour is a form of collective behaviour and how it plays an important role in organized crime, in politics, in helping migrants to adjust, in providing services, to the poor etc.<sup>70</sup>

Whyte's study of the Norton street gang is also a study of group and collective behaviour.<sup>71</sup> Homans in his "Human Group" uses this gang as a case study to test his ideas regarding the group and group processes<sup>72</sup>. Unfortunately there are few studies on gangs in India.

While not attempting an ethnographic study of gangs, this thesis studied the origin and nature of gangs in Vijayawada and the type of patronage they received. This was part of the larger descriptions of the types and characteristics of various collective units involved in collective violence.<sup>73</sup>

In the following chapters, an attempt is made to describe and provide analytical linkages between the provincial city of Vijayawada and its patterns of collective violence. In doing so, the studies mentioned above are used as a base to comment on the phenomena observed in Vijayawada.

The terms provincial city and collective violence in this thesis have been defined in the following manner.

#### PROVINCIAL CITY: DEFINITION

A provincial city is a city, that is located in an agricultural hinterland, at a considerable distance from the metropolitan regions of a nation or state. The city owes its growth and distinct characteristics to the migration of rich agricultural class - the "provincial rich" to the city. These provincial rich classes follow specific patterns of investment in the city. They are interested in short run substantial profits which in effect means that there would be little investment in *manufacturing, whether small scale or large scale*. This class of investors is predominantly involved in the commercial and service sector. This creates an economic structure which is typical of a provincial city.

Further the provincial class pursue status and power in order to maintain their social and political dominance. They take up all kinds of issues and use a variety of means to mobilize support for themselves. This makes the provincial city a highly politicized centre. In cultural terms the city is a mixture of the typical culture of the rural rich and the "nouveau" urban-industrial culture. The culture of the city has the distinct stamp of the social and cultural attributes of the provincial rich classes.

## COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE: DEFINITION

Collective violence is physical force indulged in by two or more persons, acting on behalf of themselves or on behalf of the collective unit to which they belong; the force is targeted against persons or property belonging to another group. The group may or may not be organized; the incident may be spontaneous or pre-planned. Institutional factor may or may not intrude into the actual event. Collective violence is characterized by a strong belief which includes hostile components regarding the opponent group. The reasons for hostility vary. This definition focusses on the manifest phenomenon. So long as people get together to commit acts of violence and it occurs on behalf of a group, it can be labelled as collective violence.

In stating the influence of the rich peasant class on various sectors, this thesis seeks to go beyond the impact of the values and norms of the dominant class as a determining influence. While these are significant factors, it is being argued here that the major reasons for the in-migration of this class to a provincial city, pertains to their need to expand and enlarge their power base and especially to capture urban bases of power. This occurs in the context of large scale political and economic changes, as Washbrook has shown for the early years of 20th century Madras presidency.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the very object of coming to Vijayawada, being the expansion of their hold on the regional



power structure, the peasant class does not hesitate to adopt any available means to achieve and maintain its dominance in the city. This has its own impact on various sectors. In the case of the economy, since the primary motive is political, the rich peasant entrepreneurs settle for those kind of activities which are easy to manage and yield quick profits. Consequently there is an avoidance of industrial and large scale enterprises, a bias towards 'safe' sectors related to the entrepot functions of the city and a trend towards illegal economic activities.

These factors generate their own consequences for the diverse ways in which collective violence is generated in Vijayawada.

## Notes to Chapter 1

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1. For details see the books cited on pp.19.
2. See Yin,1984,pp.22.
3. Details regarding these families are provided in Chapter 3.
4. Roberts,1976.pp.99-131.
5. Roberts.1977,pp. 180.
- 6 .Ibid,pp.193.
- 7 .Roberts,1976.
8. Oxford English Dictionary,see entry under *province* and *provincial*.
- 9 .Websters dictionary,see entry under *province* and *provincial*.
10. Ibid.
- 11 .Washbrook,1977.
- 12 .Washbrook,1973,pp.529, for a discussion with reference to the Andhra delta.
- 13 .These changes are discussed in Ibid, 1977.
- 14 .For details see Ibid, 1973,pp. 508-529.
- 15 On the Justice party see Irschick,1976.
16. Harrison,1968,pp.55.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.pp.78,80-82.
19. Ibid pp.240; see also Harrison ,1956
20. For details see chapters 5 and 6.
21. On this see Balagopal,1987 and 1988,Oavedt,1987 and 1988 and Ray and Jha,1987.
- 22 Balagopal,1988,pp.21.
23. Ibid.
24. Srinivas,1987,pp97.

25. See the section on the Kamma caste in Chapter 3 pp.
26. For details see chapter 4.
27. Weber, 1958. Also see introduction by Martindale pp. 50-55.
28. See Bayly, 1980, pp. 38.
29. Sjoberg, 1960, pp. 139-40.
30. Pahl, 1966.
31. McGee, 1973.
32. See Dube, 1967, pp. 59.
33. Ibid.
34. Some of these books are Mukherjee and Singh, 1965, Gadgil, 1952 and 1965, Sovani, 1956, and Majumdar, 1980.
35. See Engineer, 1994, Lobo, 1993 and Naidu, 1991.
36. These were developed from a detailed study of Vijayawada; details are given in the ensuing chapters.
37. Blumer, 1975, pp. 22.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Smelser, 1963 pp. 8-9, 71-73.
41. Ibid, pp. 71.
42. Ibid, pp. 228.
43. Ibid.
44. Turner, 1972, pp. 558.
45. Turner, 1981, pp. 384.
46. Park, 1954, pp. xli.
47. Ibid.
48. See Lebon, 1952, Rude, 1965 and Canetti, 1960.
49. For a discussion see Milgram's article in Lindsay, 1978.
50. Thompson, 1971.

51. Lynch, 1981.
52. Thompson, op.cit., pp. 76.
53. Ibid, pp. 78.
54. Lynch, op.cit. and Thompson, op.cit.
55. Lynch, op.cit., pp. 152.
56. Tilly, 1981, pp. 89.
57. Snyder and Tilly, 1972, pp. 35.
58. Tilly, 1981, pp. 53.
59. Tilly, 1981, pp. 249-50.
60. Ibid, pp. 85; see also Sewell, 1990.
61. See Spencer, 1992, pp. 620.
62. Manor, 1988, 8-9, 18.
63. See Kriesberg, 1984.
64. Shukla, 1990, pp. 255.
65. Wolfgang and Ferracuti, 1967, pp. 140.
66. Dube, op.cit, pp. 59.
67. Ibid.
68. Nicholas, 1979, provides details regarding the attributes of a faction.
69. For a bibliography on this see Snyder and Tilly, 1972.
70. See Thrasher, 1948.
71. Whyte, 1943.
72. Homans, 1979.
73. For details see the section on "Type of Groups" in chapter 6.
74. Washbrook, 1977, pp. 64-214 discusses these changes in detail..

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE PROVINCIAL CITY OF VIJAYAWADA:DEMOGRAPHY AND URBANIZATION**

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<b>A Brief historical profile of Vijayawada</b>	<b>39</b>
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## CHAPTER II

### THE PROVINCIAL CITY OF VIJAYAWADA

#### DEMOGRAPHY URBANIZATION AND LAND USE

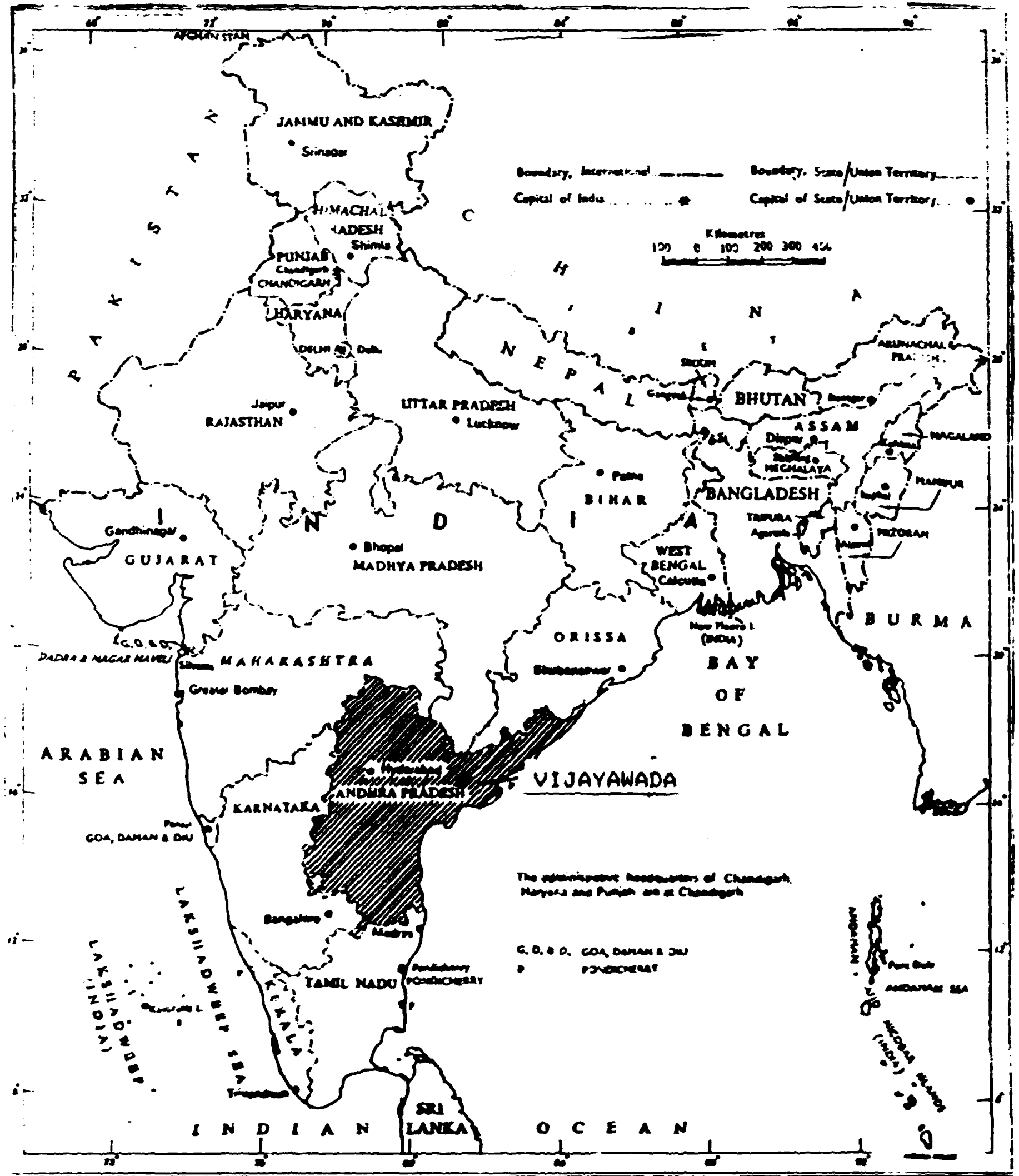
This chapter presents and analyses data pertaining to demography, urbanization, land use and settlement patterns in Vijayawada, slums and occupational structure. A portrait of the city is drawn, and the demographic evolution of the city is described. It is attempted to show through a study of the above mentioned aspects, that Vijayawada is a city with typical provincial characteristics.

#### GEOGRAPHIC ASPECTS OF VIJAYAWADA:

Provincial cities by definition are located away from the metropolitan regions in an agricultural hinterland. Vijayawada is no exception. It is located at latitude  $16^{\circ}31^{\circ}$  and longitude  $30^{\circ}37'$  in the coastal region of Andhra Pradesh.<sup>1</sup> The city lies on the northern bank of the river Krishna at the head of the agriculturally rich Krishna delta.<sup>2</sup> Vijayawada is the largest city in Krishna district and is situated 80 km to the west of Machilipatnam, the district headquarters and a major port during colonial rule. Krishna district, along with the rest of coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions, was part of the Madras Presidency before independence. It became part of an Andhra state in 1953 which merged with Telugu speaking areas of the former princely state of Hyderabad, to form Andhra Pradesh in 1956.<sup>3</sup>

# MAP NO.1

## VIJAYAWADA WITH REFERENCE TO INDIA AND ANDHRA PRADESH



Source: District Census Handbook, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, 1981.

The hinterland of Vijayawada is one of the best irrigated areas in the country. The irrigation is mainly through a network of canals which are part of Nagarjuna Sagar project on the river Krishna. The city itself is the site for the Prakasam Barrage which receives, stores and distributes water to Krishna and West Godavari districts from the Nagarjuna Sagar dam. Three canals originating from the barrage traverse the city. Vijayawada is bounded on two sides by a low range of hills, and by the rivers Krishna, on the southern side.

The city enjoys many locational advantages which makes it an entrepot town and gives it its dominant trade - transport functions. The city borders the Telangana region and is close to the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.<sup>4</sup> It connects road and rail networks in the northern and southern states of India. It enjoys greater locational advantages than any other city in the state including the state capital of Hyderabad<sup>5</sup>. As one of the biggest railway junctions in the country, Vijayawada has developed as an important centre for transport.

The location of Vijayawada has had a significant impact on its social and economic structure. It has resulted in the city's emergence as a major centre for transport, for export of agricultural produce, and as a base for rich peasants of coastal Andhra, especially of the Krishna delta. It is the contention of this thesis that the locational advantages of Vijayawada, along with the socio-economic profile of its hinterland has had a major impact on the city and its structural aspects.



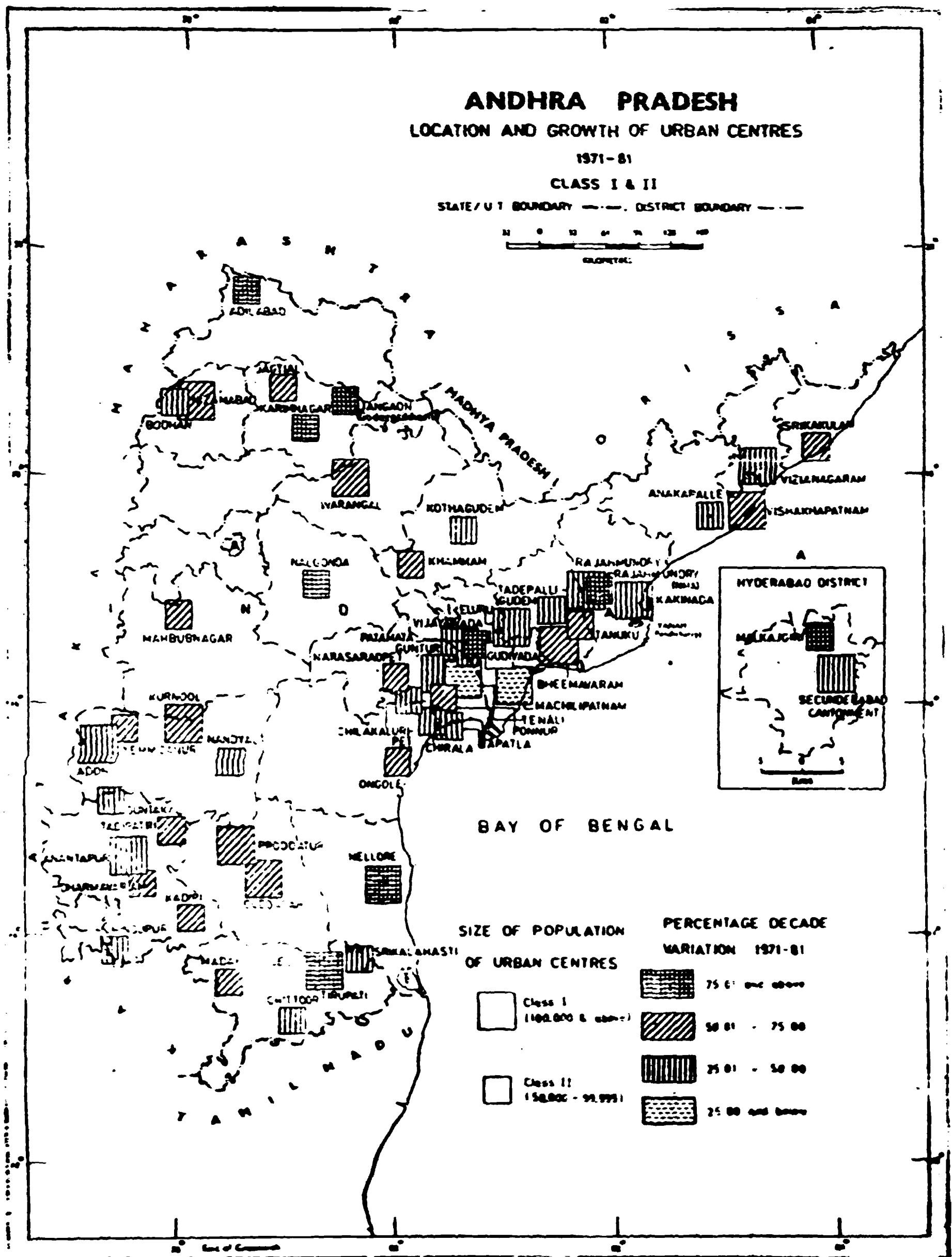
There are signs that Vijayawada and its surrounding region are getting rapidly urbanized.<sup>6</sup> Studies show that the coastal region, despite its greater reliance on agriculture, is experiencing a greater degree of urbanization as compared to other regions. The 1991 census shows that Krishna district has the highest urban population, after Hyderabad - a wholly urban district.<sup>7</sup> Ramachandran describes Vijayawada as a "Cluster city", a city having five or more one lakh plus cities within a radius of 75 kms.<sup>8</sup>

It is possible that other cities with similar geographical locations may have developed similar social and economic structure. Some of them continue as provincial cities, while others, for various reasons undergo further development to attain metropolitan status. The past history of Vijayawada indicates that it is an 'ideal type' of a provincial city and will continue to remain so for some time to come.

#### A BRIEF HISTORICAL PROFILE OF VIJAYAWADA

Since a provincial city is located in an agricultural hinterland, near a river, it is usually the case, that the city has had a long history of settlement, either as a flourishing city, as an administrative centre, or as a small town of relatively no importance. What distinguishes a provincial from a metropolitan city, however, is the fact that its past history in no way contributes to its present status and importance. Unlike metropolitan cities, they are not a by product of the colonial economy. It is significant that the growth and development of

MAP NO.2



The map shows the rapid urbanization of the region surrounding Vijayavada relative to the rest of the state

Vijayawada over the last hundred years has paralleled the decline of nearby Machilipatnam - a once flourishing port city<sup>9</sup>.

Archeological evidence exists to show the existence of a settlement in Vijayawada over two thousand years ago, during the rule of the Satavahanas<sup>10</sup>. The city, however had little political or commercial importance, until the twentieth century. It was an important Buddhist centre along with nearby Amaravathi in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.<sup>11</sup> During the medieval period, between 10th and 12th centuries, the city became a Hindu centre. The famous Kanaka Durga temple in the city had already come up and was patronized by the Komatis of the city, who were in considerable number.<sup>12</sup> The city was also host to the Telika community of oil pressers who made Vijayawada their home.<sup>13</sup> For a brief period during the rule of the Qutb Shahis of Golconda, in the seventeenth century, Vijayawada was also the seat of governance<sup>14</sup>. This was because two Hindu ministers of Tane Shah were from the city.<sup>15</sup> During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Komatis of Vijayawada participated in the textile trade of the region, buying cotton and yarn from other areas and selling locally to weavers.<sup>16</sup>

The East India Company Gazetteer (1823) does not ascribe any importance to Vijayawada, merely describing it as a town of "brahmins and beggars".<sup>17</sup> The map of coastal Andhra does not mention Vijayawada. It was just another small town in the 'Condapily sircar'.<sup>18</sup> By the 1850's the town had become a transit point for travel on the grand trunk route to Madras, from the

north.<sup>19</sup> Travellers had to cross the river at Vijayawada and resume the journey by road. The city provided ferries for crossing the river and a few rest houses for travellers.

The potential for the growth of the city was created by the construction of the anicut across the Krishna, at Vijayawada in the 1850s.<sup>20</sup> This considerably increased the area under irrigation in the hinterland and the famine prone areas started becoming more prosperous. Between 1850 to 1900, a number of Vaisya traders migrated to the city to participate in the grain trade.<sup>21</sup>

The construction of a railway bridge across the Krishna connecting the city to Madras, Hyderabad and Calcutta, in the 1890s gave a further impetus to growth.<sup>22</sup>

In the 1950's a larger barrage was erected to replace the old anicut.<sup>23</sup> A decade later, the barrage became part of the Nagarjunasagar irrigation system. These developments resulted in a vast increase in the area under irrigation. The implementation of green revolution related programmes in the region led to the Krishna delta becoming one of the most prosperous agricultural regions in the country.

Vijayawada in particular and Krishna district in general played an important role in the national movement<sup>24</sup>. It was also a centre from which various social and reform movements were launched. From the 1930s and 1940s, the city also became a centre for communist activity in the state.<sup>25</sup>

From the beginning of this century, Vijayawada has been at the forefront of every social and political movement and is regarded both by its citizens and by others as a trendsetter in the political arena.

As against the provincial cities, a majority of the metropolitan and industrial cities, came into existence over the last three to four hundred years as a result of the economic structure introduced by the British East India company and later the British government. Only those cities which continued to have a role in the economic, industrial and political structure in post-independent India continued to develop. Cities and towns in interior parts of India declined as soon as they lost their links with the colonial economy. Thus a flourishing port like Machilipatnam began to decline after 1947, whereas towns like Vijayawada and Guntur developed at a fast rate.

In the following sections, it will be shown that a provincial city like Vijayawada owes its continued growth to the migration and support of rich peasant classes. While the irrigation system and transport infrastructure are also important reasons, they also exist in other cities like Rajahmundry which did not experience the kind of development that Vijayawada has had. This is because, more than the historical factors, contemporary sociological factors, most importantly, the behaviour of the rural rich has had a significant impact in the rise of provincial cities like Vijayawada.

## DEMOGRAPHIC ASPECTS:

The population growth in Vijayawada has been consistently high with some peak periods of growth. The population has increased by more than 100 times since 1872 when it was 8026, to 1991 when it was 8,45,756. (See Table -2.1). The area of Vijayawada city has also increased considerably from 23.49 sq.kms in 1851 to 94.97 sq.km in 1991 (Table - 2.1).

TABLE 2.1  
POPULATION, AREA AND SEX RATIO

VIJAYAWADA 1872-1991

Year	Population	Decadal change	Area (sq.kms)	Sex Ratio
1872.	8026		—	—
1881	9336	14.04	—	888
1891	20741	115.93	—	818
1901	24224	19.79	—	945
1911	32867	35.68	—	930
1921	44159	34.36	—	911
1931	60427	36.84	—	907
1941	86184	42.02	—	939
1951	161198	87.04	23.49	956
1961	230397	42.93	24.14	949
1971	344607	47.04	66.30	938
1981	543008	57.57	82.50	955
1991	845756	65.00	94.97	964

Source: Decennial Census Reports for Madras Presidency, 1872 -1949

District Census Handbooks, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, 1951-1991.

--- indicates non availability of data.

In 1872 Vijayawada was very small town, with 17 other towns in the Andhra region larger than itself. In 1891 it was the seventh largest city in Andhra. From 1841 to 1951 it occupied the second rank among cities in Andhra. Since 1991, it has been the third largest city in A.P. after Hyderabad and Visakhapatman (Table -2.2).

TABLE 2.2

Rank size of Vijayawada among seven cities of Coastal Andhra Pradesh (including Hyderabad)  
VIZAG, VIJAYAWADA, KAKINADA, RAJAHMUDRY, ELURU, GUNTUR, AND HYDERABAD.

Year	Rank
1872	7
1881	7
1891	7
1901	7
1911	7
1921	6
1931	5
1941	2
1951	2
1961	3
1971	3
1981	3
1991	3

Compiled from Ashok Mitra et.al 1982 and from relevent census volumes.

The periods 1881-1891 and 1941-1951 mark the periods of peak growth (Table - 2.1). The growth in 1881-1890 was due to migration of construction workers involved in laying railway lines and construction of the railway bridge.<sup>26</sup>

The growth during 1941-1951 can be largely explained by the emerging importance of Vijayawada as a political and commercial

center, as well as the large scale migration of rich and poor peasants to the city.<sup>27</sup>

The apparently steady growth rate has to be seen in the light of inclusion of more areas in the city, especially since 1961. The actual growth rate due to natural increase or migration, thus works out to be lower. The uneven rate of increase may be due to the trade and commercial base of the city which tends to limit the growth of employment. Thus in a provincial city, the absence of industrial growth tends to inhibit the spurts in migration at certain periods, from becoming a sustained flow. Unlike metropolitan cities, a provincial city therefore, has an uneven growth pattern. The increase or decrease at specific periods can be usually attributed to specific causes related to the socio-economic structure of the city.

A study of the growth of Vijayawada between 1951-81 indicates that while the growth of Vijayawada municipal corporation is 181.99 percent, the growth rate for the outlying areas which became part of the city in 1981 was 351.80 percent.<sup>28</sup> In particular, two predominantly rich peasant settlements, Patamata and Gunadala had a rate exceeding 500 percent.<sup>29</sup> This clearly indicates that the city's growth in the last five decades is mainly due to the migration of the rich peasant class which has mainly settled in these two areas.

An uneven growth rate, migration linked growth and a comparatively slow increase in population are the features which



distinguish the demographic growth of a provincial city from metropolitan cities.

#### SEX RATIO IN VIJAYAWADA:

An analysis of the sex ratio in Vijayawada over a long period (1871-1971) indicates a high rate of fluctuation in the figures until 1950 followed by a period of stabilization.

In 1812, the sex ratio stood at 888, declined to 818 by the year 1881 and increased to 945 by 1891. The large scale migration of families for construction work between 1880-1900 perhaps explains the steep increase in the sex ratio, as also improved provision of medical facilities in the town.

The sex ratio declined to 907 in the year 1931 and thereafter stabilized around the figure 950. Since family migration was the major type of in-migration from 1941 onwards, the sex ratio remained at a high rate of around 950 where it has stabilized.

It is the contention of this thesis that the type of migration observed in Vijayawada is unlike the usual type of migration of large cities. That is, single male individuals do not constitute a high proportion of the migrants to a provincial city. Due to this reason, the sex ratio is not as adverse for females as in large cities. In Vijayawada, compared to Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh, the sex ratio is much higher at 966<sup>30</sup>. (Census, 1991). This is a consequence of a

high percentage of migration by families, especially those belonging to the rich peasant class.

In a provincial city, in the absence of large scale industrialization, there is no influx of male migrants from the rural areas. Equally significantly, being located in a dynamic agricultural region, there is no "push" factor operating in the rural areas. Also, due to absence of large scale industries as well as lack of public sector enterprises and government officers, there are few single male migrants in the white collar occupation structure. Hence the sex ratio is much higher in a city like Vijayawada.

Inspite of a high sex ratio, the city has low female work participation rates.<sup>31</sup> This is mainly due to the nature of the occupation structure in Vijayawada. The bias towards trade and transport and allied industries has meant that very few opportunities exist for women to participate in the economy. Figures since 1961 indicate low levels of females in all occupations. The lack of white collar salariat jobs on a large scale also contributes to the low level of female work participation.

#### MIGRATION:

One of the key aspects of a provincial city is the migration of a rich peasant class over a period of time which tends to dominate various aspects of the city.

Data on migration are available only from 1951 onwards. Prior to independence, proper data is not available. Discussions with some key informants in Vijayawada provided some information regarding that period.

While continuous migration is a feature of the city, the major trends occurred during specific periods when there were large scale migration by certain communities. The story of migration to Vijayawada begins in the 1850s.

Initial migration to the city took place in two phases in the 1850s and 1890s when the anicut across the Krishna river and railway lines and rail bridge were constructed.<sup>32</sup> The workers were mainly from other districts of A.P. and consisted mainly of two communities- Nagara and Vaddera.<sup>33</sup> From the beginning of the 20th century Brahmins and Vysyas in large numbers came to the city as traders, administrators and professionals.<sup>34</sup> The 1930s and 1940s saw the beginning of the migration of Kammas and Kapus to the city<sup>35</sup>. While the Kapu community is in the numerical majority today, the Kammas along with Brahmins and Vysyas constitute the dominant class in term of social status, political power and economic status.

In 1931, 46.4 percent of the district's population consisted of migrants, while in 1981, the figure was 36.6 percent . This suggests a levelling off of the phenomenon of migration over a period of 60 years. The peak period of migration seems to be

between 1941 and 1961. There was an increase in population of over 87 percent in 1941-1951 (Table - 2.1). In 1961, more than 80 percent of the population consisted of migrants, of whom three fourth were from rural areas of Andhra. In 1971, only around 50 percent of the population consisted of migrants. However the proportion is still high when compared to Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam (Table - 2.4).

While initial migration to the city was in the 1850s and 1890s, studies by Prakasa Rao<sup>36</sup> (1974) and Ranga Rao<sup>37</sup> (1984) indicate that the period of continuous migration began after 1941. The 1940s witnessed large scale migration of peasant castes to the city as the city became an important political and commercial center.

The survey of Prof. Prakasa Rao also puts the migration percentage at 74 percent which is much higher than the census figures of 51 percent<sup>38</sup>. One feature which distinguishes migration to a provincial city from migration to large cities is that migrants are mainly from within the district and to a lesser extent, from other districts within the state.<sup>39</sup> In contrast metropolitan cities have a higher percentage of in migrants from outside the state. Also they have more in migrants from urban areas, whereas cities like Vijayawada have more rural migrants.<sup>40</sup> These features are due to the location of the respective cities, their functions and economic structures.

TABLE 2.3

## Literacy in Vijayawada 1901 - 1991

Year	Total Literates	Males	Females
1901	8183	7434	749
1931	26132	20386	5746
1951	64218	41454	22764
1961	116256	71356	44902
1971	188930	111920	77010
1981	326906	187237	139669
1991	496890	277850	219040

Source: Census records: 1901-1991

TABLE 2.4

## Migration to Vijayawada City

Year	Born in other districts of A.P.	Born in the district of enumeration	Total
1951	43380	109530	153910
	From Rural areas of A.P.	From Urban areas of A.P.	
1961	104816	35818	140634
	From other districts of A.P.	From within Krishna District	
1971	94275	70820	165095

Source: Census records: 1951-71 &amp; V. Pothana, 1979.

Migration figures are not available for different caste groups. However, a study of population growth coupled with knowledge of community wise settlement patterns obtained from field work provide some clues to castewise migration patterns. The very high population growth rates in the outlying areas of

Vijayawada such as Patamata and Gunadala are mainly due to the migration and settlement of Kamma peasants in this area. The majority of mainly lower class Kapu migrants have settled in numerous slums throughout the city; they are especially concentrated in and around Krishna Lanka between the river and Bandar Canal.<sup>41</sup> This accounts for the high rate of population growth in this area.

An analysis of the demographic growth and urbanization of Vijayawada reveals that city owes both its physical and demographic growth to the migration of rich peasants (Kamma) to the City. More than fifty percent of what constitutes the municipal corporation today were earlier rural settlements which developed into urban areas, as a result of such migration. Over a period, these areas became the focal points of economic, social, political and cultural dominance in the city.

While migration is a key aspect of the growth of cities in general, the influence that the migrants can bring to bear on social, economic, political and cultural aspects of the city is uneven. In the case of a provincial city a characteristic feature is the complete domination of these aspects by the migrants. However, all migrants do not equally impinge on the various factors. It is the socially and economically dominant among them who influence the emergence of economic, social and political structures and forms of behaviour unique to the city.

## OCCUPATION STRUCTURE:

The occupation structure of a city is to a large extent shaped by its economic structure. The way in which the economy of Vijayawada has developed into a structure distinctive of a provincial city, will be discussed in the next chapter. Here it is proposed to describe some aspects pertaining to the occupation structure of Vijayawada. The economy of a provincial city is oriented towards trade, commerce and transport rather than to industry.<sup>42</sup> Data from census volumes reveal that in Vijayawada, workers in the tertiary sector constitute the largest number of workers. In the 1991 census, Trade and Commerce employed the largest number of workers, followed by Services and Transport sectors. Together, the three sectors constitute 62 percent of the workforce in Vijayawada. This represents a decline from 82 percent in 1951. This decline is not due to a rise in industrial workforce. As near by rural and semi-urban areas have been included as part of Vijayawada Urban Agglomeration in each census, the number of workers in agricultural sector have tended to go up. This has tended to depress the proportion of trade, transport and services sectors in the workforce. The proportion of workers in industry is 22 percent. A majority of these are in the small scale and household sectors. It may be mentioned here that most industries in Vijayawada are allied either to agroprocessing or to the transport sector.

A provincial city like Vijayawada possesses little or no administrative importance. This gets reflected in the occupation

structure. In the city, less than 5 percent work in various government organizations.<sup>43</sup> Coupled with the absence of large firms and highly skilled jobs, this has meant that Vijayawada has small salariat as a crucial feature of its occupation structure.

The city's economy primarily revolves around the export of agricultural produce. Thus, a majority of workers in the services and transport sectors are 'mutha' workers engaged in loading and unloading activities<sup>44</sup>. In the absence of data however, it is not possible to estimate the exact proportion of workers in this sector. Studies however, indicate that a majority of the slum dwellers mainly belonging to backward castes are working as mutha workers.<sup>45</sup>

The presence of a large workforce of manual labourers, small government workforce and a large commercial and services sector essentially means a small salariat. It also indicates that the workforce largely consists of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

The total number of non-workers shows a steep increase from 18 percent in 1981 to nearly two thirds in 1991. Of the 8.45 lakhs population, 5.81 lakhs are non-workers. The male population among non-workers has increased by almost one lakh in 1981-1991. This can be attributed to several factors. The stabilization and decline in migration not only means less migration of males, but also that the attainment of retirement age by the first generation migrants has shifted them out of the workforce. The



TABLE 2.5

VIJAYANADA 1871 - 1991: OCCUPATION STRUCTURE

YEAR	CULTIVATORS	AGR. LABOURERS	MINING QUARRYING	HOUSEHOLD NON HOUSEHOLD	COMMERCE	TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS	OTHER SERVICES	CONSTRUCTION	MARGINAL WORKERS	NON WORKERS
			LIVESTOCK	INDUSTRY	INDUSTRY					
1871	13332	—	—	—	3180	1499	—	—	—	—
1951	4005	—	—	—	28686	38522	19112	67857	—	—
1961	904	1070	1262	3774	12841	16671	13915	32956	3249	153753
1971	1583	2459	1836	1326	20855	26106	22215	20155	6431	243233
1981	2204	6356	—	—	3248	—	152100	—	2649	257743
1991	4462	20786	3297	4800	45394	64061	48101	58648	12904	581678

Source: District Census Handbook, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh 1951-1991

— indicates non availability of data.

In 1871 data for Household and non-household industries were clubbed together.

In 1951 data for cultivators and agricultural labourers were clubbed together.

In 1981 data for non-household industries, transport, commerce, services and construction were clubbed together.

inclusion of semi-urban areas in the Vijayawada urban agglomeration may also be a reason for the rise in the number of non-workers.

Among non-workers, women continue to be a very high proportion. In almost all occupations, the percentage of males are very high with negligible female work participation.

Thus in Vijayawada, inspite of a comparatively high sex ratio women constitute a low proportion of workers. This is mainly due to the nature of occupations in the city which is biased towards certain occupations which discourge women participating in the workforce.

A survey of the data from census records of occupation patterns in each ward of Vijayawada between 1951 and 1981 indicates interesting aspects. Those areas, mainly in the city outskirts, which have continuously seen rich peasant in-migration and settlement have had continuous high increases in almost all occupations such as commerce, transport, services, industry and construction.<sup>46</sup> The number of cultivators has however, not declined, but also increased in these very areas. In the absence of caste wise data, the above data shows that rich peasants who have migrated, have retained their agricultural lands and at the same time fuelled economic development in the areas in which they have settled.

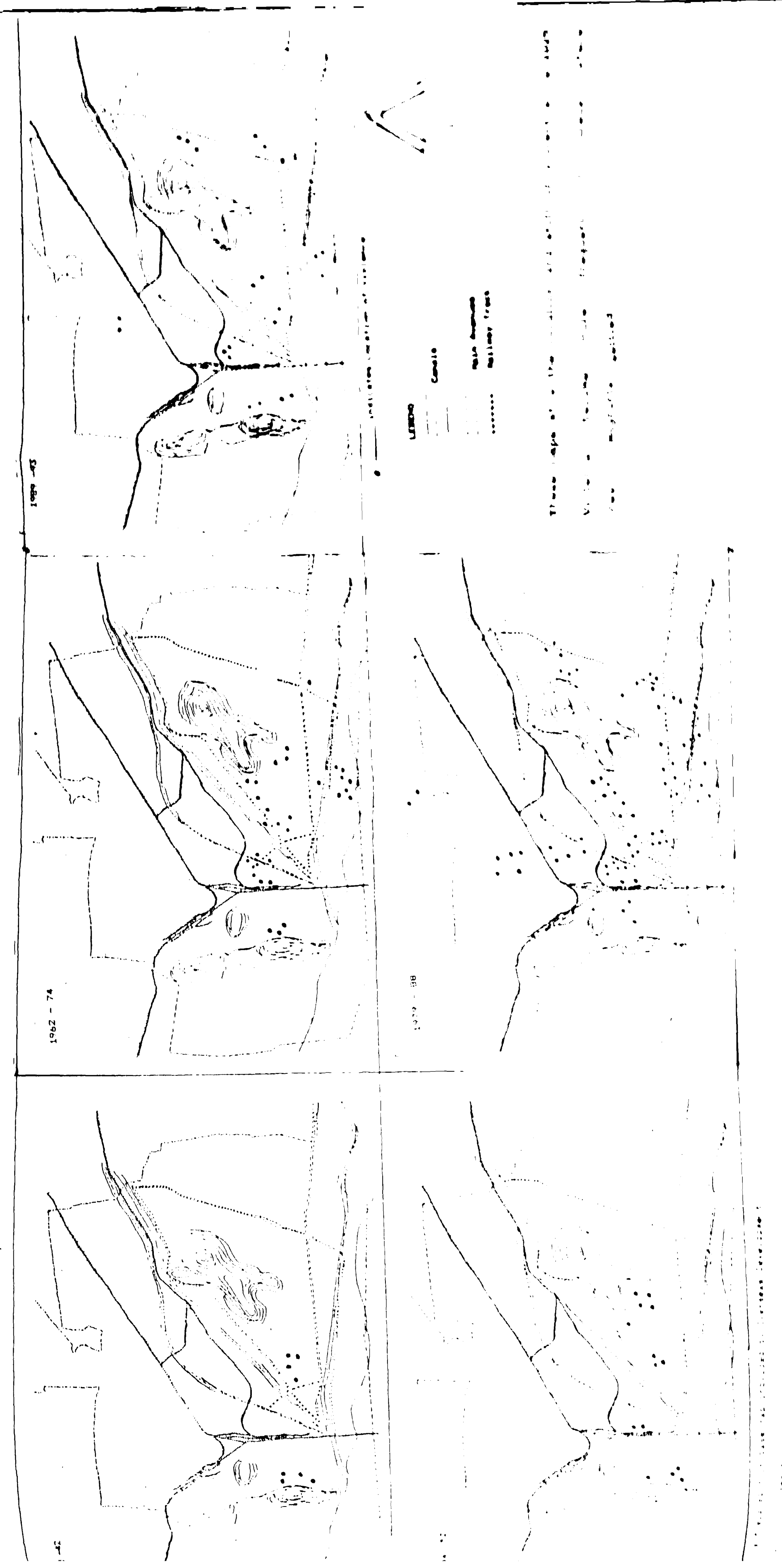
The presence of a large manual labour workforce, low level of skilled jobs, a small salariat, a large non-working class (with a

very high proportion of women) are some characteristic features of the occupation structure of a provincial city. In addition, the presence of illegal sectors and well organised gangs also contributes to the nature of the occupation pattern. The nature of this pattern and its distribution in different areas of the city generates its own social, political and cultural consequences. These and their impact on the patterns of violence are discussed in the subsequent chapters.

#### GROWTH OF VIJAYAWADA CITY: PHYSICAL ASPECTS:

The areas of Vijayawada city has grown considerably from around 10 sq kms at the beginning of this century to 23.49 sq kms. in 1951 and its present area of 94.97 sq.kms. Prior to 1941, the city's area was limited to the west of the railway track.<sup>47</sup> Both economic and residential areas were confined to the old city. Gradually, migrants began to settle in new areas to the east of the railway track, especially as emerging business activities came to be located in these areas.<sup>48</sup> The eastern half of the city also became a center for political activity, both for nationalists and communists. Over a period of time, the city experienced linear growth towards the east. This process continued, upto 1981 when Patamata and Gunadala which had become large urban settlements were included in the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.<sup>49</sup> These were erstwhile rural areas dominated by a few Kamma landowners and are today, prominent Kamma settlements of the city.

Map No. 6  
LOCATION OF VIOLENCE IN DIFFERENT PERIODS 1926 - 1992



The city has not experienced much growth to the south, being bounded by the river (which is also the district boundary). (However, the 1991 census has included the industrial, urban areas of Tadepalli and Mangalagiri areas the river in Guntur district in Vijayawada Urban Agglomeration.)

The city has thus not grown around a core, but has experienced linear growth towards rural settlements located to the east of the city.

Rich peasants in these settlements have played and continued to play a significant role in the city's economy and politics. A few dominant families created a base for other rich peasants from more distant areas to settle here. As already shown earlier, these settlements have not only had very high population growth rates in comparison with the old city, these areas constitute the centre for the major economic activities of Vijayawada and account for a higher proportion of workers involved in trade, commerce, transport and industrial sectors. The growth of Vijayawada from all perspectives, over the last fifty years, have occurred in these areas, mainly as a result of rich peasant settlement in these areas.<sup>50</sup>

#### Land Use Pattern:

The land use map of the city shows that in many ways, Vijayawada has retained several features of the pre-industrial city.<sup>51</sup> In terms of functional segregations, the city has a high

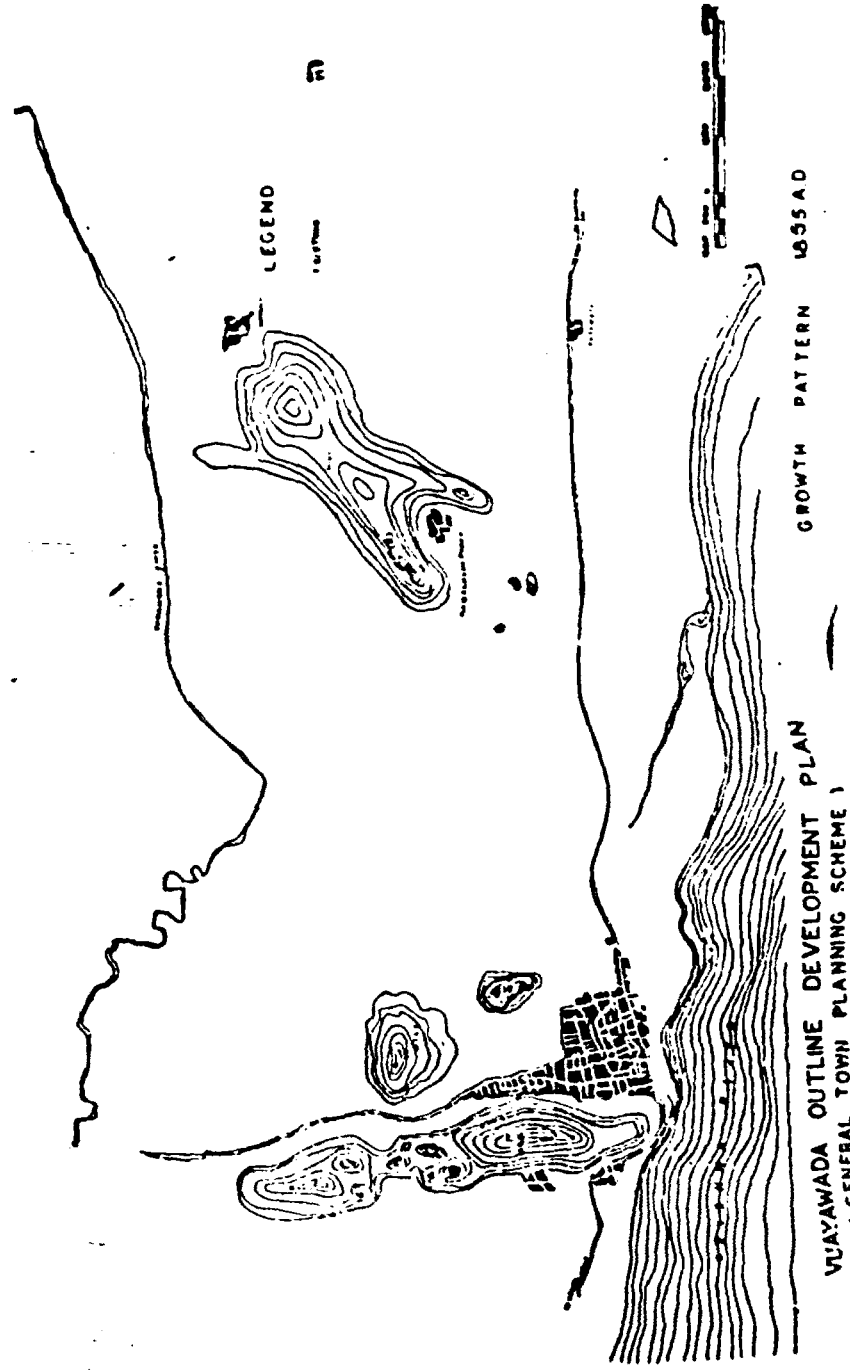
degree of mixing of several usages of the land. Commercial and residential areas exist together. Not only do lower class residential areas and slums exist alongside main commercial streets, but also upper class houses intermingle with shops and other establishments.

Another feature of Vijayawada is that the upper classes continue to reside in central locations.<sup>52</sup> They have not moved away from the centre. In fact, the slums in the city exist mainly on the fringes and outskirts.<sup>53</sup> A few of them are however situated in central areas.

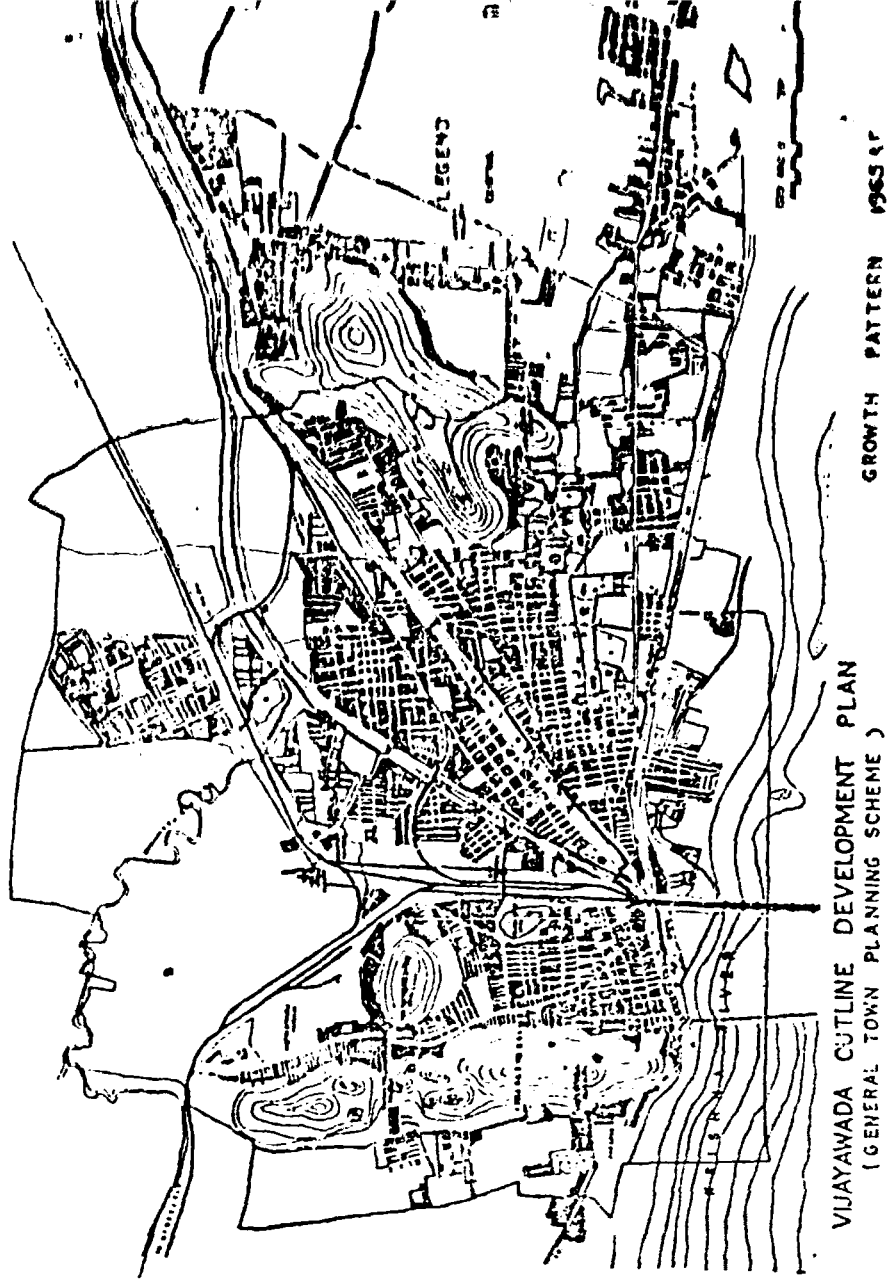
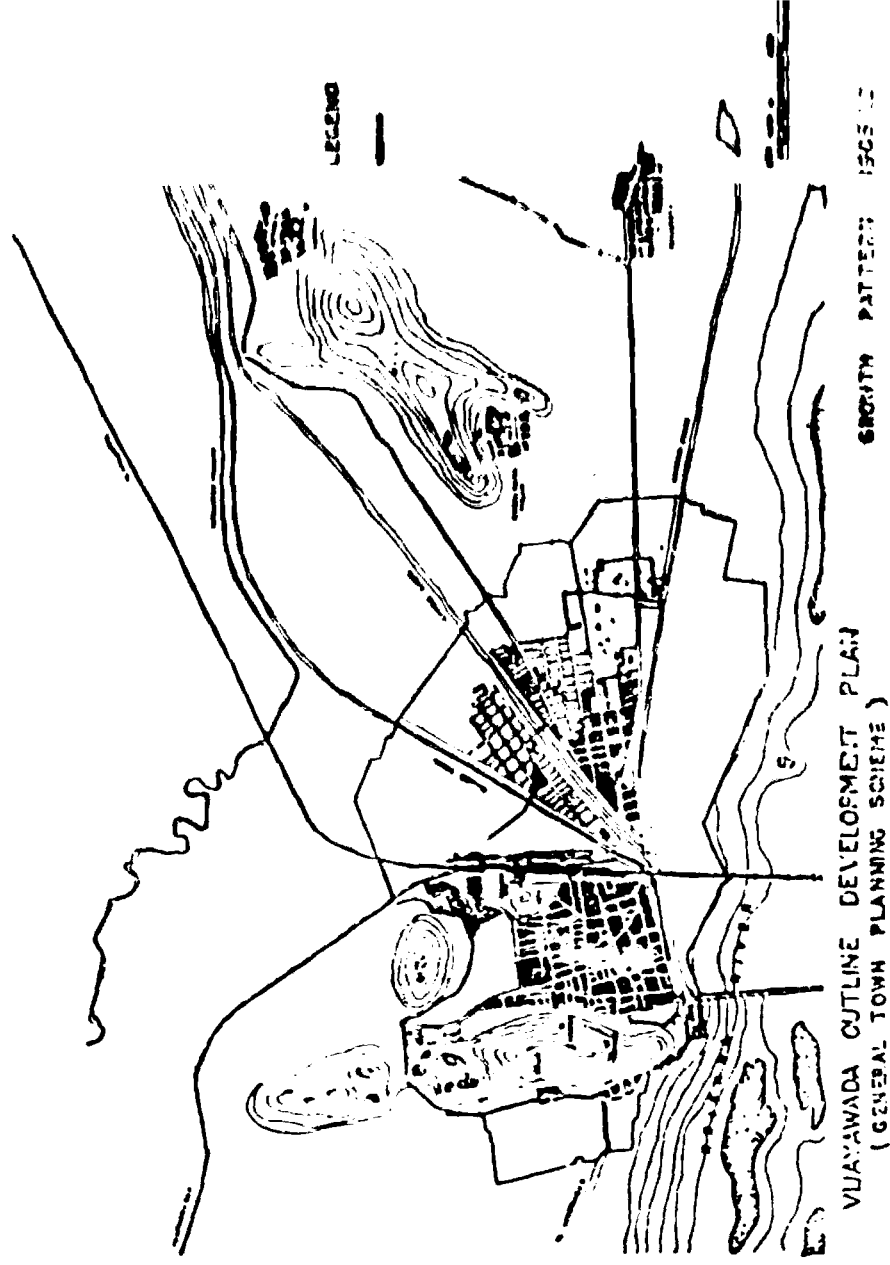
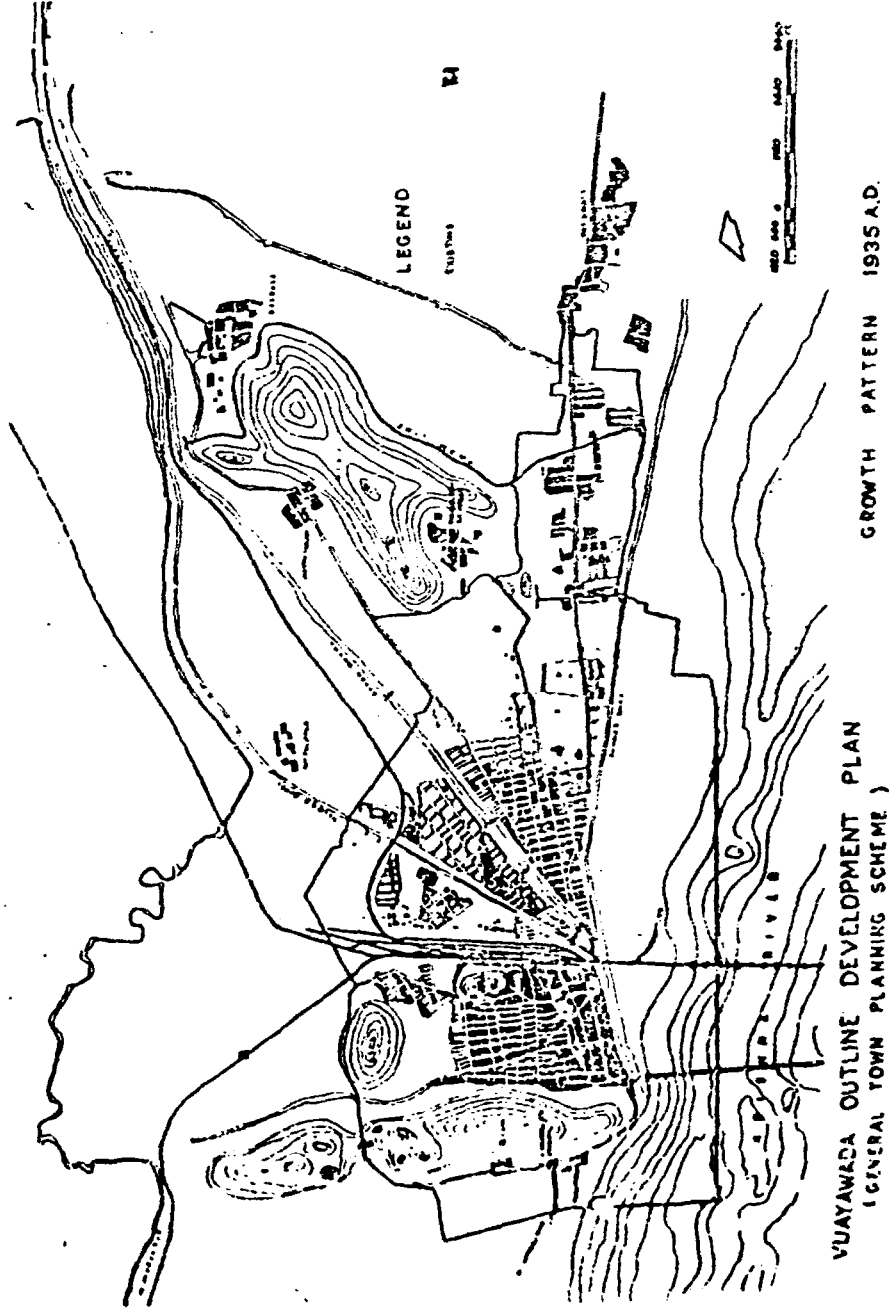
Thus a major feature of urban land-use in a provincial city is the persistence of traditional features. Provincial cities are located in areas experiencing rapid urbanization. This is in contrast to metropolitan cities which inhibit the growth of cities in proximity to it.

Studies show that in India, in general, cities tend to be characterized by intermingling of land use.<sup>54</sup> This aspect is observed to a much greater degree in Vijayawada. In the city, there are no purely residential, commercial or industrial areas.<sup>55</sup> Most residential areas in the city are also centres for transport, commerce and industry. This is not just because workers in these sectors reside in nearby areas. A more important reason is that entrepreneurs in various sectors, have tended to situate their firms close to their own area of residence. Many Transport operators for instance reside and operate from Krishna Lanka.

# GROWTH OF TOWN (1855 TO 1965)



58A



Source: Vijayawada Outline Development Plan, 1969.

Likewise, a majority of the industrialists reside close to the industrial area in Patamata.<sup>56</sup>

The Central areas of the city constitute the major residential areas for the city's middle and upper classes. These areas are close to the major commercial avenues and localities of Vijayawada. Prior to 1930, the centre city ( then confined to the west of the railway track) was characterized by a very high degree of land use over period of time, different economic enterprises became concentrated in different areas of the expanding city, where particular groups of the provincial migrant entrepreneurs settled. Thus in Vijayawada unlike in other cities, a major proportion of elites reside close to and not away from the industrial area. Also since workers tend to move closer to their place of work, most elite residential areas also have slums located nearby. The upper class residential areas include Patamata, parts of Gunadala, Mogulrajapuram and a few pockets in Krishna Lanka and in the old town.<sup>57</sup> Middle class households are scattered across Satya Narayana Puram, Suryaraopet, Mogulrajapuram, Gandhinagar and the Old town.<sup>58</sup> Slums are spread across the city, those with a large population size are located mainly along the outskirts of the city, especially on the northern and southern boundaries.<sup>59</sup>

Historically there has been a tendency for industries to shift from the western parts of the city to the eastern outskirts. Transport operations shifter from Gandhinagar and Governorpet in Central Vijayawada to Krishna Lanka in the south and Patamata in



the east.<sup>60</sup> Gandhinagar, from the 1950s, became a centre for commerce and trade, especially retail trade and cinema.<sup>61</sup>

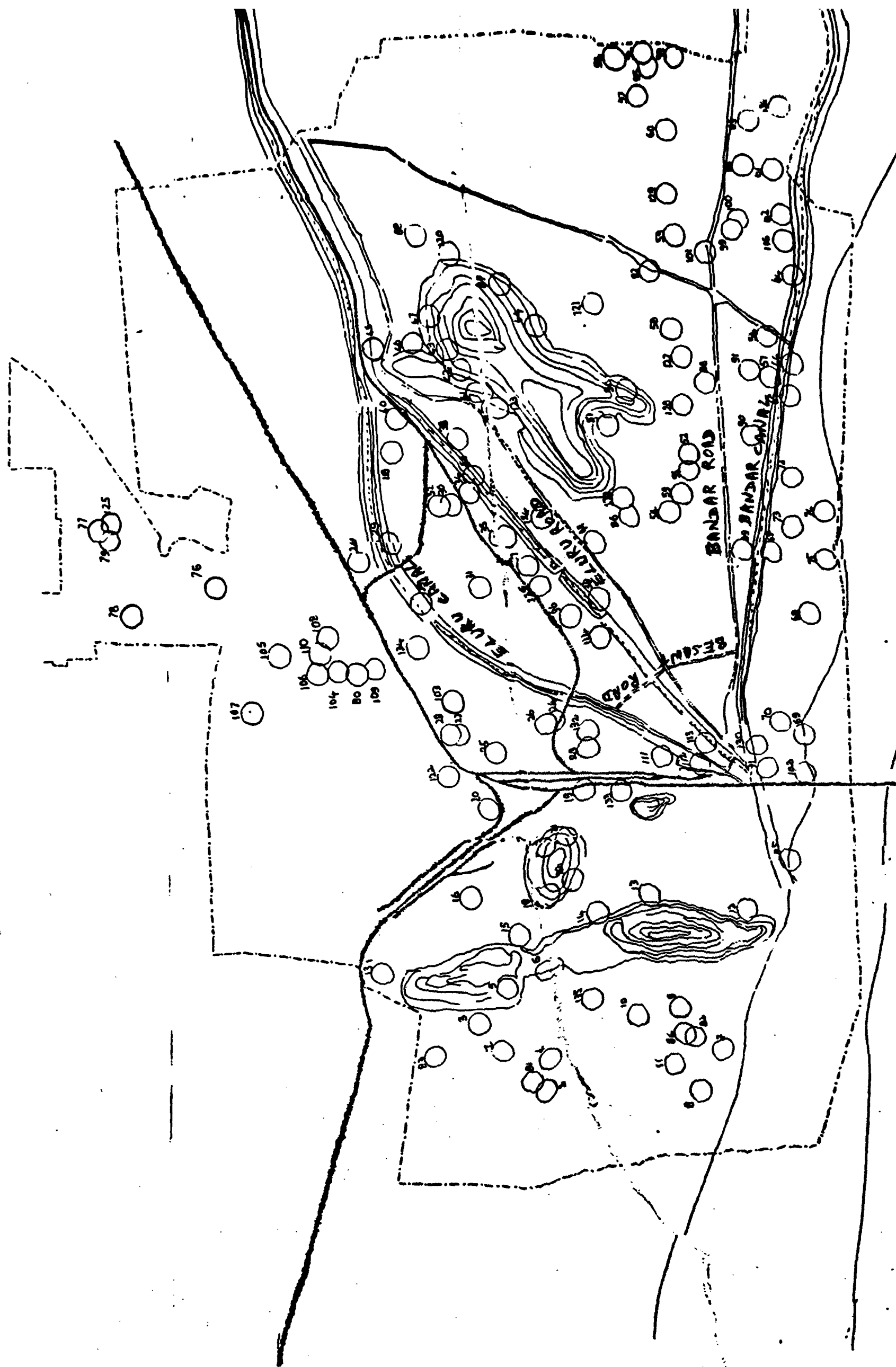
The patterns of settlement of different communities is discussed in the section on the major caste groups in Vijayawada. Historically there has been a trend for our migrants to settle near the river bed or along the canals and in the hills.<sup>62</sup> Upper classes, especially rich peasant migrants settled in areas where their community had already established small residential enclaves. The settlement of different communities in specific areas, the nature of land use, and the mixing of land use in certain area, have all had an impact on the patterns of violence. These are taken up in chapter VI.

Since slums have been an important arene for violence, a brief note regarding slum areas in the city is provided. It is also shown that slums constitute a very distinct aspect of land use in Vijayawada.

#### SLUMS IN VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada has a large slum population of 2,48,886 constituting around 35 percent of the city's population.<sup>63</sup> Slums have frequently been the focus of violent incidents, and slum population have been involved in some of the incidents of rioting in the city. Residents of a few slums are descendants of some of the oldest migrants to Vijayawada.<sup>64</sup> A study of slums in the city indicates that many communities with few resources have not been able to achieve any significant degree of mobility inspite of

# LOCATION OF SLUMS IN VIJAYAWADA



Source: Overseas Development Authority, Vijayawada.

being long time residents in Vijayawada. Contrarily, the dominant caste Kammas who migrated later have achieved greater mobility and dominance.

Basic data pertaining to slums are presented in Table 1 to 7.(Appendix) As of 1991, there were a total of 136 slums in Vijayawada, of which 96 are located in the plains, 22 on the hill slopes and 18 along canal berms. The total slum population in 1991 was 2,48,886. This is an increase from 48,353 in 1967, when only eleven census localities had slums. Currently, there is hardly any locality without at least a single slum. The slum population more than doubled between 1981 and 1991. The average population in each slum is 1830 persons. A majority of the slums 72 (52 percent ) are small in size having a population of less than thousand persons. There are only 27 large slums having a population of more than 2500 persons.

A list of all 136 slums with population and a map showing their location is given in the appendix.

Data on slums prove insights into the settlement patterns of the city. It has been mentioned earlier that in a provincial city, the city's elite continue to reside in central areas of the city. Evidence on slums shows that in Vijayawada slums are spread around the city's outskirts. A few of the older slums continue to exist in central areas while the larger slums are on the outskirts, smaller one are spread across the city. These mainly exist along the bunds of three canals, along the river bank and on the slopes of hills in Vijayawada.

A majority of the slum population in Vijayawada constituting nearly 60 percent belong to scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and backward classes. Over 72 percent of the slum population live below the poverty line, according to a survey in 1987. Only 21.2 percent of the slum population are literate.

A majority of the slum population in Vijayawada constituting nearly 60 percent belong to scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and backward classes. Over 72 percent of the slum population live below the poverty line, according to a survey in 1987. Only 21.2 percent of the slum population are literate.

Significantly in Vijayawada, few slums exist near the industrial areas. This is because Patamata, the industrial area is also a major residential area for the dominant castes. Most workers in the industries here come from distant places.

Over a period of time, starting from the 1950s, slum dwellers in the outskirts of the city migrated inwards. They settled along the canal berms and on hill slopes. These are mainly small settlements with populations ranging from 50 to 1000. With increasing demand for prime land, these slums become targets for violent efforts to evict them.<sup>65</sup> This phenomenon became linked up with other conflicts as builders took advantage of political or gang conflicts occurring in these areas. This kind of violence has been observed since 1964 and continuous till today.

Thus "accidental" fires and landslides have resulted in large scale destruction of property in slums in Rani Gari Thota, Krishna Lanka, Mogulrajapuram and Kothapeta.<sup>66</sup>

Slum residents bordering the main arteries of the city - Bandar Road and Eluru road have participated in looting in these commercial avenues in the aftermath of riots.<sup>67</sup> In commercial areas like Gandhinagar, where a number of gang get patronage, slum based gangs activists have been involved in numerous violent incidents and have been among the initiators of rioting in Vijayawada.<sup>68</sup>

More detailed information regarding the links between slums and collective violence in Vijayawada will be provided in Chapter VI. The exact ways in which the physical aspects of the city impinge on the occurrence of collective violence is also dealt with therein. The following two chapters link the demographic aspects to other social and economic aspects of the city. The distinct demographic and physical traits of Vijayawada as outlined in this chapter and as differentiated from a metropolitan city are presented in capsule form in the Conclusion, on pp 256.

## Notes to Chapter 2

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1. Director of Town Planning, 1969, pp.1.
2. See map of the city on pp.38A and of the district on pp.326.
3. For details see P. R. Rao, 1960, pp.148-70.
4. Telengana, Rayalaseema and Andhra are the three regions of Andhra Pradesh.
5. Prakasa Rao, 1972, pp.8.
6. See Ramachandran, 1969, pp.108 and map on pp.39A in this thesis.
7. Census Provisional Totals, 1991.
8. Ramchandran, op.cit., pp.108.
9. On Machilipatnam, see Banga, 1993.
10. See Krishna Sastry 1992.
11. Ibid.
12. Sundaram, 1968, pp.57-66.
13. Ibid, pp.37-45.
14. See Director of Town Planning, op.cit., pp.6.
15. Ibid, pp.6.
16. See Sundaram, op.cit.
17. Gazetteer of the East India Company, 1823, pp.443.
18. Ibid.
19. Imperial gazetteer of India, vol. 4, pp.101.
20. On this see G. N. Rao, 1968, Krishna Sastry, op.cit., pp.110-111.
21. G.N.Rao, op.cit. pp.9.
22. Director of Town Planning, op.cit., pp.5.
23. See Krishna Sastry, op.cit.

24. For details see Krishna Sastry, op.cit. pp. 80-87.
25. See chapter 5 for more details.
26. See Rao and Rao, op.cit. pp. 29.
27. The conclusion is based on interviews with a cross section of the city's senior citizens.
28. Calculated from census data between 1951-1981.
29. Ibid.
30. See Provisional population totals for A. P. Census, 1992.
31. See below, section on occupation structure.
32. See Rao and Rao, op.cit. pp. 29-30; also see Prakasa Rao, op.cit.
33. Field notes, interview with Lakshman Rao, a Nagara leader. Also see Rao and Rao, op.cit. 29, 45-6.
34. Field notes; see also Kaleswara Rao, 1956.
35. Field notes, interviews with several senior citizens.
36. Prakasa Rao, 1974.
37. Rao and Rao op.cit. pp. 40-7..
38. Ibid, pp.
39. Migration figures from Census volumes. 1961 and 1971.
40. Ibid.
41. Field notes, especially interview with Lakshman Rao.
42. See chapter 4.
43. Source: Vijayawada Urban Mandal Statistical Officer.
44. On *mutha* workers see Tataji, 1986.
45. Ibid.
46. Data from census volumes are given in the appendix, pp.
47. Director of Town Planning, op.cit..
48. Field notes, interview with Lakshman Rao. See also Rao and Rao, op.cit. pp. 29.
49. Vijayawada directory, 1986, pp. 37.

50. Sjoberg, 1980 lists these features.
51. Based on observations in the field.
52. Bhanu, 1982.
53. Qadeer, 1984, pp. 276.
54. Land use map provided by Census, Municipal Corporation and VGTUDA.
55. Field observation; the conclusion is based on addresses of industrialists obtained from various sources.
56. Field observation.
57. Field observation; also interviews with Gangadhara Rao of the Town Planning Department, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation and DVSR Krishnamurthy of the Builders Association of India, Vijayawada Chapter.
58. Ibid.
59. See Bhanu op.cit. Data is provided below in the section on slums and in the Appendix on pp. 215.
60. Town planning, op.cit. pp. 30.
61. Field notes, discussions with long term residents in the area.
62. Rao and Rao op.cit. pp.
63. Bhanu, op.cit.; tables derived from data in this report are given in the appendix on pp.
64. Rao and Rao op.cit.
65. For details see "Spatial Aspects of Violence," chapter 6.
66. Ibid.
67. IBid
68. Ibid.



**CHAPTER 3**  
**EVOLUTION AND STATUS OF CASTE GROUPS IN VIJAYAWADA**

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### CHAPTER III

#### EVOLUTION AND STATUS OF CASTE GROUPS IN VIJAYAWADA

Caste as an aspect of social structure is much more salient in a provincial city ,as compared to larger cities in India.This is one major reason for the lower incidence of communal violence in Vijayawada and the occurrence of caste based conflicts as well as the role of caste in other conflicts between various groups.

This chapter traces the migration of different caste groups to the city and discusses the changes in their respective status over a long period.In doing so ,the chapter lays a basis for explaining the way in which different groups either achieved social mobility in Vijayawada or declined or remained in the same position as before.The consequences of these factors and the means available and used for mobility had an impact on collective violence.This chapter also discusses the role of each caste group in politics and social movements.

Some of the prominent families in each caste are described in this chapter. These prominent families in Vijayawada occupy significant positions in the economic structure of the city, and who directly or indirectly influence political events in the city. These families are mainly migrants to the city. While many of them have agricultural backgrounds, a few still retain links with rural areas. In this sections, it is proposed to briefly describe a few of these families. The names of these

families kept cropping up during field work, in a wide variety of contexts - economic, political and social. It was also observed that the same families continued to have dominant a presence across two or three generations. Many trends emerged while tracing the active history of these families in the city. The Kammas are one of the few communities to continue their dominant presence in various sectors for more than five decades. The Brahmins and Komatis are not significant actors any more and are being sidelined. Those individuals with record of violence, with rare exceptions, have not been able perpetuate their or their family dominance across different sectors and generations. The few families who continue to be active are confined to political and criminal activities at the local level. They do not enjoy the kind of power, status and position, achieved by Kamma families, some of whom supported the 'gangster' families.

It may be mentioned here that population figures for each of these caste groups are estimates derived from a sample study in 1971. Caste wise data was last collected in the 1931 census. There are several problems inherent in deriving current estimates of various caste groups in the city from the census data collected between 1871-1931. These problems pertain to changes in the geographical unit for which data was collected; changes in the inclusion/exclusion criteria for defining membership in caste groups; and problems arising out of migration of these groups after 1931.

However, census figures for 1921 and 1931 pertaining to Krishna district are also presented (Table 3.1) in order to provide a basic idea regarding the caste composition of the district.

Table 3.1

PROPORTION OF DIFFERENT CASTE GROUPS TO THE TOTAL POPULATION  
KRISHNA DISTRICT AND VIJAYAWADA CITY

CASTE	PROPORTION OF THE CASTE TO TOTAL POPULATION		
	KRISHNA DISTRICT		VIJAYAWADA CITY
	1921	1931	1971
<u>UPPER CASTE</u>			
BRAHMIN	10.02	_____	12.4
KOMATI	7.19	_____	5.5
RAJU	_____	4.16	2.8
<u>INTERMEDIATE CASTE</u>			
KAMMA	21.39	_____	3.8
KAPU	27.01	_____	14.9
TELAGA	_____	11.35	_____
BALIJA	1.20	_____	_____
<u>LOWER CASTE</u>			
ODDE	_____	2.01	0.8
NAGARA	_____	_____	1.2
<u>SCHEDULED CASTE</u>			
MALA	_____	8.3	16.0
MADIGA	_____	6.3	

Source: 1. Census of the Madras Presidency, 1921 and 1931. 2. Prakasa Rao and Ramachandran, 1972.

All figures are in percentages.

\_\_\_\_\_ indicates non availability of data.

## BRAHMIN

Brahmins are at the apex of the Varna System.<sup>1</sup> The Brahmins' monopoly over learning over a long period helped them to acquire western education and adapt to changes resulting from colonialism. In Andhra, as in other parts of India, not only were the Brahmins heavily represented in the civil services and in professions, but they were also in the forefront in political movements.<sup>2</sup> They led the social reform movement, the struggle for independence and numerous other social and political movements.<sup>3</sup> As per the 1921 census, Brahmins constituted 10.02% of the population in Krishna district. In Vijayawada, their strength was estimated at around 13% in 1971. It is generally held that Brahmins today constitute 4 to 5; per cent of the population. However their strength is usually above 10% in urban areas and negligible in rural areas.<sup>4</sup>

As a famous pilgrimage centre, Brahmins have always had a sizable population in Vijayawada, till the 1940s, when peasant castes began to migrate to the city in large numbers. A gazetteer in 1828 referred to Vijayawada as being peopled with Brahmins and beggars".<sup>5</sup> The Durga Malleswari temple in the city is a major pilgrim attraction from all over India. The city is the main centre for the Krishna Pushkaram celebrated once in twelve years.<sup>6</sup> The pilgrim function of the city thus ensured a large Brahmin population.

In the later decades of the nineteenth century, Brahmins began migrating to the city to work in white collar jobs in trading, in the civil service, and in the professions-chiefly legal and medical professions.<sup>7</sup>

From the early decades of the twentieth century. Brahmans involved in political activity began migrating to Vijayawada as the city became an important political centre, especially during the nationalist movement.<sup>8</sup> This is the case for instance of Kaleswara Rao, the lawyer turned politician, Gora teacher, social reformer and atheist; Nageswara rao, businessman, publisher and nationalist - all Brahmans who came to the city from the rural hinterland.

Starting from around 1930 Kamma peasants from the hinterland had started migrating to the city. Brahmans however continued to be dominant politically in the city. Apart from a near monopoly over the professions, they had also entered trading in consumer items, both in the old town and the emerging new areas of Vijayawada.<sup>9</sup>

Brahmans, for a long time held the premier political positions in the city. Till 1962, at least one Brahman was elected as an M.L.A. from Vijayawada.<sup>10</sup> With exceptions in 1943, 1953 and 1981, Brahmans have always been elected the Chairman of the municipal council of Mayor of the corporation.<sup>11</sup> The advent of the Communist party since the early 1930s reduced the power of

Brahman politicians to an extent. Several Brahman leaders were among the initial founders of the communist party in Andhra, who made Vijayawada the headquarters for the party.<sup>12</sup> But Brahmans were later sidelined by leaders from peasant castes-chiefly Kamma. In any case Brahmans in the CPI were not interested in preserving their communal strength in society.

From around 1960, as leading Brahman politicians like Kaleswara Rao, either were no more, or retired from politics, the position of Brahmans began to decline. From 1967 onwards, not a single Brahman has been elected an M.L.A.<sup>13</sup> None of the descendants of former leaders are active in politics. Some have left the city to pursue their economic interests elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> Others are active in their professions and business enterprises. A few who attempted to survive in politics found themselves unable to compete with new generation of leaders.<sup>15</sup> Only one family the Jandhyala family has been able to be active, owing to their links with state and national level leaders.

In Vijayawada, traditionally Brahmans have always supported the Congress party.<sup>16</sup> While a few Brahmans were active in the CPI, the Communists were always opposed by local Brahmin leaders.<sup>17</sup> Brahman leaders first supported and sought the help of lumpen elements (initially Nagara individuals) to put down the Communist party. These Nagara leaders such as 'Chitti' and 'Appalaswamy' in the 1920s and 1930s ran the Justice party political machine. The Congress being perceived as a Brahmin

party, the Justice party was mainly opposed to the Congress. In municipal and provincial elections between 1920 and 1937, the city witnessed violent incidents as the Justice party used every means available for winning the elections.<sup>18</sup>

Towns like Vijayawada are a middle ground for educated individuals from rural areas to migrate to larger cities. Vijayawada performs the same function for Brahmans as well as other upper castes including Kammas. Many Brahmans from Vijayawada migrated to Hyderabad, Madras and Visakhapatnam over a period of time, in search of better jobs in the bureaucracy, public sector and private firms.<sup>19</sup> The settlement pattern of Brahmans in Vijayawada also reveals the effect of this phenomenon. Prior to 1920, the city was confined to the west of the railway line. After the 1921 All India Congress Session in Vijayawada, the Brahmans settled in Gandhi Nagar, on the eastern side, adjacent to the railway station. Gandhi Nagar was an open ground where the session was held. Adjacent areas such as Satya Narayana Puram also became Brahman residential areas. Several areas in these two localities are locally called 'agraharams' due to Brahmans being in a majority.<sup>20</sup> Suryaraopet in the Governorpet area was also a Brahmin dominated locality.

During field work, it was observed that in the old town Brahmans presently are in a very small number. Mainly lower middle class families among the community live there. Gandhinagar has become a commercial area, dominated by the firm



distribution trade located here. The Durga agraharam in Gandhinagar is controlled by a Kamma Congress leader. Many other localities in Gandhinagar are under the control of local gang leaders who are affiliated to different political parties. A number of slums have come up on the banks of Eluru canal adjoining Gandhinagar.<sup>21</sup> Most gang leaders draw sustenance from these slums. Even in Suryaraopet, Kammas are buying property from many Brahmans moving out of the city.<sup>22</sup>

It is observed that many Brahmins, working in banks, government and other public sector organizations are moving into predominantly Kamma residential areas such as Patamata, Gunadala and Mogularajapuram.<sup>23</sup> Most government offices are located along Bonder road or in Governorpet to which there is easier access from the above mentioned areas.

Brahmins are no longer dominant in the city either in politics or in the economy. A few retail business both in the old town and in Gandhinagar and Besant road in the new town are run by Brahmins. The majority however are Kamma or Komati owned. The patronage of social activities is now by Kammas.<sup>24</sup> Most temples are run by Kamma dominated trusts. Few educational institutions are controlled by Brahmins. Even among professionals Brahmins are few in number. Brahmins have little or no influence over local political events.

## JANDHAYALA (BRAHMIN)<sup>25</sup>

The Jandhyala family is a famous name in Krishna district. Several of its members are in positions in the bureaucracy. Many are professional and some live abroad in the U.S.A. and U.K. A Jandhyala was a corporator in the municipality several times starting from 1930 and was a chairman of the council in 1958-59. He was a medical practitioner, as was his son who was mayor of Vijayawada between 1987-92. The family supports the Congress party.

The family runs a hospital and possess agricultural land in the district. Though no longer having a popular support base in Vijayawada, the family enjoys close relations with state and national political leaders and bureaucrats and thus survives in politics. Kamma Congressman supported him against Ranga Rao who was threatening to become powerful and independent.

## GORA

Gora was the founder of the atheist movement in Vijayawada. He was also a Gandhian a social reformer and a nationalist. A Brahminical image has stuck to the family even though Gora rejected his Brahmin past, broke brahmin traditions fought against the caste system and many of his sons and daughters had inter - caste marriages.

The present atheist centre is managed by his son. While still propagating atheism, the movement has become weakened and

now focuses mainly on social reform, rural development etc. Several splits occurred in the movement during the 1970s. More radical atheist were dissatisfied with Gora's moderation in politics and started the Rationalist Associations. Kammas of the city who materially supported the movement are sore about the fact that a Brahmin (Gora's son) should still be the head of the centre, when Kammas have done so much for the movement. One of Gora's daughter is married to a member of the Chennupati (Kamma) family. (See description of Chennupati family on p.). She is a supporter of the atheist movement and was twice Congress MP from Vijayawada, even though party less democracy is one of the aims of the atheist movement.

The family enjoys the support of a wide cross section of society and has the support of a number of Congress leaders. Most communists are opposed to the atheist movements. This is due to their perception that the movement is conservative in politics. Also, some communist groups believe that the atheist centre serves Kamma interests in the city.

K. Nageswara Rao, A. Kaleswara Rao, and T.V.S. Chalapathi Rao were some of the prominent Brahmin politicians and freedom fighters. None of their descendants have any influence in the city. While some do not live in the city anymore, others who do live in Vijayawada have been sidelined, especially in politics.<sup>26</sup>

## KAMMA

The Kammas in Vijayawada come closest to M.N. Srinivas' concept of the dominant caste.<sup>27</sup> They are one of the numerically large groups in the city, constituting around 6% in 1971 but likely to be greater presently. Kammas are leaders in all political parties; they predominate in the local economy, run the educational and religious institutions; are prominent in the professions; and have a say in all legal and judicial matters in the city.

Kammas are one of the largest groups in Krishna district. In 1921, they constituted 21.39% of the district population. Kamma, Reddi, Kapu, Velama and Raju are all agricultural castes.<sup>28</sup> In the middle ages they were soldiers employed by various kings and local chieftains in the Andhra and Deccan areas of south India.<sup>29</sup> They all belong to the shudra category-the last rung in the Varna system. In modern times however they are considered to be forward castes. Kammas in particular are considered to be enterprising and adventurous in nature.<sup>30</sup> The introduction of irrigation systems in the Krishna delta in the 1850 and improvements in the system over a period of hundred years, has mostly benefited Kammas.<sup>31</sup> Originally middle and small peasants, they launched a movement against the Zamindars (including some Kammas) in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>32</sup> After the Zamindari system was abolished in 1948, the Kamma Peasants bought up land released by the system, and as a result the community emerged as a class of

large landholders. Further, studies show that Kammas migrated to other states in India where irrigation systems were developed.<sup>33</sup> Starting from around 1940, Kamma Peasants moved to states like Orissa and Karnataka and bought up land cheap just before the Hirakud and Tungabhadra dams were constructed.<sup>34</sup> Kamma peasants constitute the most prosperous farmers in most areas with well developed irrigation systems.

The enterprise and aggressiveness of Kammas is reflected in Telugu proverbs like "the earth fears the Kammas" and "where Kammas come in, others go out".<sup>35</sup>

Kamma landlords have been living since long on the outskirts of Vijayawada in areas such as Patamata, Gollapudi and Mogulrajapuram.<sup>36</sup> Gradually as the city began to grow, these areas became part of the city from around 1940, Many of the rich landholders began to involve themselves in urban economic and political activities. They shifted from agriculture to trade, transport, construction, cinema and small scale manufacturing.<sup>37</sup> Kammas peasants from more far flung areas in Krishna District also began to invest in Vijayawada. This process intensified as with independence, cities like Eluru, Rajahmundry, Machilipatnam and many small towns lost their economic importance.<sup>38</sup> After the abolition of Zamindari in 1948, many Zamindars either settled or invested, especially in real estate in the city.<sup>39</sup>

As Vijayawada became a centre for various political movements from 1920, many Kamma peasants participated in these movements and used them as a means for social mobility and political power.<sup>40</sup> As the centre for these movements, many Kamma leaders of the Justice party, Congress and Communist party, made Vijayawada their base. The period 1920 to 1960 saw competition between the Kammas in Vijayawada and Krishna District, and Brahmins and Komatis.<sup>41</sup> Competition over economic interests and political power resulted in frequent political conflicts. By the 1960s, Kammas had emerged dominant. they had become economically powerful in Vijayawada and were in a greater proportion demographically compared to earlier decades.

In Vijayawada, Kammas between 1920 and 1937 supported the Justice party and came into conflict with the Brahman and Komati dominated Congress party.<sup>42</sup> From 1935 onwards, Kammas supported the Communist party until 1950, when gradually many of them began to support the Congress.<sup>43</sup> Currently they are dominant in all political parties, except the radical Communist factions.

Kammas reside mainly in localities which used to be villages on the outskirts of the city. These include Mogulrajapuram where there has been a Kamma settlement for two hundred years, Patamata, Labbipet and Gunadala; Krishna Lanka which is close to the wholesale markets is a centre for Kammas involved in the transport industry.<sup>44</sup>

Kammas in Vijayawada are most prominent in the goods transport sector, cinema, wholesale trade in non agricultural consumer goods, manufacture of auto spare parts, machinery and shares for rice mills, finance and construction.<sup>45</sup>

Most educational institutions in the city including professional colleges are run by Kammas, as are most hospitals.<sup>46</sup> Most of the famous lawyers are Kammas.<sup>47</sup> Social, cultural and religious activities are supported by Kamma patrons. Politically, socially and economically, Vijayawada is dominated by the Kamma community.

#### 1. KATRAGADDA FAMILY (KAMMA)

This family is one of the oldest families in the city. They migrated around 200 years ago to the Mogulrajapuram area which was then village settlement on the outskirts of Vijayawada. Initially, they were agriculturists, but gradually shifted to trade related activities.

From around 1940, the family became a pioneer in investing in the kind of sectors the city is known for. One of the family members bought the first truck in Vijayawada and it was one of the first to enter the cinema industry. They continue to have substantial investments in film production and distribution in Vijayawada and Hyderabad. They also have interest in transport sector, real estate, timber, and marketing/advertising, / publicity. Two members of the family are counted among the founders of Krishna Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition

Society - an organisation to protect and advance the interests of small scale industries in the city and hinterland. It is widely regarded as representing Vamma interests.

The family has played a significant role in the nationalist and communist movement. Many of the members were active in both movements and provided material support. They played a major role in organizing a historic mass rally of peasants as part of the 1944. All Indian Kisan Sabha Conference. The conference was held in open ground in Mogulrajapuram. Many Kamma and Brahmin communist activists bought land and settled in the area from 1944 onwards with help from the Katragadda family.

The family have been traditional supporters of the CPI. However a prominent CPI leader of the party went over to the Congress party in 1969. Currently, some members support both the Congress and TDP, without formally being in politics. One member of the family is always represented in the municipal corporation. The person who is prominent Congress leader is generally regarded as a strategist both for the Congress party and for the Kamma community. There are allegations that he is one among the conspirators in the killing of Ranga Rao, a Congress, Kapu MLA in 1988.

The family has also been involved in the development of educational institutions, including the Jesuit, Loyola College and the Siddhartha group of institution.



## II. CHALASANI (KAMMA)

Chalasani Vasudeva Rao was one of the founders of the communist party in Andhra. Vijayawada being the head quarters of the party, he migrated from a village in Krishna district and settled in the city in the mid 1940s. His descendent are active in business especially in the transport and allied manufacturing sector. One of the family members is currently the secretary of the Krishna Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition society. While the family is still sympathetic to the CPI, they are not active in politics. However, they continue to financially support political parties in the city including the CPI, TDP and Congress.

The family lives in Mogulrajapuram along with numerous other ex-communist, presently business oriented families. They also played a significant role in developing education institutions in Vijayawada .

## III. CHENNUPATI (KAMMA)

This family were landlords in Patamata a village near Vijayawada, which is now part of the city. It is primarily a Kamma settlement. In the 1940s, and 1950s, C. Ramakotaiah, was Panchayat Board president and MLA from nearly constituency and a Congressman. His descendents are still with the Congress. His son owns one of the largest fleets of trucks in the city and played an important role in the development of the transport industry in

the city. His family owns petrol bunks and other auto parts manufacturing units.

The son is a Congress leader and is married to the daughter of Gora - the founder of the atheist movement. She was twice elected to the Lok Sabha from Vijayawada. The family initially provided land and other amenities to Gora and his family when they settled in Vijayawada in 1940. The family continues to support the atheist movement. The current head of the family as a Congress leader has held no formal positions, but like a few others Kammis is regarded as a strategist for Kamma interests and of the Congress party. Many murders of business rivals and of political leaders /gangsters are traced to him.

There are several other Kamma families such as the Pinnamaneni, Yelamanchili, Veeramachaneni, and Chukkapalli families. These families are prominent as professionals contractors, industrialists and businessmen. At least one member from each family is in politics and occupies an elected position at the municipal, district or state level. They all have at one time or the other used and supported gangs in the city against their rivals or workers in their enterprises.<sup>48</sup>

KAPU:

Kapus, like Kammis are an agricultural caste with martial origin. The term Kapu used to be a general term to refer to peasant communities in Andhra.<sup>49</sup> Census reports, reporting on

castes upto 1931 did not differentiate between Kapus and Reddis - a dominant peasant caste numerically strong in Rayalaseema and Telaga areas of the state.<sup>50</sup>

Kapus are lower in the caste ranking compared to Kammas, but belong to the same Sudra category in the Varna system. In Krishna district, the numerical strength of the community equals that of the Kammas, but their economic status is much lower. They are mainly small/marginal farmers. In the Godavari delta they are the numerically largest caste. Many Kapus here are big landholders and businessmen.<sup>51</sup>

The Kapu caste as currently referred to by the Kapunadu movement includes several castes-Telaga, Ontari, Baliya, Kapu besides other minor sects.<sup>52</sup> Baliya is an endogamous group and were originally traders who settled down by the nineteenth century as cultivators.<sup>53</sup> Telaga, Ontari and Kapu are usually classed as a single unit.<sup>54</sup> All three interdine and intermarry. Kapu was originally lower in rank compared to Telaga and Ontari. Kapus in Telangana area are a backward class, while in Andhra region, they are not so classified.<sup>55</sup>

In Vijayawada, Kapus constitute 14.9% of the population. They first began migrating to the city in 1930s. But larger flows began only after 1950, as towns in Godavari delta began to decline. After the abolition of Zamindari Kammas became more powerful in rural areas. Many Kapus who could not compete with

them, became marginalized and moved to towns such as Vijayawada. The Kapus migrated to the city mainly from the Godavari and Krishna districts. Initially they worked as manual laborers in construction, as 'mutha' labour in the transport sector and in unskilled and semi skilled jobs.<sup>56</sup> The second generation of Kapu immigrants took up petty trading, skilled jobs and low paid white collar jobs. Economically, the Kapus do not have a dominant presence in any sector. Most belong to the lower middle/lower classes.<sup>57</sup>

The CPI in the 1950s and 1960s recruited many immigrants including Kapus into the party and in their trade unions.<sup>58</sup> Even now Kapus continue to have a strong presence in various trade unions in the city. The Vangaveeti brothers-Radha and Ranga initially worked in CPI trade unions.<sup>59</sup> They later split with the CPI in 1967 and formed a large criminal enterprise. Ranga became a Congress MLA in 1985. After he was killed his widow and a step brother were elected to the state legislature.

Kapu leaders are also active in INTUC a Congress affiliated trade union. Between 1981 and 1991, a few Kapus became corporators in the city.<sup>60</sup> They however had to face stiff opposition from the Kammas, including those in the Congress who had earlier supported Kapus.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Kapu gang leaders were used by Kammas in their illegal activities.<sup>61</sup> Thus Ranga and other Kapus

became involved in criminal activities. Due to this, even though some Kapus occupied political positions, political power could never be used to improve the social and economic status of the community.

Vijayawada emerged as a centre for Kapu political activities, when Ranga took up the leadership of Kapunadu in 1985. Ranga built up a following among Kammas in his fight against the police and against rival (Kamma) gang leaders. A Kapunadu conference in 1988 in the city was the largest ever rally by Kapus.<sup>62</sup> Kapunadu has split; the leaders of one groups hail from Vijayawada and represent the relatively poorer sections among Kapus.

Though Kapus have held political positions and are well organized, they are economically poor in Vijayawada. In the city, they live mainly in Krishna Lanka (where rich Kammas also live) as well as in numerous slums in the new part of the city.

#### VANGAVEETI (KAPU)

The Vangaveeti brothers claim themselves to belong to the Kapu caste. However they are of mixed Kapu/Kamsali origin. The brothers migrated from the West Godavari district in 1960. The elder brother Radha began working as a taxi driver, while Ranga Rao was a cycle mechanic. They soon became involved in trade union activities and illegal activities. Working under the communist Venkataratnam. They split with Venkataratnam in 1969

and began operating among trade unions, student unions, and doing illegal work for liquor manufacturers and others. By 1972 they controlled a large criminal enterprise. Radha allegedly killed Venkataratnam in 1972. In 1974 Radha was killed by his Kamma opponents and Ranga managed the activities. Gandhi and Nehru Kamma brothers who were with Ranga split to form their own group. Increasing conflicts between the two groups resulted in the killing of Gandhi in 197.. Ranga Became Congress corporator in 1951 and an MLs in 1985. For protecting himself from Nehru who had the support of the Telugu Desam government, Ranga projected himself as a Kapu being persecuted by Kammas. He mobilized kapus in Vijayawada and all over Andhra Pradesh. He as killed allegedly by Nehru in 1988. His widow Ratna kumari became an MLS in 1989 from the city and controls part of his groups. Another group is controlled by Rajgas step brother - Chalapathi Rao who got elected as an MLA from Vuyyuru. There is frequent conflict between the two groups as well as with oothers groups. All memves of the family are believed to control a large part of illegal economic activities in the city. However there are no overt sings of investments in the city. They are however believed to have invested in real estate elsewhere within and outside the state.

#### KOMATI

Komatis are the trading caste of Andhra. They have historically lived in the Godavari and Krishna delta areas since the medieval period and spread to other areas over the list two

centuries,<sup>63</sup> Komatis claim to be Vaisyas, the commercial caste occupying the third place in the Varna system.<sup>64</sup> Like Brahmins, Komatis are a twice born caste.

Historical evidence shows that Komatis have lived in Vijayawada for over a thousand years.<sup>65</sup> There is little evidence for large scale migration of the Komatis to Vijayawada. From the 1890s onwards, when Vijayawada became an important railway junction connecting north and south India, the city emerged as a centre for agricultural trade. It was around this time that the Komatis from the city and its hinterland acquired control over the agricultural trade.<sup>66</sup> As the city became a major centre for export of agricultural products, Komati traders became prosperous. They also invested in processing of agricultural products and in retail trade in the city.<sup>67</sup> They entered the bullion trade which became an important sector as the city became more prosperous from 1940 onwards.<sup>68</sup>

Currently Komatis still control much of the wholesale trade in agricultural products in the old town.<sup>69</sup> They also own most of the retail outlets related to agricultural products, groceries and general provisions. Though they are not prominent in the Cinema industry, a Komati in the 1950s, was a pioneer in film distribution and exhibition.<sup>70</sup> The famous Kowtha family has investments in small scale industries apart from trading.<sup>71</sup> There are signs that Komatis are entering sectors hitherto dominated by Kammas. A Komati is a big name in construction. He has a

manufacturing unit in the automobile sector and is the chief promoter of the Vijayawada stock exchange.<sup>72</sup>

The Vijayawada Chamber of commerce has more than five hundred member organizations, representing various traders, wholesalers and retailers.<sup>73</sup> It is widely viewed locally as a Komati front organization. Its president was a Congress supporter, who recently shifted his support to the BJP.<sup>74</sup> The Komatis have traditionally supported the Congress. In the 1920s and 1930s, they used the Congress to win political positions and restrain Kammas who were then striving for economic and political power in the city. Many Komatis participated in the national movement. The Kowtha family which also participated, contributed a municipal chairman in 1947.<sup>75</sup> A member of the family was a corporator between 1981-86 and 1987-92. In the 1940s, some Komatis supported the Hindu revivalist Jan Sangh and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS), over the last ten years, there is support for the Jan Sangh successor B.J.P. not only from the Komatis, but also from Kammas and other caste groups.

The Komatis continue to reside by and large in the old part of Vijayawada.

#### KOWTHA (KOMATI)

The Kowtha family has been residing in Vijayawada for over a century. At the beginning of the century, they were involved in



trading activities in the city. By the 1940s they had started investing in small scale industries. Currently the family has investments in Vijayawada and Hyderabad and is mainly involved in whole sale trade and small scale manufacture of steel products.

The family as part of the Komati community supported the Congress against the Justice party then dominated by Kammas in the 1920s and the 1930s. The Kammas threatened the political and economic power of Komatis who had been dominant for over fifty years in the wholesale agricultural trade form Vijayawada. A Kowtha was chairman of the municipal council in 1931-32 and 1935-36, His brother was a deputy chairman in 1931-1932. A female member of the family wa twice corporator between 1981 and 1992.

The family has popular support both among the Komatis and among poorer people in a few words where it has undertaken charitable works. However, the family is opposed by local leaders of rival factions in the Congress. It has the support, however of state level leaders.

The wholesale and retail trade in the old town is still largely in the hand of Komatis. However, few Komati families play an influential role in the city's life. The Vijayawada Chamber of Commerce consists of over a hundred organization of retailers and wholesalers of various articles. The president of the Chamber is a Komati who used to support the Congress but

presently supports the BJP. The Chamber's influence was reduced following the emergence of the Kamma dominated Krishna Industrial Exhibition Society in 1975. There are signs that Komati individuals are entering non-Komati type of economic sectors. One family has invested in cinema theatres and hotels. Another is a builder in Vijayawada who is now one of the chief promoters of the Vijayawada Stock Exchange. These families are not politically active.

#### MADIGA

The Madigas are one of the ex-untouchable castes and currently are included in the scheduled castes.<sup>76</sup> They constitute one of the numerically large percentage of castes in Andhra Pradesh. In Vijayawada, in 1971, they constituted 6% of the population. Madigas are traditionally leather workers and currently constitute a major part of the large mass of agricultural labourers in Andhra. They are still involved in tanning and curing of leather and manufacture of leather goods, both in villages and in cities.

In Vijayawada, Madigas first migrated in large numbers during the construction of railway projects in and around Vijayawada in the 1890s.<sup>77</sup> Later they migrated intermittently to the city, to escape rural poverty. Initially they worked in construction work, in unskilled jobs and other work involving manual labour. They are currently mainly found among casual

labourers, rickshaw pulling and construction work.<sup>78</sup> Madigas used to ~~stay~~ in slums near the river bank, close to the railway station. These several slum areas, both in the old and new parts of the city.

The vast majority of them are poor. Madiga and Mala castes were initially involved in mutha labour (loading and unloading work in the trade and transport sector. Mutha labour is well paid and secure. But as intermediate castes migrated to the city, these castes with greater access to power, resources and networks displaced Malas and Madigas in Mutha labour.<sup>79</sup>

Madigas have had few opportunities for political power or social mobility. CPI(M) supported bid to organize Madiga leather workers working for a major Kamma owned firm failed, as the family simply closed its leather goods manufacturing concern.<sup>80</sup>

While Madigas are beginning to involve in trade union activities, many have joined criminal gangs and are involved in various group conflicts. During large scale rioting, some Madigas along with other castes in slums participated in looting.<sup>81</sup>

The Madigas have little influence on local politics, though a few have been elected as corporators.

## MALA

Malas are also an ex-untouchable caste.<sup>82</sup> They constitute a large proportion of the population in the State. In Vijayawada, they constitute 8.3 per cent. The traditional occupations of Malas are weaving and agricultural labour. Currently they mainly work as agricultural labourers in the villages, and in low paid jobs in cities.

Like the Madigas, Malas first migrated to the city in the 1890s for working in railway construction projects.<sup>83</sup> Over the next fifty years they began working in *mutha* labour, in junk and scrap collection and in petty trading.<sup>84</sup> In the city, Malas took advantage of Christian missions (many of them are Christian converts) to acquire education from missionary schools.<sup>85</sup>

Compared to Madigas, Malas have thus achieved a certain measure of mobility. Tataji in his study showed that several of the third generation Mala immigrants have entered lower level white collar jobs, skilled jobs and small business.<sup>86</sup> They have also been aided in their mobility by government measures specifically targeted at scheduled castes.

However, the majority continue to be poor. Some Malas have entered the transport sector as drivers. A few even own a trucks which they drive themselves for transporting goods.<sup>87</sup> Though Malas are better organized, in the absence of economic resources and

political power, the community as a whole in vijayawada has not achieved noticeable social mobility.

There have been recent attempts by the Malas at organizing themselves as Dalit Christian in order to demand special concessions from the state.<sup>88</sup> However the attempts never achieved any tangible benefits.

Malas and Madigas, for long supported the Congress party. Over the last decade, there are indications of increasing support to the CPI(ML) groups as well as dalit parties such as the Bahujan Samaj Party. These parties apart from organizing dalit workers in the city are also taking up related issues in the rural interland of Vijayawada. Recently two leaders who have had their political training in the city have become leaders of the B.S.P.<sup>89</sup> With their combined strength of around 14% they are likely to emerge as a strong political force in the future.

#### NAGARA

Nagaras are a cultivating caste, originally confined to the Visakhapatnam district.<sup>90</sup> They claim to have worked as soldiers in the medieval period. They were also practitioners of native medicine. During the nineteenth century, they were mainly agricultural labourers and marginal farmers.

Three Nagara Subedars in the British army, then stationed at Vijayawada acted as labour contractors for the construction of an anicut across the Krishna river in the 1850s.<sup>91</sup> They got their own fellow caste families from Visakhapatnam district for construction work in Vijayawada. Many more migrated in the 1890s for railway construction work. The descendants of the three subedars made a fortune out of labour contracting and some of them continued in the profession till the early decades of this century.<sup>92</sup> One of them Appalaswamy, had his labour gangs working in construction works throughout Andhra.

These families invested in real estate and trade in Vijayawada. The Potina family built the first cinema in Vijayawada in 1942.<sup>93</sup> The family played a significant role in the freedom movement. One of them became the chairman of the municipal council in 1953.<sup>94</sup> Appalaswamy supported the Justice party between 1920 and 1935 and reportedly was responsible for electoral violence in favour of his party.<sup>95</sup> After the decline of the party, he along with Chitti, one of his followers joined the Congress. Both were prominent congress leaders. Appalaswamy was a leader of the INTUC-trade union affiliated to the Congress party Chitti was thrice elected MLA from the city.<sup>96</sup>

During the years of prohibition in the 1930s and 1940s, Nagara individuals were chiefly involved in the distribution of illicit liquor. Participation in criminal activities were high

and violent conflicts were witnessed amongst Nagara individuals and groups resulting in several murders at that time.<sup>97</sup>

T.Potharaju was a Nagara Communist leader who built up opposition to Chitti.<sup>98</sup> He was elected an MLA in 1952 and 1962. After the CPI split in 1964, he formed a City Communist Party which merged with the CPI split in 1964, he formed a City Communist Party which merged with the CPI in 1972. He generated large financial resources for the party. Thus it can be seen that Nagaras played an important role in the politics of the city.

Though Nagaras initially worked as manual labourers and were involved in illegal activities, they achieved a higher economic status as a community. Presently, they are represented in small businesses, retail trade, money lending and clerical jobs in private and public concerns.<sup>99</sup>

Nagara leaders are found in most trade unions affiliated to the Congress, CPI and radical Communist groups.

Nagaras continue to live in the old town, where they first settled over a century ago.

#### POTINA (NAGARA)

The Potina family are descendants of an ancestor who as a subedar in the army contracted labourers from his community for

the construction of barrage across the Krishna river in the 1850s. He became a labour contractor for public works in the area. He later bought up land in the old town and began investing in trade. One of the descendants built the first cinema in Vijayawada in 1942. He was chairman of the municipal council in 1955-56. His family were all involved in the freedom movement. The family still retains interests in cinema in Hyderabad and Madras. However they are not active in politics now. But as a prominent Nagara family is drawn into activities involving the community.

The family is related by marriage to the Marupilla family which also descended from a labour contractor in the 1890s. Marupilla chitti was thrice MLA from Vijayawada in 1955, 1957 and 1967. Chitti was originally with the Justice party and organized its political machine. He joined the Congress after the Justice party declined in the mid 1930s. He was involved in several clashes with CPI cadres between 1940 and 1955. His family is no longer political active.

T. Potharaju, was Communist party MLA in 1952 and 1962. His family also no longer wields any influence in the city.

#### ODDE (VADDERA)

Oddes are a caste traditionally involved in quarrying stones, constructing tanks and executing all kinds of earth work and road construction.<sup>100</sup> In Andhra Pradesh, they are classified



as "backward class". In 1931, they constituted 2.01 per cent of the population in Krishna District. In Vijayawada their strength was estimated at 1.7% in 1971.

Oddes migrated in large numbers in the 1890s for railway construction work.<sup>101</sup> They settled near the railway station, on the banks of the Krishna river. The population of this slum were relocated in different areas in 1979.<sup>102</sup> The community still retains a monopoly on earth and sand labour. Oddes were the major workers in the construction of a new barrage across the river in the 1950s.<sup>103</sup> They are involved in construction of buildings, road construction and other earth work. They are one of the few groups exclusively engaged in their caste occupation.

The large scale construction activity between 1960 and 1990 generated continuous employment for the community. Recent shifts in capital investment away from construction has led to fluctuation in employment in this sector. Many Oddes as a result have been out of work for a long time.

Oddes like many other communities participated in looting and arson during riots. These were directed especially at rich Kamma contractors and builders.

#### RAJU

The Rajus are of martial origin, but are now mainly agriculturists concentrated in the northern districts of coastal

Andhra. They claim to be Kshatriyas, the warrior/ruler caste who occupy the second position in the Varna system. The Rajus are a prosperous community. A majority of them are rich landlords, businessmen and industrialists.<sup>104</sup>

In 1931, they constituted 4.16 per cent in Krishna District. They were 2.8% of the population in 1971, in Vijayawada. They began migrating to the city after 1940. A majority of them in the city keep aloof from politics. A few support the congress party. G.S.Raju, one of the few prominent Rajus in the city, is a past president of the city Congress unit. He is an industrialist manufacturing pharmaceuticals and hails from a prominent Raju political family based in Krishna District.<sup>105</sup>

As a community the Rajus in Vijayawada do not support any other caste Group. Most Rajus are businessmen and small scale industrialists. Only a minority are in low paid occupations.

A description of the caste composition of Vijayawada, its evolution and the current status of different groups, reveals many aspects. While the economic condition and political power of some groups improved, other groups lost their dominance in society. Even though most of the groups consist largely of migrants they came to the city for different kinds of resources, from different socio-economic background. In their attempt to gain entry into different sphere of activity, the groups utilized every available means and competed with each other.

This process generated conflicts as groups responded in a variety of ways through social, political and economic institutions.

The various groups migrating over a period of time settled in different areas of the city. Thus when conflicts arose, they had spatial impact as violence tended to be distributed over specific localities of the city.

The exact ways in which the migrant group adopted to the city, their economic activities, political behaviour and cultural responses are outlined in the following chapters. It is shown in greater detail as to how some groups like the Kammass achieved and maintained their dominance; at the same time castes like addes, Malas and Madigas who constitute the earliest in-migrants could not achieve any significant degree of social mobility and control over resources.

A study of the prominent families in Vijayawada's history provides several insights. There are few families belonging to non Kamma communities who are as dominant as their Kamma counterparts. Even these have rarely been able to maintain their position across generations. The kind of wide ranging participation in various sectors is also not observed among the prominent non-Kamma families. In particular, it was observed both during field work and in records of past events, that the rich peasant families have always been involved in all major events in the city - political, social and economic.

It is also seen that in the case of Kamma families ,their participation in politics is not only crucial for their dominance in other sectors, but is itself a significant aspect of their migration and presence in the city.

### Notes to Chapter 3

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1. See Thurston, 1975, for details.
2. See Innaiah, 1984, pp. 45.
3. This is evident from a perusal of the list of prominent leaders in the movements. For Krishna district see Krishna Sastry, 1991.
4. There are no studies to substantiate these figures. However for some tentative figures see Prajapandha, 1990.
5. Gazetteer of the East India Company, 1823, pp. 445.
6. See Krishna Sastry pp. 1-10 for details.
7. Field notes. See also Washbrook, 1977.
8. Field notes. Based on discussions with some political and social leaders in the city.
9. Field notes. In the Besant Road Brahmins still continue to have a presence in retail trading.
10. See chapter 5 for more details.
11. Ibid.
12. See section on communist parties in Chapter 5
13. Ibid.
14. Field notes. Based on discussions with senior Brahmin politicians.
15. This was the case for instance of descendants of T. V. S. Chalapathi Rao, former Mayor and M L A and of the Kowtha family.
16. Field notes. Their marginalization in recent years have led to protests and some Brahmin leaders distanced themselves from the party during the December 1994 elections.
17. The Brahmin politician Kaleswara Rao led the anti-communist attacks.
18. See section on municipal politics in Chapter 5
19. Field notes; interview with a Brahmin trade union leader and DVSR Krishnamurthy, a key informant working for several business concerns; this was the case of even public figures such as Nageswara Rao.
20. Field notes. Interview with DVSR Krishnamurthy.
21. Field observation; see also Bhanu 1992, for details; the map of Vijayawada is given in Chapter II.
22. Field notes. Interviews with some Brahmin citizens as well as

with a few house agents operating in the area.

23. Field observation and discussion with Brahmin citizens, especially with the atheist leader Lavanam.
24. Field notes; these included management and patronage of temples, charitable organizations, Lions clubs, cultural associations, etc.
25. The description of the various families in this chapter are derived from in depth informal interviews and discussions with members of the families as well as with other key informants.
26. This is the case of the family of Chalapathi Rao.
27. See Srinivas, 1987, pp. 97.
28. For references regarding these castes see Thurston 1980.
29. Ibid, pp. 94
30. This is a widely held view among all sections in the state.
31. See Swamy, 1986, pp. 65-76; also G. N. Rao, 1985, pp. 8-10.
32. See Dhanagare, 1982, pp. 142-44. for details; also Haragopal, 1985, pp. 80-105.
33. Swamy, op. cit. pp. 74.
34. Ibid, pp. 76.
35. Thurston op. cit. pp. 99.
36. Field notes, interviews with some senior citizens; see also Narsaiah, no date, pp. 2.
37. Narsaiah, pp. 3.
38. For details see Chapter. 2, in Raman Rao 1958, pp. 160-172
39. The Challapalli Zamindar was one of these.
40. Details are given in ch. 5. pp. "Social and Political Movements".
41. Field notes, based on an illuminating discussion with Lakshman Rao; Kaleswara Rao, 1956; also Washbrook, 1973, pp. 521-22..
42. Details in Chapter. 5
43. Ibid.
44. Field observation; also discussions with persons in the transport sector. These Kammas were the main targets of attack in the 1988 riots. .
45. See chapter. 4
46. See section on "Education", chapter. 4.
47. One of these recently launched an agitation for a bench of the High Court near Vijayawada. He is a Congressman and a

participant in various movements including the Jai Andhra movement. He has also represented several of the city's gang leaders in court cases.

48. Field notes. Interview with T. Ganapati Rao, a Nagara Communist Trade unionist.
49. Thurston, op.cit. pp. 22; also Balagopal, 1968, pp. 228.
50. Census of the Madras Presidency, 1941, pp.
51. Balgopal, op.cit. pp. 228; See also newspaper reports in August, 1994, for statements by R Krishnaiah on various occasions opposing the demand for BC status to the Kapus.
52. See Thurston for details regarding these castes.
53. Ibid, pp. 14.
54. Field notes. This is the basis for the Kapunadu movement demanding Backward Class status for themselves. For details see chapter V.
55. Field notes. Interview with some Town Planning officials working or worked earlier in the city.
56. See Rao and Rao 1984, pp. 96; also Tataji, 1984; Kapus in these reports are referred to as Telagas.
57. Ibid ; field notes. Interview with some Kapu trade union ists and a leader of the Kapunadu movement.
58. Janashakti, 1989, pp. 12-14.
59. Field notes. Interview with old time trade union leaders.
60. Field notes. Interview with Kapu leaders.
61. See Chapter. 4 , section on "Types of Groups".
62. Chapter. 5.
63. On this see Sundaram, 1972, pp. 57-62.
64. Thurston op.cit. pp. 307.
65. Sundaram, op.cit.
66. G. N. Rao, 1989, pp. 9.
67. Field notes. Most of the units located in the old part of the town are still owned by them
68. Field notes. This also includes Vaisyas from other states especially from the north.
69. Field notes; Vijayawada Directory 1986 has a list of associations of wholesale traders; a majority of these traders are Komatis.
70. This was the family of Mangaraju; they also own a few hotels.

71. See below section on the Kowtha family.
72. He is active in the Kamma dominated Krishna Industrial and Agricultural society.
73. For a complete list see Vijayawada Directory op.cit.pp.313-323
74. Field notes.
75. See below, section on Kowtha.
76. Thurston ,op.cit.pp.292.
77. Rao and Rao op.cit.pp.62.
78. Tataji op.cit.
79. IBid,pp.191.
80. Field notes. Interview with T. Ganapati Rao.
81. Field notes. Interview with a few Town Planning officials with an intimate knowledge of the city.
82. Thurston op.cit.pp.329.
83. Rao and Rao op . cit. pp.44-49.
84. Ibid,pp.62
85. Tataji,op.cit.pp.191.
86. Ibid,pp.189.
87. Rao and Rao ,op.cit.pp.49.
88. See Eenadu dated pp.1,Nov. 1992, for a report.
89. Field notes. These are Bojja Tharakam and Kathi Padma Rao who have played important roles in the *dalit* movement in the past decade.
90. Thurston ,op.cit.pp.135.
91. Field notes. Interview with Lakshman Rao.
92. Ibid.
93. See below section on Pothina family.
94. Chapter. 5,section on Municipal Politics.
95. Field notes, interview with Lakshman Rao; also Baker,1975,pp.120 and Suryanarayana, op.cit. 145.
96. Chapter. 5.
97. Field notes. Interview with Lakshman Rao.
98. Details in Chapter. 5.
99. Field notes.
100. Thurston ,op.cit.pp.422
101. Rao and Rao ,op.cit.pp.45-46..
102. On this see Prasanna Kumar,1984.
103. Field notes. Interview with officials in the Town Planning



section, Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.

104. Field notes. They are very prominent in the industrial scene in present day Andhra Pradesh.
105. Field notes. They are originally from West Godavari district and still retain connections with their native region.

**V**

**CHAPTER 4**  
**THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF VIJAYAWADA**

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF VIJAYAWADA

In this chapter, an attempt is made to study the different aspects of the economic structure of Vijayawada. The major premise of this thesis being that Vijayawada is a provincial city, this section outlines the typical economic structure of a provincial city. It is proposed to show that the economy of Vijayawada is oriented towards the tertiary sector, towards trade, commerce, transport and services. Industries are mainly restricted to the small scale sector and consist of ancillary units to the tertiary activities. The economy as a whole derives its capital from the rural economy in the countryside. The investment pattern is based on identification of sector having potential for quick profits. The economy is largely dominated by the rural land own classes who have migrated to the city.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND FUNCTIONAL IMPORTANCE

Traditionally, Vijayawada has been a centre for the export of agricultural produce from the Krishna and Godavari deltas.<sup>1</sup> The origin of the city itself can be traced to the increased prosperity induced by canal irrigation and of improvements in communication and transport facilities in the latter half of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In particular, historians studying the economy of coastal Andhra, focus on the construction of the anicut across the Krishna at Vijayawada in the 1850s and the

railway bridge connecting Madras and Calcutta through Vijayawada, in the 1890s.<sup>3</sup>

The Komati or Vysya traders were in control of the grain trade from Vijayawada to various centres in the Madras presidency.<sup>4</sup> In the early decades of the twentieth century, rich peasants belonging to the Kamma caste entered the grain trade, initially by setting up rice mills and later participating in a large way in the transport of food grains and other commercial crops.<sup>5</sup>

As investments in agro-based units reached a saturation point, capital shifted to construction, hotels, cinema etc. The increasing trade in the city created a need for more services, as also the emerging political importance of the city since the 1920s.<sup>6</sup>

By the 1950s Vijayawada had emerged as a "Primate" city in the delta districts;<sup>7</sup> this primacy had its origin not in industrialization but in the city's functional importance as an entrepot town. The Krishna delta was one of the beneficiaries of green revolution related programmes in the 1960s. This, along with the creation of greater irrigation facilities in the post-independence era, increased the prosperity of the land owning classes. The Nagarjunasagar dam and the Prakasam Barrage together irrigate over 80% of the agricultural lands in Krishna district.<sup>8</sup>

The intermediate castes and Kammas in particular benefited from changes in the economy and government policies from the 1920s. The abolition of Zamindari in 1948,<sup>9</sup> and the provision of government incentives and subsidies resulted in large scale commercialization of agriculture.<sup>10</sup> The resultant surpluses were channeled into easily manageable and profit producing sectors, with low gestation periods. While the rate of urbanization is high in the coastal Andhra region, especially in the Krishna Delta, an industrial climate does not exist<sup>11</sup>. The rate of industrialization is very low.

The primacy of the city thus has no basis outside its functional importance as an entrepot city.

As we shall see, the mere provision of infrastructure facilities was not a sufficient condition for industrial development. The large number of small scale industries were mainly producing goods for use by the tertiary sector. The city's function as a commercial centre for procuring agricultural products from the hinterland and arranging their processing and distribution to different areas of the country has not diminished.

Several authors have commented on the functional aspects of Vijayawada. (Late) Professor Prakasa Rao described Vijayawada as "a commercial city with a high degree of nodality".<sup>12</sup> Prof. Rao and Ramachandran are of the view that the city functions as a

major transit point for sizable "rail and road borne commodity flows".<sup>13</sup> The city's emergence as an "economic nerve centre" of the region is explained as being due to its advantageous location in relation to a vast and productive agricultural hinterland. According to Professor Prakasa Rao, the city's marketing function reflects "an integrated Urban Rural Economy".<sup>14</sup>

The commercial function of the city results in voluminous commodity flows. This has generated a large transport sector. Tataji classifies Vijayawada as a "trade - transport" city.<sup>15</sup> Premi categorises the city under "Trade, Commerce and Transport".<sup>16</sup> The 1971 census classifies the city under "Industry cum Trade and Commerce cum Transport".<sup>17</sup>

Table 4.1  
Functional Classification of Vijayawada City

Source of classification	Functional Type
1.V.L.S.Prakasa Rao, 1983	Commercial City
2.Census 1961	Services cum Industry and Trade and Commerce
3.Census 1971	Industry cum Trade and Commerce cum Transport
4.R.Ramachandran, 1989	Urban Cluster with a degree of specialization high in Trade and Commerce
5.M.K.Premi, 1985	Trade and Commerce and Transport
6.U.Tataji, 1986	Trade - Transport city

Vijayawada is one of the biggest rail and road junctions in the country. It is an important centre for wholesale trade and distribution of various consumer goods for Andhra Pradesh

including cloth, auto parts, pesticides, fertilizers, drugs and pharmaceuticals.<sup>18</sup>

The actual economic structure of Vijayawada is therefore influenced by its location in an agriculturally rich hinterland and its function as an important centre for the distribution of agricultural produce. In the following pages, the major economic sectors of the city are discussed, keeping in mind the functional status of Vijayawada. The social background of the various sectors also have a bearing on the way in which the economy is structured and investments are patterned. The way in which the different economic sectors are related to the social structure and the impact of these on politics, criminalization and violence are analyzed.

#### THE MAJOR SECTORS IN VIJAYAWADA'S ECONOMY

The following pages provide an over view of the various sectors in the city's economy. In the process, the provincial nature of the economy is brought out. It is shown that most sectors are those where quick profits can be made and reinvested/circulated.

Investments which take a long time to show returns are avoided. There are frequent shifts from one sector to another depending on perceptions of profitability. Many individuals are involved in several sectors simultaneously. Usually different

members of a family are located in the different sectors. Frequently, the person involved or a member of a business family is also in politics.

## TRADE

As an entrepot city, trade, especially trade in food grains is the most important aspect of the city's economy. Traditionally, wholesale and retail trade in agricultural products has been in the hands of Vysyas. To this day they continue to dominate this sector.<sup>19</sup> The wholesale markets for agro-based products are located in the old part of the city known as "one town".

Apart from trading in grains, vegetables and other products, Vysyas have a dominant presence in retail selling of general provisions, jewellery and bullion markets, drugs and pharmaceuticals, cooking vessels and wholesale cloth<sup>20</sup>. The Vijayawada Chamber of Commerce with over 500 member organizations is widely viewed locally as an organization to protect the interests of Vysyas.<sup>21</sup> The Krishna District Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition Society,<sup>22</sup> on the other hand is seen to be an organization which projects the Kamma interests.

Historically, the Vysya Community has been involved in conflicts with peasant castes who were seen as intruding into trading. In the pre-independence period Kaleswara Rao fought



many cases on behalf of his Vysya clients. Elections to the Municipal Council and Madras Provincial Legislature saw the Vysyas extending support to Brahmin/Vysya candidates against Kamma opponents<sup>23</sup>.

Almost all caste groups are represented in petty retail business especially in the slums. In the old part of city, the Nagara community are also involved in petty trading, money lending and retail cloth trade.<sup>24</sup> In the new town, Brahmins have considerable presence in the consumer goods trade. However most of the shops that have been set up over the last twenty years belong to Kmmas. These shops mainly deal in electronic goods, textiles, garments and other high value consumer items<sup>25</sup>. A sizable trade exists in spare parts for rice mills and automobiles, which are operated both by upper castes and intermediate castes.<sup>26</sup>

The leather footwear trade is dominated by one Kamma family which manufactures and sells footwear through a large number of outlets in Vijayawada and also distributes to other cities in Andhra Pradesh.<sup>27</sup>

Data on import and export of commodities show that leather products constitute an important segment in the economy<sup>28</sup>. The city and its suburbs mainly import jute, cloth, raw steel, alcohol, ground nuts, and aluminum sheets. Jute is for making gunny sacks to pack and transport agricultural products. Raw

steel, aluminum sheets and iron for making auto and rice mill spare parts, and cooking utensils. Alcohol is for pharmaceuticals and ground nuts are imported by the oil mills in the city. The major exports from the city include rice, tobacco, pulses, vegetables and bran oil. (See Table 4.2)

The commodity flows from the city extend almost in all directions. However a study shows that commercial ties are stronger with the North-eastern states and Northern states.<sup>29</sup> Within the state the commodity flow is mainly towards the Rayalaseema area.

Table 4.2

EXPORT, IMPORT AND MANUFACTURE OF THREE MOST IMPORTANT COMMODITIES

VIJAYAWADA URBAN AGGLOMERATION 1971 - 81

EXPORT, IMPORT MANUFACTURE	YEAR	VIJAYAWADA	PATAMATA	GUNADALA
EXPORT	1971	RICE, TOBACCO, PULSES	VEGETABLES, BRAN OIL, PULSES	PADDY, GREENGRAM BLACKGRAM
	1981	RICE, TOBACCO PULSES	VEGETABLES, BRAN OIL, PULSES	PADDY, GREENGRAM BLACKGRAM
IMPORT	1971	JUTE, CLOTH, IRON AND STEEL	GROUNDNUT SUGAR CHILLIES	ALCOHOL, ALUMINIUM STEEL SHEETS RAWSTEEL
	1981	" "	" "	" "
MANUFACTURE	1971	TANNED LEATHER, SYNTHETIC DRUGS CEMENT	GROUNDNUTS, BRAN OIL	PHARMACEUTICALS, ALUMINUM AND STEEL VESSELS ENGINE BODIES
	1981	" "	" "	" "

SOURCE: Town Directory, Andhra Pradesh Census, 1971 and 1981.

While most of the exports to the North is by Rail, trade to south is mainly by road transport. Very little of the exports are locally manufactured. They are mainly imported from other areas, assembled or processed and distributed. The major exports apart from agricultural products are fertilizers and pesticides, textiles, leather goods, engineering goods, minerals, drugs and pharmaceuticals.<sup>30</sup>

A sample survey in 1971 showed that Vysyas constituted 41.66% of the trading community.<sup>31</sup> The Kammas owned 27.77% of the commercial establishments. The figures for Brahmins, Kapu and Nagara were 11.11%, 8.37% and 5.55% respectively. Another study of a major slum in Vijayawada showed that there are no Vysyas among shop-keepers.<sup>32</sup> The traders were predominantly from intermediate castes, scheduled castes and Muslims. At present, the Vysya community continues to dominate trade in agricultural products in the old city. However in the new city, there has been considerable increase in the consumer goods trade, especially in the new extensions in Labbipet and Patamata. The majority of these traders are Kammas<sup>33</sup>. There has also been a huge increase in the number of street side vendors over the last two decades, mainly in the Besant Road and Governorpet area. This has been a major source of conflicts with upper caste retailers trying to evict street hawkers and street vendors mobilizing under Ranga, a congress M.L.A. A major reason for attacks on shops in Besant Road in the 1989 riots was the eviction of Kapu and other low caste petty traders<sup>34</sup>.

The Kammas mainly own shops which sell white goods, and other high value consumer durables, textiles, electronic goods and liquor. These are mainly located in Governorpet, Bandar Road and Patamata. During the 1989 riots, these two streets were the main targets of attack. Rs. 100 crores worth commodities were destroyed in Besant Road alone.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, the old city was spared of attacks since almost no Kammas live there or own shops.

The work force in Trade and Commerce constitute nearly 25% of the total main workers in Vijayawada<sup>36</sup> the largest number.

#### TRANSPORT

The voluminous flow of goods through Vijayawada has generated a large transport sector. The transport industry employs more than 48,000 workers or 18% of the total work force<sup>37</sup>. Till the 1940s railways were the major mode of transport. From the 1940s road transport came to be increasingly used<sup>38</sup>. The number of lorries in Vijayawada increased from 31 to 343 between 1941 and 1951.<sup>39</sup> The completion of the Prakasam Barrage cum road bridge provided an impetus for growth in road transport.<sup>40</sup> However goods transport by road became a highly profitable business only after the green revolution in the 1960s. In 1969, Daniel Thorner observed that the lorry transport business was so profitable that trucks could afford to come back empty from Madras.<sup>41</sup> The Krishna District Lorry Owners

Association - one of the most powerful organizations in Vijayawada, as well as in the state, was setup in 1967 with 800 members<sup>42</sup>. Presently the city has around 9000 lorries employing more than 30000 persons. In addition, 2000 lorries from other districts and states pass through the city every day. Krishna district has the largest number of lorries after Hyderabad.<sup>43</sup>

While persons belonging to all castes operate trucks, a majority of the lorry owners are Kammas. The Lorry Owners Association has a strong identification with Kammas. Particularly, those owning five or more lorries and owning large transport companies, belong to the Kamma community.<sup>44</sup> Many of them are former landlords from surrounding areas.

One of the founder members and a leader of the Lorry Owners Association used to own vast agricultural lands in Patamata before it became part of the city. His company owns 30 trucks, his wife was twice Member of Parliament, he himself is a Congress party supporter, and a supporter of the Atheist movement. Numerous violent incidents of murder over the last 25 years are usually traced back to him<sup>45</sup>.

Likewise many of the large truck operators come from agricultural backgrounds, and play an important role in politics and society. Prominent temples and educational institutions sustain themselves due to the support of lorry owners. Some of them are associated with the Congress-I, Telugu Desam or the

Communist Party of India. Often the same person supports the communist party or Atheist movement, offers financial help to a missionary institution and contributes to the construction of a temple.<sup>46</sup>

The transport business in Vijayawada has spawned a number of ancillary industries and commercial establishments. Around one hundred auto finance companies exist in the city to cater to the financing needs of truck operators.<sup>47</sup> Less than five percent of the lorry owners are dependent on own finance to buy lorries.<sup>48</sup>

The majority of manufacturing units in the city consist of small scale industries making spare parts for trucks. While many of the larger lorry owners themselves own some of these units, a majority of the auto spare parts manufacturers are non-truck owners. However these are also mainly Kammas.<sup>49</sup> More details regarding this sector will be provided in the section on the lorries. The innumerable workshops for servicing and repairs of trucks are mainly situated in the Jawahar Auto Nagar on the city outskirts. The Auto Nagar is an industrial estate specially meant for automobile workshops, manufacturing units for auto spare parts<sup>50</sup>. The Auto Nagar was set up in 1969 - the first such estate in the country.

The Auto Technicians Association, which played a significant role in setting up the Auto Nagar, the Automobile Body builders Association, and the Lorry Owners Association together represent

not just a successful economic sector but also a politically influential sector. The Lorry owners Association started a co-operative society for buying and distributing among its members, petrol and diesel, engine oil, lubricants and spare parts. It is the most successful and profitable co-operative society in the state.<sup>51</sup>

Vijayawada is one of the important junctions in the country for the Indian Railways. Linking the north and south, it lies on the route to Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and Hyderabad. The Vijayawada division is next only to the Secunderabad division in size in the South Central Railway and contributes nearly 5000 workers to the total work force in the transport sector.<sup>52</sup>

Construction workers and gangmen working in the railways, mostly belonging to the Vaddera community and other lower castes, reside in slum surrounding the railway station.<sup>53</sup> Vadderas have been involved in railway construction work since the 1890s. Though these groups are not involved in group conflicts, they are participants in rioting.

The volume of passenger road transport from, to and through Vijayawada is also very high due to its commercial importance. Having a very large floating population, the travellers from within the state mainly depend on road transport. Vijayawada has the largest number of private buses under operation by the state Road Transport Corporation.<sup>54</sup> The private buses were originally

operated by the owners themselves. After the routes were nationalized, the owners leased them to the Road Transport Corporation for operation. There are over 250 private buses in the city.<sup>55</sup> These owners live mainly in the Krishna Lanka area and in Patamata. The workers in the passenger road transport sector are highly unionized. The 1970s and 1980s saw a number of strikes and inter union conflicts.<sup>56</sup>

Directly and indirectly, the transport sector provides employment to the highest number of persons. The *mutha* workers involved in loading /un-loading of goods as well as those working in workshops and factories - all belong to intermediate castes, lower castes, scheduled castes and Muslims,<sup>57</sup> while the owners of trucks and others enterprises are Kammas.

A basis for conflicts thus exists which erupts during incidents of rioting, and other conflicts.

## SERVICES

As per the 1991 census, services employs the second largest number of workers in Vijayawada, around 22%. The world over, there is a trend towards an increase in the services sector. What is different in Vijayawada is that the increase is not due to the need for greater services, but due to the huge profits that they provide. Also increase in service workers are not in communications, media and information sectors but in sectors like health, hotels, education and entertainment.



## HOTELS

For a city of its size, Vijayawada has a very large number of hotels. There are around one hundred hotels of various classes. Some are run by traditional hotelling families belonging to Brahmin/Vysya castes. However the more recent ones are owned by Kammas as well as other intermediate castes<sup>58</sup>.

Due to its commercial importance and the presence of a large floating population, the city's hotels have high occupancy rates unlike in other cities. Hotels are seen as an opportunity for investment with safe and quick returns. In the 1989 riots, a few hotels belonging to the Kamma owners were destroyed in Gandhinagar, while a large hotel in the same area was not attacked since it belonged to a prominent Vysya family who also have interests in cinema.<sup>59</sup>

Many hotels in the city have the reputation for functioning as brothels.

In general the owners of the major hotels have come to the field after making profits in other areas such as trading, cinema etc.<sup>60</sup>

## HOSPITALS

Vijayawada has a plethora of private hospitals and diagnostic centres. Traditionally the city has been famous for indigenous systems of medicine, especially *ayurveda*. A number of

ayurvedic clinics still attract a number of patients<sup>61</sup>. However, over the last decade a number of most modern clinics, hospitals and diagnostic centres have been set up. These are mainly started by local and foreign based Kammass as well as a few doctors belonging to other castes<sup>62</sup>. The Siddhartha Medical College which used to be under private management until eighty years ago produced a large number of Kamma medical graduates who could pay the exorbitant fees charged by private colleges. The prosperity of Kamma peasants led them to invest in professional education. The need to get returns on this investment led to the emergence of a large number of private hospitals.

A study in 1971 found that for around 63% of the doctors in the sample, medicine was a subsidiary occupation<sup>63</sup>. This is because a professional degree is not for jobs but for acquiring status, enhancing one's value in the dowry market etc.

The presence of a large number of hospitals and diagnostic centres has led to competition for clients. In Vijayawada practising doctors get a commission for prescribing tests and sending patients to specific diagnostic centres/hospitals<sup>64</sup>.

## CINEMA

Vijayawada is the headquarters of the Telugu film industry. The first ever cinema hall in the state was constructed in

Vijayawada <sup>65</sup>. It has around fifty cinema halls at present which is the largest number for a city of its size in the state and perhaps in the country <sup>66</sup>. The number of halls increased to its present number from 15, 22 and 30 in 1961, 1971 and 1981 respectively. <sup>67</sup> While cinema halls are closing down in Hyderabad, more halls are coming up in Vijayawada.

The city is also the major centre for financing and distribution of films in Telugu. There are over eighty distribution agencies in the city. <sup>68</sup> However due to recent changes involving decentralization of distribution, the number of agencies are declining in Vijayawada.

Some of the oldest Kamma families in the city are involved in film distribution and production. A prominent family which has its members in both the Congress (I) and Communist Party of India and has interests in timber, printing, publishing and automobile industry, is today a major name in film production and distribution <sup>69</sup>.

The Vijayawada Film Chamber of Commerce was set up in the city in 1953 and is the dominant group in the Andhra Pradesh Film Chamber of Commerce.

Major film directors, actors and producers and political leaders in the state all have a stake in the film industry of Vijayawada through ownership of distribution companies and cinema

theaters. The cinema theaters of Vijayawada contribute Rs.2 crores every year as entertainment tax.<sup>70</sup>

The city became the centre for the film industry for various reasons. Initially, some of the Zamindars and rich landlords invested in films in the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>71</sup> As the Kamma peasantry became more prosperous in the post independence era, only they among the surplus owning classes had the money to invest in film production. Through the Justice Party and later the Dravidian movement, the non-Brahmin rich peasant already had an experience of the world of cinema.<sup>72</sup> In the 1950s films used to be exhibited in rice mills in Andhra<sup>73</sup>. The owners of these mills saw an opportunity for investing in permanent buildings for film exhibition. As the Kamma community began to participate in greater numbers as actors and directors, gradually they also started investing in production and distribution.

However over the last few years the importance of cinema in the city's economy seems to be declining, mainly due to perceptions of greater profitability in other areas. A number of prominent film personalities from Vijayawada and other coastal areas have shifted their base of operation to Hyderabad. One family owning three theaters in the city has already closed down one and is planning to diversify into hotels.<sup>74</sup> Two theaters which were destroyed in the 1989 riots are not being rebuilt. Instead multi-storied building for office and shops are coming up in their place.

The film industry has spawned several ancillary units. The publicity requirements of the Telugu film industry are met by the large number of litho presses in Vijayawada which print posters for state wide distribution.

## EDUCATION

As agricultural castes Kamma, Kapu and others had low literacy levels at the beginning of the century<sup>75</sup>. While Kapus still lag behind, the Kammas used their participation in various social and political movements and their increasing prosperity to acquire education<sup>76</sup>. Their struggle for mobility, however, has always been detested by other groups. The Andhra University, first located in Vijayawada was shifted within a few years to Visakhapatnam, in response to fears that the Kammas may dominate the University.<sup>77</sup>

In the 1930s, the Raja of Nuzvid set up the SRR and CVR college which was the only higher education institution in the city till the 1950s. Till then those aspiring for higher education mainly went to Madras, Visakhapatnam or even to Benaras.<sup>78</sup> In the 1950s the Loyola College was set up by a Jesuit mission with financial support from the Kamma community. The Katragadda family helped in acquiring 100 acres of land for the college<sup>79</sup>. Several other christian missions set up convents with the support of the Kamma community. In 1975, the Siddhartha Academy of Technical and General Education was set up through a contribution of 25 lakhs by over 250 persons from the city and from Krishna district, a majority of them belonging to the Kamma

community.<sup>80</sup> The Academy started an engineering college, a medical college and several schools.

The shortage of seats in government run institutions led to two responses from the rich peasant class. The first was to set up private colleges where their wards could enroll by paying donations, without going through state prescribed admission procedures. At the same time these colleges became an income generating concern.<sup>81</sup> The second response was to start a host of tutorial colleges to prepare students for entrance into colleges, as in due course admission procedures even into private colleges came to be regulated. Such tutorial colleges are especially popular and numerous in the Nellore, Guntur, and Krishna districts.

The above phenomena has been well documented in the case of the state of Karnataka. Kaul in her study states that apart from a profit motive, these institutions also "enhance the political power and pretense of the dominant peasant class."<sup>82</sup> The private colleges with their phenomenal fees are "manifestation of the interface between caste, class and power which continue to treat education as an enterprise".<sup>83</sup>

Vijayawada also has a large number of private schools - around 400 with an intake of 1.5 lakh students<sup>84</sup>. Usually the managements of private schools collude with each other and with government officials to ensure that their students pass the school leaving examination.<sup>85</sup>

## INDUSTRY

The manufacturing sector employs lesser number of persons compared to Trade and Commerce, Services, and Transport sectors. Only 17% were working in industries as of 1991<sup>86</sup>. This percentage drops to 15% if the areas in Guntur district recently made part of Vijayawada Urban Agglomeration are excluded.

The industrial sector is mainly oriented towards small scale units. There are only nine large and medium scale units in the area with an average employment of 327 persons.<sup>87</sup> Of these two are in the public sector - Thermal Power station and Wagon Workshop. One is in the cooperative sector - the Dairy Development Federation. Of the private concerns - the Andhra Cement Company - one of the oldest in the state - is a sick unit. Likewise a spinning mill is also on the verge of closure. The Kowtha steel products (of the Kowtha family) makes cooking utensils and is one of the few industries owned by a Komati family.

Yet another medium scale unit makes pharmaceutical products and is owned by a Raju.<sup>88</sup> The Andhra Pradesh Heavy Machinery and Engineering Limited was a pioneering effort to promote industrialization by utilizing the surplus generated from agricultural activity in the hinterland of Vijayawada.<sup>89</sup> Out of an initial outlay of Rs.8 crores, Rs.2 crores were contributed by rich peasants from the hinterland. The company began production in 1983 and has been sick since 1986. The reasons for this included

pressures in contrary directions by the shareholders as well as the pressures to provide jobs to their relatives. A number of malpractices in the Company's functioning have also come to light.<sup>90</sup>

Table 4.3

Employment in Manufacturing units : 1911-1985

Year	Number of units	Number of workers
1911	89	
1961	216	2692
1971	553	5431
1985	1787	17528

Source: District Census Handbook, 1961 & 1971; Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation.

Small scale units constitute the majority of units in the manufacturing sector in Vijayawada. Data pertaining to these units are highly unreliable and the number of units and working population fluctuates frequently. There are several reasons for this. Baru states that though growth rate in the manufacturing sector is high in Andhra, mortality rates for the units are also high at 47%<sup>91</sup> More than 30% of registered units were not traceable. He attributes this situation to the setting up of units for purposes such as black marketing of raw materials, tax evasion, opportunity for availing government loans etc.



In 1911 (see Table 4.3) Krishna district had 89 units, the highest in Coastal Andhra. However, the district no longer holds this preeminent position. A study in 1955-56 showed that total income from factories in the district was the lowest in Coastal Andhra.<sup>92</sup> As far as industrialization is concerned Krishna district lags behind most other districts now. This holds true even in food processing industries (with the exception of rice mills)<sup>93</sup>. In 1985, there were 1787 small scale units in the city, each employing 8.2 persons on average. However data obtained for 1988 put the figure at only 1243 units.<sup>94</sup>

With reference to the range of products manufactured by the industries in Vijayawada, except for the manufacture of automobile spare parts workshops since the late 1960s, there has been very little change. In 1945, the range of industries included rice mills, oil mills, printing and dyeing of cloth, and a few general engineering industries<sup>95</sup>. In 1967, in addition to the above there were a number of saw mills, rerolling mills, units making metal products and a few pharmaceutical units.<sup>96</sup> As of 1991 the emphasis is on units working with iron, steel and aluminum for manufacture of a variety of products for the transport sector.

The major sectors among small scale units are:

1. Auto spare parts: These are located mainly in the Jawahar Auto Nagar, an industrial estate developed for the auto ancillary industries, workshops and related trading establishments in 1969. The 745 units (as of 1991) in the Auto Nagar employ around twenty

thousand persons working in spare parts manufacturing units, service and repair workshops and in shops selling spare parts and other auto ancillaries

Table 4.4  
Production and Employment in the Industrial Estates of Vijayawada

Estate	Number of Working units	Employment	Total Production
1. Industrial Estate	60	600	Rs. Five crores
2. Jawahar Auto Nagar	745		Rs. Twenty five crores

Source                      Andhra                      Pradesh                      Industrial                      Development  
Corporation, Vijayawada. .

2. Rice mills: Krishna district has around 950 rice mills, the largest number in the state.<sup>97</sup> This is mainly due to the fact that the Krishna delta is one of the major rice producing areas of the country. The city has around fifty rice mills with an additional thirty mills processing edible oil, pulses etc.

3. Foundries: Foundries are a specialization of the city's economy. In 1971 there were 37 units employing 814 persons<sup>98</sup>. Though no data is available, the present number is likely to be above fifty. Foundries cater to the auto spare parts and rice mill spare parts units by processing raw and steel. They also make typefaces for the city's large printing industry.

Other major manufacturing units include those making plastics, steel and aluminum household articles, drugs and pharmaceuticals, saw mills and leather products.

Leather work especially used to be a major sector with about thirty units until 1989. A Kamma family had a dominant presence with over ten units and control over distribution, wholesale and retail trade of footwear. However, as a result of a communist supported long drawn strike, typical of the city's entrepreneurs, the family chose to close down its units and began to import footwear from the northern state of Uttar Pradesh for distribution all over Andhra.

Regarding the caste background of the industrialists, a study in 1971 found that the largest proportion were Kammas - 28.20% followed by the Kapus - 17.94% and Brahmins at 7.69%.<sup>99</sup> A later study in 1974 found that Kammas and Kapus each owned around 17% of the units with Vaisya Komatis owning 15% of the units.<sup>100</sup> However the major expansion has been in the post 1971 period which witnessed a large expansion in the economic activities of the Kamma community. Hence the share of the Kammas could be much higher<sup>101</sup>. Both the studies found that an overwhelming majority of the industrialists were from the hinterland of Vijayawada. Over 70% of them hailed from Krishna district<sup>102</sup>. More than 79 % of the entrepreneurs invested their own capital and few depended on banks or other government agencies.

A common refrain in the city is that the government has not provided facilities in Vijayawada for industrialization, in terms of infrastructure. However it has been observed that whatever facilities were developed were utilised by the transport sector and allied industries. Further Table 4.5 shows that the state's attempts to develop infrastructure has not been availed by the city's entrepreneurs. Of the more than one thousand developed plots and sheds in the industrial estates in the city, only 745 have been occupied. In the Kondapally estate near the city, of the six hundred developed plots, around 450 are lying vacant.

Table 4.5  
Development and Utilization of sites in the Industrial Estates  
of Vijayawada

Estate	Developed Sites		Allotted Sites		Vacant Sites	
	Plots	Sheds	Plots	Sheds	Plots	Sheds
1. Industrial Estate(Vij)	57	34	57	33	---	1
2. Jawahar Auto Nagar	1174	73	1174	73	---	---
3. Industrial Estate Kondapalli	620	15	167	6	453	9

Source: Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation, Vijayawada. .

As already pointed out earlier attempts to industrialize by involving rich farmers have not taken off. Those industries that do exist are integral to the existence of the type of sectors favoured by the city's economic elite. Vijayawada has failed to industrialize primarily because its entrepreneurs seek easily manageable options which produce quick profits. As will be seen the recent trends towards finance, stock markets etc. will further retard industrialisation in the region.

#### CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

The builders and contractors of the city have largely changed the landscape of the new parts of Vijayawada over the last two decades. The large number of houses, hotels, hospitals, cinema theaters and shopping complex owe their development to the investment of rich Kammass in building activity.

Construction activity has always played an important role in the city's economy. The construction of the anicut in 1850s the railway bridge and other railway infrastructure in 1890s and the Barrage across the Krishna river in the 1950s generated a lot of employment and migration to the city. In the late 1960s, rich Kamma peasants moved to Vijayawada and began to develop areas on the outskirts.

The Jai Andhra movement was led by a Kamma congress leader from the district and was supported both by the Kamma peasantry

in the countryside and in cities by businessmen; Kamma contractors layed a major role in Vijayawada.<sup>103</sup>

Available data indicates that most of the builders and contractors in the city live in Krishna Lanka, Labbipet, Patamata and Mogulrajapuram<sup>104</sup>. As we shall see these areas were a major target of attack during riots. A majority of group conflicts also occur in these areas. The builders and contractors chiefly belong to the Kamma caste. Of late however, a few Brahmins/Vysyas are also entering this activity.<sup>105</sup> More than 12000 persons are working in construction activity, as per the 1991 census. However construction business is dependent on a number of factors and hence there is a lot of fluctuation in the flow of investment into this sector.

In the 1960s, there were two reasons for increased investment in this sector. The first was the increased prosperity and resultant surpluses due to the green revolution. The second was the lifting of prohibition in 1969, when a number of illicit liquor manufacturers shifted to construction. This includes a political leader who was earlier with Congress and is now with Telugu Desam and who is one of the accused in the murder of Radha a faction leader.<sup>106</sup>

The large scale destruction of property after Ranga Raos murder in 1989 also propelled further investment in this sector. The perception of greater profits in the stock market has led to

shifts in investment from building to shares over the last two years.<sup>107</sup> This has thrown a number of workers out of jobs. It has also dislocated the trade in building materials.

#### INVESTMENT IN SHARES

Over the last two years, there have been considerable flow of investment into the share market. Vijayawada brings out a Telugu weekly exclusively devoted to the share market. There are three stock exchanges in the city, none of which are recognized by the Securities and Exchange Board of India. The builders and contractors of Vijayawada are playing a prominent role in promoting the Vijayawada stock exchange, perceiving greater opportunities for profits.<sup>108</sup>

Among the promoters of the Vijayawada Stock Exchange six are builders, five are contractors, and three are politicians. with a few exceptions, they all belong to the Kamma community<sup>109</sup>.

#### FINANCE

An informant in Vijayawada stated that "Vijayawada does not have a finance company in every street, there is one in every house"<sup>110</sup>. The large volume of trade, commerce and transport generated a need for credit and capital on a large scale basis. Since the banks could not fulfill their needs, finance companies emerged, especially in the transport sector. There are around 100 auto finance companies offering finance for purchase of

trucks<sup>111</sup>. In addition there are numerous finance and chit fund companies to finance wholesale and retail trade, hire purchase, leasing etc. Film finance is also an important segment.

A survey of a few finance companies revealed that while some were started by persons who had already made money in other sectors, others diversified after making profits in financing. Financing offers a way of making profits with very little investment and recurring expenditure.

#### PRINTING AND PUBLISHING

Vijayawada is a major printing and publishing centre in the state. The Andhra Patrika newspaper was started by a prominent congress leader from Vijayawada - K. Nageswara Rao<sup>112</sup>. Every Telugu News paper in the state has an edition from Vijayawada. A total of eight daily newspapers in Telugu and three in English are published from Vijayawada.<sup>113</sup> Before independence, newspapers from the Krishna district played a significant role in the freedom movement. The Communist Party published its party organ from the city in the 1930s. The daily organs of both the CPI and CMI(M) which enjoy a wide circulation in the state are published from the city.

As the centre for the film industry, the publicity requirements of films are met by the city's 33 litho printing presses for distribution all over the state.<sup>114</sup> In addition,



Vijayawada is the home for the Telugu publishing Industry. There are more than 50 publishers in the city bringing out books, novels, magazines, text books, general books etc.<sup>115</sup>

There are 187 printing presses in the city. It represents an increase from 1 in 1911 to 13 in 1961<sup>116</sup>. The major increase in the industry has thus taken place over the last 30 years. The printing industry is also a contributor to the generation of illegal economy through piracy of books, as will be shown later.

Vijayawada is a centre for the publishing of a number of periodicals which carry satirical articles on politicians, businessmen and others. These 'yellow' journals have names like 'Commando', 'Encounter', 'Youth and Youth' etc. These periodicals have been a major source of tension, with an editor being killed in 1985<sup>117</sup>. The sale of such periodicals as well as of obscene/pornographic literature which have wide sales in Vijayawada are major point of conflicts between the police and the sellers of these books.

#### SERVICE AND REPAIRS

The agricultural base of the city and the large transport sector has created a burgeoning need for service and repair of automobiles (mainly trucks) and machinery used in mills processing agricultural products.

Service and repair of lorries is mainly concentrated in the Auto Nagar where an estimated 1000 lorries are serviced each

day.<sup>118</sup> In the 1960s, these workshops were located in Gandhinagar and Bandar Road<sup>119</sup>. These were shifted to the Auto Nagar in the early 1970s. Some workshops exist in the old town area since lorries carrying food grains, vegetable and fruits come to the wholesale markets located there.

The servicing and repairing of machinery used in rice mills, oil mills etc. are mainly done in the old city. These are located in the by lanes adjacent to the wholesale markets located there.

Repairs of pump sets and other agricultural tools and machinery are also done here.

A large number of mechanics involved in truck servicing were able to get state subsidies and land for sheds when the Auto Nagar was set up. The Auto Technicians Associations today represents a prosperous community of erstwhile mechanics who now merely own and run their workshops by employing others<sup>120</sup>.

#### ILLEGAL ECONOMY

Most cities have an underground economy. While Vijayawada has the usual illegal sectors such as prostitution, protection rackets etc, the very nature of the economy generates illegal segments within the formal sectors.

In addition, the lure of quick profits have generated a

number of manufacturing and commercial segments which constitute the underground economy.

Several mafia groups operate in the city. In the 1950s, there were only one or two groups. However through a series of splits, there are now a large number of groups, most of whose leaders are affiliated to the Telugu Desam, Congress-I, CPI and CPI(M).<sup>121</sup> These groups are mainly involved in settlement of private disputes pertaining to a wide range of issues such as property, profit sharing, embezzlement of funds by business partners, family disputes etc. These are discussed in greater detail in the chapter VI. The groups are also involved in extortion, protection rackets and prostitution.

Prostitutes, though present in all cities is a more ubiquitous phenomenon in Vijayawada. A majority of hotels and lodges function as brothels. At any time of day or night, if one is on the streets of Vijayawada there is a likelihood of being solicited by a pimp. The researcher had a number of experiences in this regard during field work.

A major sector in the underground economy pertains to black marketing of goods which are in short supply. This is especially in the capital goods and raw materials (steel, iron, cement etc.) sectors. Several studies have documented the fact that one of the reasons for lack of industrialization in Vijayawada is that trade, particularly trade in raw materials is more

lucrative.<sup>122</sup> Baru, in his study, finds that mortality rates for small industries are as high as 47%, and 30% of registered industries are not traceable in the cities of coastal Andhra.<sup>123</sup> One of the reasons for this is that units are set up primarily to avail of government licenses for procuring raw materials which are then sold in the black market at higher rates.<sup>124</sup> The same entrepreneur frequently shuts down and opens another firm to escape the law. Thus cities like Vijayawada have a high rate of growth for manufacturing units.

Units are also started for availing government loans and subsidies. The units become sick once the loans stop coming. Yet another aspect of the illegal economy pertains to piracy and counterfeiting<sup>125</sup>. Vijayawada specializes in manufacturing substitutes for well known brands of almost all products ranging from garments to soft drinks to electronic gadgets. There is also a profitable business in pirating school text books. Due to the inability of the government to publish text books in adequate numbers at lower rates, printers in Vijayawada attempt to bridge the demand - supply gap. As much 25.4 lakh books came to light in a recent raid in the city.<sup>126</sup>

The publication of pornographic literature is also a profitable trade in the city.

The importance of finance, cinema and construction in the economy, as already shown, means a greater role for black money.

since the role of un-accounted money in these sectors is well known.

The presence of a large illegal economic structure, and the nature of the provincial economy itself, therefore creates the need for criminal elements both to protect the illegal trade and to carry out the activities. The acute competition in all sectors due to high profitability rates, often lead to conflicts between competitors. The tendency in Vijayawada to form associations of all those involved in similar activities, does not diminish these conflicts, Vijayawada has a large number of associations of all kinds of trades. Some of these have less than ten members. These associations range from Old Book Seller Association to 'Second Hand Rice Mill Spare Parts Retailers Association', from 'Pan Shop Owners Associations', 'to Lorry Owners Association'.<sup>127</sup>

Many of these associations as well as unions of self employed and others workers function like guilds. For instance the loading/un-loading workers are a tightly organized group.<sup>128</sup> Entry is regulated by caste and kinship and payment of a fixed amount. Studies reveal that intermediate caste are replacing scheduled castes from this category of workers, since the jobs pay better and provide year round employment<sup>129</sup>.

The migrants into the city thus find it difficult to obtain jobs due to the rigid organization of workers. Since the economy

is oriented towards commerce rather than industry, employment expands slowly. Hence migrants attracted by the city's prosperity find that the city does not provide adequate number of jobs.

Opportunities for self employment are vast. However limited financial support is advanced by the state. Private finance is available only to those with caste, kin or other networks.<sup>130</sup> Since white and blue collar jobs are dependant on such networks and government jobs are few in a provincial city, those without access to any kind of network or resource, mobilize to acquire resources. It is in this context that one can explain the successful mobilization around the Kapu caste identity in the city.<sup>131</sup>

The Brahmin/Vysya/Kamma groups either had the resources or contacts necessary to advance their economic interest. Studies show that there is a lot of occupational mobility among scheduled castes in Vijayawada due to government policies.<sup>132</sup> Thus it was only the non-Kamma intermediate castes and other lower castes who did not have the opportunity structure to enable upward mobility. Hence, the mobilization of various castes against Kammals and around the slogan of 'Backward class status for Kapus' was both a protest against kin/caste networks and a demand for caste based government programmes.

The instability of the economy as reflected in the constant shifts in investment based on changes in profitability also generates problems. Continuously, large sections of unskilled and semi-skilled workers are rendered unemployed due to shifts in investment. This constantly replenishes the lumpen proleteriat. Also the continuing migration to the city without a concomitant rise in expansion of jobs adds to the population of the lumpen proletariat. In this situation, the illegal economy absorbs the lumpen proletariat and continues to expand. Census data reveals that while the population of Vijayawada in the period 1961-91 increased by 267.08% the work force increased only by 169.80%<sup>133</sup>. The proportion of workers to the total population in the ~~same~~ period decreased from 41.94% to 31.22% (See Table 4.3)

Table 4.3

PROPORTION OF WORKING POPULATION , 1961 - 1991

YEAR	WORKING POPULATION	PROPORTION TO TOTAL POPULATION
1961	96642	41.94%
1971	101366	29.41%
1981	166554	30.67%
1991	260746	31.22%

Source: District Census Handbooks, Krishna District, Census

Andhra Pradesh, 1961, 1971, 1981 and 1991.

Thus, the economic prosperity of the city has not created a rise in employment opportunities.

An overview of the city's economy, therefore leads to the conclusion that the economic structure reinforces social divisions and creates conflict situation. By denying mobility opportunities for the lower castes, the economic structure lays a base for mobilization on caste basis. At the same time the very structure of the economy creates a need for persons who would be willing to operate outside legal parameters. As we shall see in the following sections, the various social, political and cultural aspects of the city have vital links with various aspects of Vijayawada's economic structure.

#### ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND ECONOMY IN VIJAYAWADA

In the preceding pages it was shown that in Vijayawada, industries are scarce, tertiary and service sectors are dominant and all kinds of economic activities are labour intensive and oriented towards making quick profits with minimum efforts at management. Scholars have argued that the modern post industrial cities have economies which are knowledge driven<sup>134</sup>. Not only is production and technology based on advanced systems of knowledge, but knowledge itself is an industry. Compared to this, the provincial city of Vijayawada is characterized by an almost total absence of knowledge based economic activities. While the latest trends in the consumer sector are adopted, bought and sold, one does not come across cases where business or manufacturing activities are capital intensive and driven by advanced



technology.<sup>135</sup> Even though labour intensive modes of production are difficult to manage, they are persisted with. There are three major factors which explain the nature of the economy, the type of investments that are made and the kind of sectors which are dominant in Vijayawada.

First, as historians and sociologists have shown, cities in India were traditionally creations of the elites. "The rural gentry", especially in provincial cities had "a stake and interest in local cities".<sup>136</sup> As Sjoberg has shown pre-industrial cities arose because urban residence "commanded social prestige and offered greater access to political economic and educational facilities"<sup>137</sup>. This has been a major reason for the migration of the rural rich to the cities. Also, under pressure from land reforms and increasing demographic pressure, families were forced to send some of their members to cities where they took up urban occupations, as shown in the studies by Gould for instance<sup>138</sup>.

Secondly, the increase in agricultural surpluses due to the 'green revolution' needed an outlet for investments which would be easy to manage and yield quick profits to be used for conspicuous consumption, for political purposes etc.

Thirdly, entry into the urban economy was a means of expanding the dominance of the rich peasant class both in physical and spatial terms. The large scale changes in the economy and political sphere since the early twentieth century,

meant that this class had to adjust to the changed circumstances in order to maintain their dominance. If they were to remain powerful at district, state and national levels, they had to first dominate the cities which would otherwise have been controlled by the intellectual/mercantile classes or Brahmin/Vysya castes.<sup>139</sup>

Thus, it can be seen that the primary motive for entrepreneurship as stated by scholars like Weber, Schumpeter, Mclelland etc did not exist. The motive to enter urban economic activity came from non economic spheres. Hence importance was not given to industries, to technology, to improved means of production etc. Urban business were managed in the same way as agricultural farms were managed. Investments are maximized through maximum exploitation of labour. However, in a provincial city like Vijayawada, though there is more exploitation of workers, workers struggles are minimized by exercising control over them through political parties, caste associations etc.

There is a very little actual management of labour. When control over workers becomes weakened, the units are simply closed down and the entrepreneur finds different avenue for his investments.

Thus on the one hand, the entrepreneur in the city does not possess the typical qualities of an entrepreneur as proposed by various economists and sociologists. The provincial

entrepreneur's talents do not lie in bringing together and organizing the various factors of production and in managing the relations of production.

On the other hand, there is a continuous quest for sectors where investments yield quick profits and which need minimum management skills.

These aspects not only lead to the development of tertiary and service sectors to the neglect of industries, but more importantly results in a large illegal sector and a generally unstable economy.

Commenting on this type of economy, P.C. Joshi states that the search for higher profits leads to investments "not in production for the masses, but in the sphere of circulation."<sup>140</sup> He terms a society supporting this kind of economy as a "parasitic society" which is dominated by the "lumpen bourgeoisie and lumpen petty bourgeoisie".<sup>141</sup> These social categories are created due to the "over expansion of the tertiary sector" and growth of the "sphere of circulation without contributing to the sphere of production".<sup>142</sup>

A.G. Frank has also used the term "lumpen bourgeoisie" to refer to the kind of economy found in Vijayawada.<sup>143</sup> This type of economic development is labelled by him as "lumpen development".

Joshi also mentions the unchecked expansion of higher education (a dominant feature of Vijayawada) as an aspect of social parasitism.<sup>144</sup>

Bagchi and Baran also mention the barriers that are created against the development of industrial capitalism and the formation of productive capital, by these classes. Baran states that profits are not accumulated and invested, but spent on lavish consumption, or ploughed into the tertiary sector, as shown by Joshi.<sup>145</sup>

There is also a tendency in a provincial economy to alter the conditions of the market by political means. The use of politics detracts from economic rationality, a dominant aspect of urban capitalism for Weber. Lavish consumption styles differ from the protestant ethic of austerity during the industrial revolution in the west.

Thus, it can be seen that demographic, social and political pressures drew the rich peasant class to the cities. In the cities, as can be seen in Vijayawada, their participation in urban economic activities created a distinct 'provincial' economic structure. Their style of participation and the economy that evolved were largely influenced by the social origins of the entrepreneurs in the rural milieu, their experiences in managing agricultural holdings and the kind of education and socialization experiences they had gone through as first generation immigrants to the city, of families still powerful and having a base in the rural hinterland of Vijayawada.

#### Notes to Chapter IV

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1. See Prakasa Rao, 1983, pp.18.
2. G. N. Rao, 1988, pp.9 and Raman Rao, 1958, pp.166-71.
3. See Krishna Satry, 1991, pp.80-87.
4. Field notes; also see G.N.Rao, op.cit. pp.9.
5. Field notes. Discussions with K. Narsaiah of the Katragadda family, one of the oldest Kamma families in Vijayawada.
6. On this see Chapter V.
7. Prakasa Rao, op.cit. pp.18.
8. Source: Andhra Pradesh, Statistical Abstracts, 1988, pp.22.
9. For an account of anti- Zamindari struggles see P. Pattabhirama Rao, 1992.
10. On the commercialization of agriculture in Andhra see Thorner, 1969, pp.238-53 and G.N.Rao, op.cit.
11. Prakasa Rao, 1983, pp.49 and 174.
12. Prakasa Rao 1974.
13. Ibid, pp.12.
14. Prakasa Rao, op.cit. pp.18.
15. Tataji, 1986, pp.186.
16. Premi, 1986, pp.131.
17. Town Directory, Census of Andhra Pradesh, 1974.
18. Field notes. Discussions with officials in the APIDC and with members of trade associations.
19. Field notes.
20. Ibid.
21. Vijayawada Directory, 1986, pp.317.
22. Field notes. There are indications however that of late the membership is becoming more broadbased and representative of the different communities in the city.

23. Suryanarayana, p.138-45;also see Kaleswara Rao,1956.
24. Field notes. Interview with Nagara leaders.
25. Field observation;also interview with several key informants with knowledge of this sector.
26. Field notes. These are located mainly in the old part of the city and in Patanata.
27. Field notes. The Chukkapalli family.
28. Town Directory,Census of Andhra Pradesh,1971 and 1981.
29. Rao and Ramachandran,op. cit,pp.173-4.
30. Town Directory,op.cit.
31. B. Sarveswara Rao, 1974,pp.21, vol.2.
32. Rao and Rao,1984,pp.44-49.
33. Field notes. This is very apparent from a glimpse of the names of these establishments which usually carry the surnames of the families.
34. Field notes. Details were provided by a trade union leader, T. Ganapati Rao.
35. See Forum for Democratic Rights, 1989,pp.46.
36. From Census Provisional Totals,1991,Andhra Pradesh.
37. Ibid.
38. Rao and Ramachandran,op.cit.,pp.112.
39. Krishna District Census Handbook,1951.
40. This was completed in 1857.
41. Thorner ,op.cit.pp.223.
42. Data provided by Secretary,Krishna District Lorry Owners Association. (KDLOA)
43. Ibid;see also Andhra Pradesh,Statistical Abstracts,1991.
44. Field notes. Discussions with Members of the KDLOA and others.
45. For details see "Chennupati",Chapter,III.
46. Field notes. This is true of most prominent Kamma families. The conclusion was derived while collecting information on different aspects.

47. Field notes. Data obtained from Vijayawada Auto Finance Welfare Organisation.
48. Source:Secretary,KDLOA.
49. Field notes;based on data provided by Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation.
50. See "Jawahar Auto Nagar in Vijayawada Directory,op.cit.,pp.301.
51. Field notes. Source:KDLOA.
52. Source:Mandal Statistical Officer,Vijayawada.
53. Field notes. Information by two Town Planning officials.
54. Andhra Pradesh Statistical Abstracts,1991.
55. Field notes.
56. Field notes. Discussions with trade union leaders.
57. Field notes;see also Tataji,op.cit.pp.,191-195.
58. Field notes. Discussions with Secretary,Vijayawada Hotel Owners Association.
59. Field notes. This is the Mangaraju family which owns the Hotel Swarna Palace.
60. Field notes;this is the case of the posh Ilapuram,Swarna Palace and Krishna Residency hotels.
61. Field observation.
62. Field observation; also see Hindu dated
63. Lakshma Rao, op.cit.pp.48, Table 2.11.
64. See Hindu dated Dec.14 1992,pp.24.
65. The Pothina family still owns it;see details in Chapter III.
66. Field notes. For its population and size Hyderabad has far fewer cinema theatres.
67. Source:Census Reports,1961 - 1981.
68. Data obtained from Vijayawada Film Chamber of Commerce.
69. The Katragadda family;see Chapter III.
70. The Hindu,dated 14 Dec. 1992,pp.22.
71. Field notes. Interview with senior personalities in the film industry.

72. On this see Irachick, 1980.
73. Narsaiah, n. d. pp.1.
74. This is an erstwhile landlord family from the Challapalli Zamindari.
75. See relevant data in Madras Presidency Census Reports upto 1931.
76. See "Social and Political Movements" in Chapter V.
77. P. R. Rao, op.cit., pp.137.
78. Field notes. Interview with K. Narsaiah.
79. Field notes. Also see Newstine dated 3, March, 1993.
80. Field notes; see also Vijayawada Directory, op. cit, pp.73-5.
81. Field notes.
82. See Kaul, 1992.
83. Ibid.
- 84.. The Hindu dated 1 Sep 1993,
85. Ibid.
86. Field notes. See also Hindu dated 14 Dec 1992.
87. District Census Handbook, Krishna District, Unpublished data, Andhra Pradesh Census, Hyderabad.
88. Source: VGTUDA.
89. The "Siris" Company, one of the oldest in the state. For details regarding the owner G. S. Raju, see Chapter III.
90. See The Hindu dated 18 Nov. 1993.
91. Field notes, interview with a veteran AITUC trade union leader.
92. See Baru, 1984.
93. Andhra Pradesh Statistical Abstracts, 1991.
94. ON this see R. Radhakrishna et al, 1989.
95. Andhra Pradesh Statistical Abstracts, 1991.
96. Census of India, 1951.
97. Director of Town Planning, 1989.



98. Andhra Pradesh Statistical Abstracts, 1991.
99. District Census Handbook, Krishna District, 1971.
100. B. Sarveswara Rao, 1974.
101. See Lakshman Rao, 1984.
102. This could be discerned from a list of developed plots and sheds allotted to Vijayawada's entrepreneurs by the APIDC.
103. See Sarveswara Rao and Lakshman Rao, op.cit.
104. Field notes. A memorial erected by the city's contractors and builders in Gandhinagar area still stands.
105. Based on data provided by Builders Association of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada Chapter.
106. Ibid.
107. Field notes. He is one of the well known patrons of gangs using them in his illegal enterprises.
108. Field notes. Perception of several persons in the construction industry.
109. Field notes. based on data provided by Vijayawada Stock Exchange.
110. Ibid.
111. Field notes. Statement of J. Satyanarayana, a former AITUC trade union leader.
112. Field notes. Source: Vijayawada Auto Finance Welfare association.
113. On Nageswara Rao see P.R. Rao, Op.cit. "Appendix"
114. Andhra Pradesh, Statistical Abstracts, 1991.
115. Vijayawada Directory, op.cit., pp.
116. Data from relevant Census reports.
117. Field notes; see also Chapter V. This was P. Dasaratharam, editor of "Encounter".
118. Field notes. Data provided by Secretary, Auto Technicians Association (ATA)
119. Field notes. On this see Director of Town Planning, op.cit.
120. Field notes. Discussions with members of ATA.
121. Field notes. This is evident from a discussion with a wide

cross section of people regarding the various gangs existing and which existed in the past.

122. Lakshman Rao, 1980, pp. 84.

123. Baru, 1984, pp. 373.

124. Ibid. 381.

125. Field notes. The annual statistics issued by the Vijayawada City Police shows that the the number of crimes under this heading is considerable.

126. See reports in The Hindu , dated 7, Sep. 1992.

127. Field notes. These are only a few of the associations that the researcher came across during field work.

128. Tataji, op.cit. provides more details.

129. Ibid.

130. Field notes. Discussion with two economists who have done studies of the area.

131. See "Kapunadu", in Chapter V.

132. Tataji, op.cit.

133. Figures derived from Census data, 1961 - 1991.

134. On this see Bell, 1976 and Harvey, 1990.

135. See Lakshman Rao, op.cit., "Conclusion", for a discussion.

136. Bayly, 1973, pp. 38.

137. Sjoberg, 1960, pp. 142.

138. Gould , 1985, pp. 39.

139. See G.N.Rao, op.cit. pp. 8-10, and Balagopal, 1988, pp. 21.

140. Joshi, 180, pp. 121.

141. Ibid.

142. Ibid, pp. 126.

143. Frank, 1977.

144. Joshi, op.cit., pp. 124.

145. Baran, 1960, pp. 376-77, and Bagchi, 1991.

## CHAPTER V

### POLITICAL BEHAVIOUR AND CULTURAL ROOTS OF VIOLENCE

This chapter seeks to trace the roots of violence in Vijayawada through a description and analysis of the typical forms of culture and political behaviour encountered in the city. Political activity and social movements have generated many of the incidents of violence studied in this thesis. Likewise the distinctive culture has been an important factor in the city's history of violence.

This chapter also shows how the rich peasant class has tried to acquire leadership of all political parties, social trends and movements with a view to achieving social mobility and power. This process along with the response from rival groups has been an important aspect in the generation of violence in Vijayawada.

This chapter provides clues to understand the reasons behind conflicts between a large number of political groups. It also provides a basis for explaining the connections between political parties, castes, gangs and the cultural aspects of the city.

#### POLITICAL PARTIES IN VIJAYAWADA:

Vijayawada was the headquarters (for Andhra region) of the Congress Party and the CPI until 1956.<sup>1</sup> Krishna district leaders played an important role in the emergence of the national movement (led by the Congress), the Communist movement, and the emergence

of the Telugu Desam Party.<sup>2</sup> Even though the party headquarters of all parties are presently situated at Hyderabad, the state capital, all parties have a strong presence in Vijayawada. The district offices of all parties in Krishna district are located in the city, and not in Machilipatnam, the seat of district administration. Tracing the history of various political parties in Vijayawada will provide clues regarding the conflicts, rivalries, and violent incidents in the city, as well as help to explain the involvement of political parties in these incidents.

#### INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS:

Many individuals from Andhra Pradesh had been participating in the national movement, in their individual capacity and as part of local groups and organizations since the 1880s.<sup>3</sup> The Vandemataram movement, launched in 1906, and the tour of the Bengali nationalist, Bipin Chandra Pal, to various towns in Andhra (including Vijayawada) in 1907 attracted many individuals to the nationalist movement and to the Congress Party.<sup>4</sup> By the year 1914, when the All India Congress Committee held its session in Madras, a formal Congress organization had emerged in the presidency, with district level branches in Andhra.<sup>5</sup> The demand for a separate Andhra provincial Congress was raised in the Andhra Mahasabha conference at Vijayawada in 1914.<sup>6</sup> The demand was part of a larger demand for the creation of a separate province constituting Telugu speaking people.<sup>7</sup> The AICC conceded the demand for a separate party organization in Andhra, and the Andhra Congress Circle was formed in 1918. Its headquarters was

located in Vijayawada and the circle came to be known later as the Andhra Provincial Congress committee.

The 1921 All India Congress Committee meeting was held in Gandhinagar in Vijayawada and provided an impetus to the national movement in the region.

Till the 1960s the party in Vijayawada was dominated by local Brahmin professionals and Komati traders.<sup>8</sup> A Few Kamma and other non-brahmins had joined the Congress Socialist Party, formed as a wing of the Congress in 1934, nationally, and in 1935 in the city.<sup>9</sup> The Communist party faced a ban between 1934 and 1942. After the ban was lifted, most of these Kamma, and other Brahmin radicals left the CSP to join the Communist Party. However, a small number of Kammas stayed with the party. From the early 1950s onwards, in small numbers, Kammas in the city and in Krishna district joined the Congress.

As Vijayawada was the party headquarters, not only did the local leaders from the city and district rise to prominence, but activists from other districts came to the city and settled down for full time political activity.<sup>10</sup> The formation of the Congress Socialist Party had also attracted radical youths to the city. Sundarayya and Rajeswara Rao, who later become national Communist leaders, had, by 1935, already begun to mobilize peasants in the rural areas along with N.G. Ranga.<sup>11</sup> Ranga - a Kamma was active in the Kisan Sabha movement and later worked with the Communist Party.

In 1920, the first municipal election was held in Vijayawada. The Congress , as part of the non-cooperation movement boycotted the election, and the Justice Party, supported by non-brahmins from Krishna district won control of the municipal council.<sup>12</sup> However, from 1923 onwards, all municipal elections were won by the Congress Party till 1981. The Congress Party was supported by the Komati traders of the city who perceived benefits in opposing Kammas in the Justice Party with whom they had trade and political rivalries.<sup>13</sup> The chief opponents of the Congress Party till 1943 were the Justice Party, and the Communist Party thereafter, until the emergence of the Telugu Desam in 1983.

Kaleswara Rao of the Congress was elected continuously, from 1926, to the Madras legislature, till 1946, and to the Andhra and Andhra Pradesh legislature in 1955 and 1957<sup>14</sup> Other Brahmin leaders of the Congress such as T.V.S. Chalapathi Rao were elected to the legislature in 1962 and 1967.<sup>15</sup> Chitti and Syed Appalaswamy (Nagaras) who ran the Justice Party political machine till the mid 1930s, thereafter joined the Congress. Chitti was thrice MLA in 1955, 1957 and 1967 while Appalaswamy was a national leader of the Congress affiliated trade union -INTUC.<sup>16</sup> The elections to the Madras legislature in 1927 saw a contest between Kaleswara Rao and a Kamma Justice Party candidate - Govindrajulu Naidu. The campaign was a violent one, with Appalaswamy's men attempting to disrupt and win the election for the Justice Party.<sup>17</sup> Soon after the decline of the Justice Party, Appalaswamy along with Chitti who

was one of Appalaswamy's men, joined the Congress.<sup>18</sup> This resulted in large scale Nagara support for the Congress.

After 1952, when the ban on CPI was lifted, a number of Kamma peasants, who had been supporting the Party, went over to the Congress. Some of them went over after the Communist split in 1964. Many rich Kamma zamindars affected by the 1948 Zamindari abolition act had also joined the Congress.<sup>19</sup>

The CPI, in order to maintain its strength in the city had begun using criminal elements in their trade union and political activities from the 1950s.<sup>20</sup> It was also a response to the Congress leaders like Chitti and Appalaswamy who frequently resorted to force, in pursuing their activities. As differences developed between individuals supporting the CPI, the Congress offered support to some of these gang leaders such as the Vangaveeti brothers - Radha and Ranga Rao.<sup>21</sup> The two were working for Venkataratnam - the Communist trade unionist. Congress leaders involved in the illicit liquor trade and others illegal activities supported and used these persons in their activities.<sup>22</sup> The Vangaveeti brothers later became powerful in the Congress and their conflict with Nehru, a Kamma who joined the Telugu Desam in 1983, pitted the two parties into violent conflicts.<sup>23</sup>

As the state headquarters of the party till 1956, and its continuing importance later, the city became the centre for different factions in the Congress Party. Differences between

Prakasam, N.G. Ranga, Sanjiva Reddy and Sitaramayya, created new configurations within and outside the party. Their conflicts not only affected state level politics but had an impact in Vijayawada, as local rival leaders supported one or the other group. Many of these faction leaders had a long association with the city and owed their rise in the party to erstwhile powerful Congressmen from Vijayawada and Guntur. In 1965, the movement for a steel plant in Andhra Pradesh became a violent one directed against the then union steel minister Sanjiva Reddy; local opponents of Sanjiva Reddy's faction destroyed his statue in the city and attacked his supporters.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, in 1973, the separatist Jai Andhra movement was led by a Kamma Congress leader based in the city.<sup>25</sup> K. Venkataratnam led his faction and projected rich peasant opposition to the land reforms initiated by the Narasimha Rao government. The movement resulted in large scale destruction of government property in the city.<sup>26</sup>

Conflicts between local leaders of the Congress Party also generated violence. Various Congress leaders who patronized Kapu individuals and used them in political and extra - legal activities, clashed with these individuals, once they started becoming powerful. The patron of Radha, in the past an illicit liquor manufacturer and presently a builder, allegedly colluded with Radha's CPI opponents in having him killed.<sup>27</sup> The G.S. Raju group (Raju is an industrialist and city Congress leader) was opposed to Ranga Rao's groups, resulting in conflicts. Conflicts arose over distribution of seats in the municipal corporation, and



over the use of the party office buildings.<sup>28</sup> The latter dispute persists as Ranga Rao's widow, Ratnakumari, an MLA is locked in a conflict over possession and use of the building with the Raju group, whose member is currently the city Congress president.<sup>29</sup> As upcoming entrants into Congress politics seek patronage of state level leaders, the factions at the state level tends to translate into divisions at the city level and create further conflicts.

The Congress Party continues to be preeminent in Vijayawada's politics. The two MLA's from the city belong to the Congress.<sup>30</sup> The last municipal corporation was ruled by the party. However, the Congress is no longer regarded as a party of the Brahmins and Komatis. Members of Brahmin /Komati political families are now settled in other cities. Those still living in the city have been marginalized, for eg. the scion of TVS Chalapathi Rao and Kowtha Subba Rao.<sup>31</sup> Popular belief is that the Congress is being run by three prominent Kammas none of whom hold an official position in the party or government. One hails from one of the oldest Kamma families of Vijayawada which supported the Communist and National movement and who are now prominent businessmen. The second is a leading criminal lawyer who has handled most of the cases of murder and assaults by different groups. The third is also from a leading business family. His wife is a former MP. The last two are also supporters of the atheist movement.<sup>32</sup>

A few Brahmins in the party such as J. Shankar the Mayor between 1987-92 survive with support from Kammās and due to their links with state level leaders.<sup>33</sup>

#### COMMUNIST PARTIES:

The Communist movement began to spread in Andhra in the early 1930s. The repression and subsequent ban on the party in 1934, by the British government led to many leaders coming to the southern states, where the movement had not yet spread on a large scale.<sup>34</sup> At the same time M.N. Roy a Communist who had worked with the Bolsheviks, came and delivered lectures in Andhra. His brand of 'radical humanism' found a ready response in Krishna and Guntur districts.<sup>35</sup> Soviet literature were being translated into Telugu and published from Vijayawada and Guntur.<sup>36</sup> When the Congress Socialist Party (within the Indian National Congress) was formed in 1934, P. Sundarayya from Guntur was one of the first to join it.<sup>37</sup> The party had its headquarters in Vijayawada.<sup>38</sup> As the CPI was banned till 1942, Communist sympathizers from all over Andhra joined the CSP and many youth came to Vijayawada to operate from the city.<sup>39</sup>

The Kisan Sabha movement emerged in Andhra in the early 1930s. N.G. Ranga, a Kamma from Guntur, educated at Cambridge was the first president of the Andhra unit of the All India Kisan Sabha, which was based in Vijayawada.<sup>40</sup> He mobilized peasants and agricultural laborers and fought against the Zamindari system.

Kammas from Krishna and Guntur districts were prominent in these movements.

In the Communist movement, initially there were a number of Brahmin educated youth. The leadership however soon went into the hands of others. Rajeswara Rao, Basavapunnaiah (both Kamma) and Sundarayya (Reddi) all hailed from this area.<sup>41</sup> They made Vijayawada their base and all three became top leaders of the CPI and the CPI (M) (the last two) in their life times.<sup>42</sup>

Many of the Communists had been influenced by the social reform movements in Andhra. Being dissatisfied with the limited nature of the proposed reforms, they joined the Communist Party. Thus Vijayawada between 1940 and 1960 was a center for inter caste marriage, widow remarriage and anti - caste movements as Communists combined their activities with social reform.<sup>43</sup> As these reforms became popular, and as Communists became powerful, there was opposition from orthodox Hindus in the city. The RSS which had a small following, especially among Komati traders, and other orthodox Hindus in the Congress clashed with the CPI frequently between 1942 and 1948.<sup>44</sup> Youth belonging to various 'sabhas' began to object to women participating in public activities in the Communist movements. Attacks on women led to counter attacks by the CPI cadre.

After the ban on the CPI was lifted in 1942, the party launched a number of struggles from Vijayawada, especially

against the zamindars in Krishna district.<sup>45</sup> In 1944, the All India Kisan Sabha and the Communist Party organized one of the largest ever rallies in Vijayawada as part of an all Indian peasants conference.<sup>46</sup> Kamma peasants who were prominent in its organization, later settled near Mugulrajapuram, where the rally was held. Many of them became political activists supported by prominent Kamma families such as the Katragadda family which resided in Mogulrajapuram.<sup>47</sup> The Telangana armed struggle attempted to overthrow the feudal system in the Hyderabad state ruled by a native prince the Nizam. The movement was led by leaders like Sundarayya and Rajeswara Rao along with leaders from Hyderabad. Vijayawada provided the leadership and was the base from which men, arms and food supplies were sent and the operations were planned.<sup>48</sup>

The CPI was banned in 1948, for its role in the movement, and the ban was lifted in 1952. When a separate Andhra state came into being in October 1953, Vijayawada which laid claim to be the capital of the new state was rejected in favour of Kurnool. This was due to perceptions that Vijayawada would be dominated by Communists/Kammas. The CPI with Kamma support began a movement for Visalandhra - a larger Andhra state consisting of Andhra and Hyderabad states. The perception was that the party would be able to form the government in a combined Andhra Pradesh. The Congress Party was divided over the issue, but leaders in Vijayawada supported the demand and Vijayawada emerged as a centre for the movement for Andhra Pradesh.<sup>49</sup>

The government of India accepted the division of states on linguistic basis and Andhra Pradesh emerged as the first linguistic state in November 1956.

At this juncture, the Kamma peasantry in the rural areas had stopped supporting the Communist Party and many joined the Congress Party. Intermediate peasants had joined the CPI to fight against the zamindars. The abolition of zamindari system reduced the power of erstwhile zamindars and the intermediate peasants, especially the Kammas bought up the land released by the abolition of zamindari. Thus a new class of rich peasants emerged who saw in the CPI a threat to their position.<sup>50</sup> However professional Communist politicians stayed with the CPI. Their descendents continued to be with the CPI even as they became prominent businessmen and industrialists in Vijayawada.<sup>51</sup> Some of them have since the last two decades begun patronizing other parties including the Congress Party and the Telugu Desam Party.

In addition to the withdrawal of support by rural rich peasants, local leaders became top functionaries of the party at the national level and so had little time for local politics. These persons included P. Sundarayya, C. Rajeswara Rao and M. Basavapunnaiah. They operated from Delhi and Hyderabad even though Sundarayya was thrice elected to the state assembly from Gannavaram near Vijayawada.<sup>52</sup> In a weakened party there was little scope for carrying out their activities among the peasants.

In the city itself, there was not much trade union activity, owing to the lack of industrialization.<sup>53</sup> The party lost badly in the legislative elections in 1955 and in 1957.<sup>54</sup> In order to survive and maintain its presence in the city, the party took in all kinds of lumpen elements. C. Venkataratnam, a Kamma trade unionist in the CPI soon became a leader of a gang of criminals who were involved in theft, pickpocketing, protection rackets etc.<sup>55</sup> Almost all major 'gang' leaders in Vijayawada had worked for him in the 1960s. The Vangaveeti brothers had worked in his transport workers union before developing differences with Venkataratnam and forming their own group. Venkataratnam was active in municipal politics as the CPI retained its positions as the chief opposition in the municipality from 1952 to 1972.<sup>56</sup> Venkataratnam was the opposition leader when he was killed, allegedly by Vangaveeti Radha in 1972.<sup>57</sup>

The CPI also remained the main opposition to the Congress Party in the assembly election. Only twice in 1952 and 1962 did the CPI candidate T. Potharaju - a Nagara - win.<sup>58</sup> Potharaju weaned away the Nagara community's support to Congress leaders like Chitti. The CPI as well as extreme left parties such as the CPI (ML) Janashakti still have some Nagara leaders.

The CPI suffered a split in 1964, due to differences in ideology as well as clashes between its top leaders. Since three of the leaders Rajeswara Rao, Sundarayya and Basavapunnaiiah were from Vijayawada, the split had a greater impact in Andhra and in the city. Sundarayya and Basavapunnaiiah joined the break-away

CPI(M), while Rajeswara Rao stayed with the CPI. Through 1964-66, the split resulted attacks on each others property by the cadres of the two parties.<sup>59</sup> It was also alleged that opponent groups within the Congress took advantage of the clashes to attack the property of rivals in the CPI and CPI(M).<sup>60</sup> The Potharaju faction formed a new party called the City Communist Party which merged into the CPI in 1972.<sup>61</sup> As the lumpen elements within the CPI and CPI(M) clashed frequently until 1972, the City Communist Party gained in strength and Potharaju emerged as a major figure in Communist politics who threatened to weaken CPI influence in the city. The killing of Venkataratnam in 1972 created a leadership void and the CPI compromised with Potharaju and took him back.<sup>62</sup>

The changes in the ideology and policies towards increased moderation, of the CPI and CPM led to further splits, in the wake of the 1967 Naxalite movement. K. Sitaramayya from Vijayawada became the leader of the most militant CPI-ML faction - the Peoples War Group.<sup>63</sup> A further weakened party took in more criminal elements, especially as the Congress Party in Vijayawada encouraged gangs to target CPI activists. The process continues to this day.

The CPI and CPI(M) began working together from 1977 onwards, when all major non-Congress parties came together to fight the Congress Party in the aftermath of the national state of emergency (1975-77). The two parties together with the Janata

Party and other minor parties won a majority in the elections to the newly constitute minicipal corporation in 1981.<sup>64</sup> The Mayorship rotated between the CPI and CPI(M) during the five year term of the corporation. A Ramulu, the CPI(M) mayor in 1983-84 has a criminal record and is an accused in a murder case.

The emergence of the TDP in 1983, split the support base of the CPI and CPI(M) and the 1987 municipal elections were won by the Congress.<sup>65</sup> In the 50 ward corporation the Communist parties won ten seats and came a close second in most other wards.<sup>66</sup>

True to its past history as an important centre for the communist movement, Vijayawada continues to be receptive to the various left wing organisations. The CPI-ML Prajapandha and the CPI-ML Janashakti, have over the last five years consolidated their position among the unorganised workers and self employed persons.<sup>67</sup> The recent anti-arrack movement was spearheaded by the women's wing of CPI-ML Prajapandha, operating from Vijayawada.

The Indian Peoples Front is a political organisation of the CPI-ML Liberation growth having a strong base in the nothern states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In their attempt to spread southwards, the IPF held its annual conference in Vijayawada in 1992, even though it had no base in the city.<sup>68</sup> It has since set up a party office in the city and has launched movements in the coastal districts of Andhra.



## TELOGU DESAM PARTY

The Telugu Desam Party was formed in May 1982 by a group of persons who belonged to the Congress and Janata Party and supported by non political individuals from among industrialists and landlords.<sup>69</sup> The group consisted mainly of Kammias from the Krishna delta. Its leader was N.T. Rama Rao, a popular film star from the district. N. Bhaskara Rao, a Kamma minister in the Congress cabinet in 1978-80, was one of the main forces behind the party's emergence.<sup>70</sup> While being a native of Guntur district, he had been elected from Vijayawada to the state assembly in 1978.<sup>71</sup> Most Telugu newspapers, then controlled by Kammias provided publicity and propaganda for the TDP.<sup>72</sup> The party propagated its ideas through numerous fan clubs of N. T. Rama Rao. Its populist schemes gained vast support among the backward classes initially, including the Kapus.<sup>73</sup> Within nine months of its formation, the party came to power in the state winning 200 out of 294 seats in Andhra Pradesh.

The formation of the TDP saw an intensification in the rivalry between Ranga Rao and 'Nehru' in Vijayawada. Nehru had worked together along with his brother - Gandhi in Communist trade unions in the 1960s. Later they split from the CPI along with Ranga Rao and created a large criminal empire for themselves in the city. The two groups split in 1978.<sup>74</sup> Nehru, a Kamma, joined the TDP and became an MLA.<sup>75</sup> Another Kamma, A. Jaiprakash son from Vijayawada. Jaiprakash was the chief accused in the

murder of Ranga's brother.<sup>76</sup> The election of Nehru and Jaiprakash saw them using political and police power in their conflict with Ranga Rao, who was implicated in many cases and arrested several times between 1983 and 1988. Ranga began to portray his personal problem as persecution of Kapus by the Kammās through Telugu Desam.<sup>77</sup> To this end he mobilized Kapus against the TDP and the Congress Party supported him in portraying the TDP as a Kamma party. Mainly due to the perceived authoritarianism of Vijayawada's police officers, and the portrayal of TDP as a party of Kammās the city's poor became disassociated from the TDP and began to support Ranga Rao.<sup>78</sup> At this juncture, beginning in 1987, many Kapus resigned from the TDP and joined the Congress. The Kapunadu movement became stronger and held a massive rally in Vijayawada.<sup>79</sup> Ranga's death, allegedly by supporters of Nehru and with police / government support sparked off rioting in Vijayawada and other cities in Andhra.<sup>80</sup> Kamma and Telugu Desam individuals and their property were the major targets.

Nehru was arrested, let out on bail and won the election to the state legislature again in 1989 from Kankipadu, neighbouring the city.

The TDPs supporters in Vijayawada include businessmen, persons in cinema, construction and arrack contractors. Their property were the main targets of attack during rioting however, their prosperity is reflected in the fact that much of the losses were recouped and the property rebuilt within a couple of years

By 1991, Vijayawada showed no scars of the two months of violence, arson and destruction in 1988-89.<sup>81</sup>

The populist measures of the TDP caused losses to Vijayawada's private bus operators, educational entrepreneurs, and doctors.<sup>82</sup> In the assembly election of 1989, the TDP lost to the Congress (I). However, a TDP nominee V.S. Rao, a Kamma was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1991.<sup>83</sup> Rao is a farmers leader, had been an MP, earlier in 1985 and an MLA of the Janata Party from Vuyyuru in 1978-83.<sup>84</sup> The TDP had won the two assembly seats from Vijayawada in 1983 and had not won an assembly seat from the city since. It however supported a CPI candidate who won in 1985 and 1994 from Vijayawada West constituency. In Krishna district the Congress has won back most seats including N.T. Rama Rao's native Gudivada.

In the 1987 municipal elections, the party had split the Communist vote, helping the Congress to win. The party secured six seats mainly in wards with a Kamma majority population.<sup>85</sup>

In the city itself, the party retains the support of many Kamma businessmen. The TDP is active in student organization.<sup>86</sup> Mehru operates from the city and controls much of Gunadala and Patanata. His group continues to be active in criminal activities and in settling private disputes.<sup>87</sup>

## **BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY:**

The Bharatiya Janata Party has been existing at the national level for over sixty years. The party is regarded as a Hindu revivalist/fundamentalist party and is closely allied to the RSS.<sup>88</sup>

The Jan Sangh / RSS combine was active in Vijayawada between 1940 and 1948, when the RSS was banned for its role in the assassination of Gandhi. Some Komati's in the city supported the Jan Sangh. In the early 1940s, there were clashes between the RSS and CPI cadre as RSS youth led some attacks on CPI, especially on women activists for their participation in Hindu social reform activities.<sup>89</sup> In 1948, there was an attempt to generate violence in the city in the wake of Gandhi's assassinations. CPI activists clashed with RSS youth in an attempt to prevent rioting.<sup>90</sup> Some of the RSS cadre along with Congress activists were involved in attacks on CPI activists between 1948 and 1951. They were supported by urban and rural interests opposed to the CPI's leadership of mass struggles in the urban rural areas of Andhra Pradesh, during that period.<sup>91</sup>

After 1948, the BJP did not play any significant role in the political history of Vijayawada until 1981. In that year, the party won three seats in the municipal elections, two of the candidates being Kammas.<sup>92</sup> One belongs to a family involved in the transport business in the city. The other is the wife of a prominent pharmaceutical distributor. In the 1987, municipal

elections only one candidate, the latter D. Jhansi Laxmi was elected.<sup>93</sup>

The BJP has support among the Komati traders and some Nagara traders. B. Appa Rao, a Nagara was a BJP leader between in 1970 and 1990 and contested the legislative elections several times without success.<sup>94</sup> Currently, one of the general secretaries of the BJP at the national level is a Kamma from Guntur.<sup>95</sup> Hence some Kammas in the city support the BJP. Also in keeping with Kamma strategy, some members of the community join whichever party is in ascendancy. Over the last few years, it has been observed that BJP activity is on the rise in Vijayawada, not only in the old town area, where the Komatis and Nagaras live, but also in Patamata, a Kamma locality.<sup>96</sup>

Vijayawada has never had communal (inter-religious) conflicts, inspite of a significant Muslim population and the rise of the BJP. Most towns in coastal Andhra witnessed violent incidents in December 1992 when the Babri Masjid was destroyed. However, Vijayawada experienced no rioting. One reason for this could be that the Kammas whether in Congress or TDP need the Muslim vote to win the Vijayawada west constituency. A second reason pertains to greater mobility for the Muslims, most of whom were working in the automobile repair workshops and benefited from the increasing prosperity of the transport sector in the city.<sup>97</sup>

Vijayawada is often called the political nerve centre of Andhra Pradesh. This is because, the city plays such a dominant role in political events and has played a crucial role in the emergence of various political parties. Added to this is the perception that "what Vijayawada (and Krishna District) does today, Andhra Pradesh following tomorrow".<sup>98</sup>

The city is also regarded as a highly politicized center. Every political party has an office in the city, whether or not it has any political following for it in the area. Vijayawada is regarded as the key to the entry into the larger arena of state politics. Since every party wishes to develop a base in the city, all kinds of lumpen elements are encouraged by the parties to join their ranks. In the process, the numerous gangs in the city acquire political backing for their activities. Thus, every party in Vijayawada constitutes a committee in each ward of municipal corporation. Most of these ward committees are actively involved in taking up local issues and representing them /agitation for resolving the issues. Every issue, whether private or public, pertaining to an individual or a group, is routed through ward members of a political party. When there are no issues to take up, parties frequently organize rallies for various occasions. While religious festivals are not celebrated in a prominent manner, occasions such as Independence day and other national functions become occasions to display ones' strength.<sup>99</sup>

Vijayawada used to be a panchayat till 1888, when it was made a Municipality.<sup>100</sup> British civil servants acted as chairman of the municipal council till 1893, when the Madras Government began to appoint prominent Indians to the post<sup>101</sup>. Elected bodies held office till 1972, with special officers appointed for brief periods in the interregnum of holding elections<sup>102</sup>. During 1933-35, and 1959-62, there were no elected bodies in office.<sup>103</sup>

Congress or Congress supported candidates held office during the entire period of 1919 to 1972, except in 1943-47, when the Justice Party candidate held the post of chairman.<sup>104</sup> A survey of the list of municipal chairman during the period, shows that eight of them, the largest number were Brahmins, one was a Komati, one a Nagara, one Kamma, one Reddi and two Muslims.<sup>105</sup>

From the 1950s onwards, the CPI constituted the chief opposition party in the Municipal council.<sup>106</sup> In 1981, in alliance with the CPI(M), the CPI won a majority in the Corporation<sup>107</sup>. Between 1919-81 the Kammars were unable to get their candidates elected mainly because they lived on the outskirts of the city which were not part of the municipality. Some areas such as Bhavanipuram were included in 1959<sup>108</sup>. These were however sparsely populated areas. The major areas of Kamma concentration such as Patamata and Gunadala were incorporated only in 1981, when the municipality was upgraded into a municipal corporation.

In 1943, the Justice Party candidate Govindarajulu Naidu, a Kamma won the election mainly because most Congress leaders who participated in the Quit India movement were either in jail or had gone underground.<sup>109</sup> A few Kammas CPI leaders defected to the Congress in the late 1960s.<sup>110</sup> A few important Kamma businessmen and professionals had however always been with the Congress Party.<sup>111</sup>

The 1981 election saw the CPI - CPI(M) alliance win the election to the newly formed corporation.<sup>112</sup> According to the existing rules, the elected councilors, in turn elected a mayor from among themselves. During the five year tenure of the corporation, two councilors from the CPI and one from the CPI(M) shared the post of Mayor for various periods. The inclusion of areas having a large concentration of Kammas helped in the victory of CPI, CPI(M) alliance as they could participate in and influence the political and electoral process more directly. However, in the 1986 corporation election, the support base of CPI and CPI(M) was eroded due to the emergence of the Telugu Desam Party which took away a large chunk of the votes from CPI and CPI(M). The Congress won a majority in the corporation, as well as the Mayorship for which direct elections were held.<sup>113</sup>

As can be seen from Table 5.1, ward numbers 1,2,29, and 46-50 have the highest number of voters of above ten thousand per ward. Of these 1 and 2 consist of a few Kamma landlords and families belonging to lower caste communities in the numerous slums in the



Table 5.1

NUMBER OF VOTERS IN EACH DIVISION AND THE PARTIES  
ELECTED WARDWISE IN VIJAYAWADA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION - 1987

DIVISION	NUMBER OF VOTERS	PARTY ELECTED
1.	11488	TDF
2.	11602	CFI
3.	8982	INC (I)
4.	9100	CFI
5.	6610	TDF
6.	5236	INC (I)
7.	7099	INC (I)
8.	5975	BJP
9.	7310	INC (I)
10.	5158	INC (I)
11.	7368	INC (I)
12.	7385	INC (I)
13.	7183	CFM
14.	6630	INC (I)
15.	5933	INC (I)
16.	5701	INC (I)
17.	1652	CFI
18.	6019	TDF
19.	7347	INC (I)
20.	6259	INC (I)
21.	6558	INC (I)
22.	9150	CFI
23.	7205	INC (I)
24.	8463	INC (I)
25.	7493	INC (I)
26.	7432	INC (I)
27.	7212	CFI
28.	7025	INC (I)
29.	10433	INC (I)
30.	7181	CFI
31.	6390	INC (I)
32.	5744	INC (I)
33.	8326	INC (I)
34.	6666	CFI
35.	8097	INC (I)
36.	9581	INC (I)
37.	8410	INC (I)
38.	8901	CFI
39.	9673	INC (I)
40.	6321	INC (I)
41.	8790	IND
42.	7066	TDF
43.	8782	IFD
44.	7572	INC (I)
45.	8348	INC (I)
46.	11219	CFM
47.	11615	TDF
48.	11480	INC (I)
49.	11604	INC (I)
50.	11018	CFM

Source: Vijayawada Municipal Corporation

area. Ward No.29, Gandhinagar is predominantly a Brahmin area. Wards 46-50 include Patamata, a predominantly Kamma residential area; Autonagar where Kammass own the factories, while the workers are mainly Muslims and lower castes, and Krishna Lanka which includes Kamma businessmen and Kapu and other lower caste manual workers in almost equal proportion.<sup>114</sup>

Prominent persons like Kaleswara Rao and Chalapathi Rao who held terms as MLAs in the Madras and A.P. legislatures and who were freedom fighters, held terms as Municipal chairmen of Vijayawada.<sup>115</sup> Between 1919 and 1991, of the elected chairman / mayors, four were doctors, (two of them father and son) and three were lawyers.<sup>116</sup> One a komati was a prominent businessmen from the city.<sup>117</sup> His family also contributed a Deputy Chairman and a corporator. A Nagara businessman, the first person to set up a cinema in Vijayawada, was also a chairman in the 1953.<sup>118</sup> Two others who were related to the chairman by marriage, controlled the corporation for almost three decades from the 1920s without holding any position in the municipality.<sup>119</sup>

Elections to the Vijayawada Municipal council and corporation have not had any high degree of violence, compared to the general violence observed in the city. Each party and candidate usually have a core group of supporters who are also spatially segregated. Krishna Lanka in the new city and Vidyadharapuram and Kothapet in the old town are the few areas where supporters of both Kamma businessmen and Kapu and other backward class manual laborers

reside. In general, both during elections and during other periods, the area is known for a high degree of violence<sup>120</sup>. Since other areas are divided by caste and party, little violence occurs during elections. There are signs however of a change in this system. In the last election in 1986, corporators got elected by small majorities and two or more parties secured similar number of votes.<sup>121</sup>

Since the Kammas constitute only 6 - 8 percent of the population, they could not win seats on their own except in some areas in Patamata. Similar is the caste with Brahmins and Vysyas. Thus the number of Kamma, Brahmin and Vysya councilors are not more than two each at any time.<sup>122</sup> However, the Mayor is usually from an upper caste. The Kammas have a dominant presence in all political parties and most candidates owe allegiance to a Kamma leader. It is only when candidates rebel against their party leaders and contest on their own that conflicts occur during elections, as happened in 1981, when V. Ranga, Congress MLA set up his candidate against candidates of G.S. Raju's faction.<sup>123</sup> Mogulrajapuram and Patamata which have been Kamma settlements before they became urbanized, still continue to elect Kamma councillors.<sup>124</sup> The Katragadda family, one of the oldest Kamma families in Vijayawada usually contributes one councillor in each corporation.<sup>125</sup>

While there has been little violence during elections on the whole, available data since the 1920s show that candidates with

violent records have often been elected as councilors and corporators.

From 1920 to 1940, the contest was mainly between the Congress and the Justice Party, chiefly supported by the Brahmins/Vysyas and Kammals respectively. The Justice Party was in power in the Madras provincial legislature and during this period. The party imposed several municipal taxes in Vijayawada that targeted the Vysya traders.<sup>126</sup> The Kammals not having entered trading in a big way at that time, and residing outside the city limits, were not affected by the increased taxes. These acts of the Justice Party government were fought in the courts and also became issues of contention during election.<sup>127</sup> Kaleswara Rao and other Brahmin lawyers who fought there cases also contested and won municipal elections. As conflicts between the two groups increased, Nagara musclemen working for 'Appalaswamy' and 'Chitti' labour contractors, began to be used by the Justice Party to intimidate voters and 'rig' elections.<sup>128</sup> The two controlled a number of councilors and set up confrontations in council and meetings.<sup>129</sup> Fights during session reached a pitch in March 1933, when about fifty of their men barged into a budget meeting and along with two councilors supporting the Justice Party, abused the chairman and beat up a few Congress members<sup>130</sup>. The disturbances were used as an excuse to supersede the municipality and the Madras government appointed a commissioner to directly govern the city's municipal affairs<sup>131</sup>. The trend of using manual labourers and criminal elements by labour contractors and trade union

leaders, in the conflicts between dominance groups, still continues. Individuals involved in violence set up their own criminal enterprises. They began to offer their services in an economy which increasingly began to be based on illegal and extra legal activities.<sup>132</sup> In course of time these groups became divided on caste basis and entered politics. Chalasani Venkataratnam started playing an important role in municipal affairs. He reportedly ran a city wide criminal enterprise, apart from his trade union activities in the burgeoning transport sector of the city.<sup>133</sup> Most leaders of criminal enterprises in the city, operating in the 1970s and 80s as well as members of political parties had been working under him between 1950 and 1970. Venkataratnam was an opposition leader in the council when he was killed by a rival in 1972.

A. Ramulu, who held the office of Mayor between 1983-84, was involved in a major murder case in 1989<sup>134</sup>. V. Ranga, the leader of a vast and illegal enterprise and later an MLA was a corporator for a brief period in 1981-83<sup>135</sup>. Likewise, Venkatanarayana was a two time corporator before he was expelled from the CPI, as he developed differences with rival gang leaders within the party<sup>136</sup>. He was killed in 1991. These are only a few of the corporators with violent records, and there are a number of other corporators with similar backgrounds.

These individuals, though holding membership in various parties, function in a highly independent manner. Their power

derives from their support base which is distributed equally among the city's poor and the business classes. While a few traders and industrialists such as G.S. Raju and Narasaraju were themselves corporators,<sup>137</sup> most of the city's elite prefer to support their candidates, while they themselves remain outside the formal political sphere.

As different political parties enter Vijayawada, they have also been drawn into local conflicts. In the process, local conflicts have tended to spread to other areas of the state, as local leaders begin to dominate state politics.

#### ELECTORAL POLITICS:

##### 2. Assembly and Parliament

A study of the elections and the candidates elected to the state legislature and the national parliament from Vijayawada and nearby constituencies yields interesting conclusions. Local leaders, who initially became councillors/corporators began their upward journey by getting elected to the state legislature. It is also observed that persons of national prominence in various fields have got elected from the Vijayawada parliamentary constituency. The city has two assembly constituencies which used to be called Vijayawada North and South till 1962 and Vijayawada East and West from 1967 onwards.<sup>138</sup> Congress Party candidates have held both seats for most of the period between 1926 and 1969 in the assembly constituencies (Table 5.2) Between 1926 and 1946. A Kaleswara Rao, Brahmin lawyer, Congressman and nationalist was

from Vijayawada to the Madras provincial legislature.<sup>139</sup> In the 1946 elections, Vijayawada was designated as the west Krishna district constituency, with two member to be elected by the same electorate. A Congress Socialist Party candidate, a Kamma and a member of the Katragadda family won from this constituency, apart from Kaleswara Rao.<sup>140</sup> C. Rajeswara Rao, a Kamma Communist leader, who later became the General Secretary of the CPI, was elected in 1952, when the Communists won the largest number of seats from Andhra.<sup>141</sup>

After the Andhra state was formed in 1953, and the united *Andhra Pradesh* in 1956, the Congress Party won continuously till the 1983 elections, with the exception of the Vijayawada north constituency in 1952 and 1962, which went to T. Potharaju a CPI candidate, of the Nagara community.<sup>142</sup>

Brahmin and Nagara candidate held the two assembly seats from the city till 1972. A. Kaleswara Rao and T.V.S. Chalapathi Rao (See Table 5.2) were Brahmans; Chitti and Potharaju belonged to the Nagara community, as did P. Chinna who won in 1978. Muslims have won twice in 1972 and 1989. Kamma candidates began to win from Vijayawada, from 1972 onwards with the victory of D. Rama Rao. N. Bhaskara Rao in 1978, A. Jaiprakash in 1983 and V. Ratnakumari, widow of V.M. Ranga Rao in 1989. Only once has a Kapu got elected, V.M. Ranga Rao in 1985.<sup>143</sup>

It has been observed however that Kamma candidates have got elected to the state assembly from neighbouring rural constitutencies, where they have a greater ability to win election, mainly due to their greater demographic, economic and political strength in the villages. K. Venkataratnam, a Congress faction leader and a prominent representative of rich peasants interests, won thrice from Vuyyuru in Krishna district in 1957, 1962 and 1967.<sup>144</sup> He was in the forefront of an agitation against the land reforms of the P.V. Narasimha Rao led Congress government in 1972. This movement was transformed into a separatist Jai Andhra agitation, led by Venkataratnam in 1973.<sup>145</sup>

V. Sobanendraeswara Rao, a Kamma farmers leader who later became an MP from Vijayawada, began his political career as an MLA from Vuyyuru in 1978. A Babu Rao who got elected in 1985 was also a Kamma.

The Kankipadu constituency adjoining Vijayawada has always elected a Kamma candidate except in 1978. C. Ramakotiah, elected in 1957 and 1962 was a landlord whose sons are prominent businessmen in the transport sector in Vijayawada.<sup>146</sup> A. Bhaskara Rao, elected in 1967 and 1972 was active in the cooperative movement and played an important role in the development of the transport industry in the city.<sup>147</sup> From 1983 onwards D. Rajasekhara Rao alias Nehru, a leader of criminal activities, and the chief accused in the Ranga Rao murder case has been elected thrice from



ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS: 1955 - 19

YEAR OF ELECTION	VIJAYAWADA NORTH / WEST				VIJAYAWADA SOUTH / EAST				KANKIPADU			
	PARTY	NAME	CASTE	PARTY	NAME	CASTE	PARTY	NAME	CASTE	PARTY	NAME	CAST
1955	CONGRESS	M. CHITTI	NAGARA	CONGRESS	A. KALESHWARA	BRAHMIN	CONGRESS	K. VENKATA	KAMMA	---	---	---
					RAO			RATNAM				
1957	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	---	---	---
1962	CPI	T. PUTHURAJU	" "	" "	T. V. S. CHALA PATHI RAO	" "	" "	" "	" "	CONGRESS	C. RAMA KOTAIAH	KAMM
1967 1972	CONGRESS " "	M. CHITTI A. PASHA	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "	" "
1978 1983	CONGRESS TDP	P. CHINNA B. S. JAYA RAJU	NAGARA B. C.	" "	D. RAMA RAO	KAMMA	---	" "	" "	" "	A. BASKARA RAO	" "
1986 1990	CPI CONGRESS	V. R. RAJU M. K. BAIG	B. C. MUSLIM	CONGRESS CONGRESS	N. B. RAO A. JAIPRAKASH	" "	JANATA TDP	V. S. RAO K. P. REDDIAH	" "	" "	K. RANGARAO	B. C.
1994	CPI	K. SUBBARAJU	KAMMA	CONGRESS	V. RATNAKUMARI	KAPU	CONGRESS	A. BABURAO	" "	TDP	D. RAJA SEKHAR	KAMM
					V. RATNAKUMARI	KAPU		V. S. C. RAO	KAPU			
					V. RATNAKUMARI	KAPU	TDP	A. RAJU RAO	KAMMA	TDP	D. RAJA SEKHAR	KAMM

Kankipadu.<sup>148</sup> All three candidates are Kammaas, originally from Kankipadu, but settled in Vijayawada.

P. Sundarayya, a Reddi, who dropped his surname to project a non castiest image was elected from the rearly Gannavaram constituency in 1957, 1962 and 1978. He was a leader of the Telangana movement in 1946-51 and later became the General Secretary of the CPI(M).<sup>149</sup>

A review of the list of MLAs from Vijayawada thus reveals that Brahmins and Nagaras were dominant till 1967. From 1967 onwards, not a single Brahmin candidate has won, while Kammaas have at least one member from Vijayawada. However several Kammaas with a base in Vijayawada have won from neighbouring constituencies.

In terms of the occupational background of the legislators, the trend has been from professionals to politicians/businessmen to leaders with criminal records. Kaleswara Rao was a lawyer and T.V.S. Chalapathi Rao was a doctor. Chitti was a politician who had links with criminal activities and provided men and organized the Congress political machine. Potharaju was an ex-army man who generated a loyal following among Nagaras opposed to Chitti's leadership. He was active in Communist trade unions Rama Rao and Bhaskara Rao were Kamma politicians representing the interests of rich peasants. Jaiprakash was active in the group loyal to 'Nehru' and was the chief accused in the murder of Racha, brother

of Ranga Rao. Ranga himself ran a vast criminal enterprise in Vijayawada, who mobilized the city's poor by leading agitations on their behalf and by appealing to their caste sentiments. Similar is the case with 'Nehru: Ratnakumari' Ranga Rao's widow runs a part of Ranga Rao's activities. A section of Ranga Rao's followers went over to the group headed by Chalapathi Rao and his sons.<sup>150</sup>

This trend towards increasing participation of those with criminal records is not found in the elections to the national parliament from Vijayawada constituency. Members of parliament from Vijayawada, were till 1980, persons either from the city or from other areas of the state/ nation who had achieved prominence in their fields. Between 1952 and 1972, the main contest in the city was between the Congress Party and the CPI. In 1977 and 1980, the main contest was between the Congress and the Janata Party. From 1985 onwards, the contest has been between the Congress Party and the Telugu Desam Party.<sup>151</sup> The TDP candidate V.S. Rao, a Kamma farmer leader, was elected in 1985 and 1991. K.L.N. Prasad and M. Venkateswara Rao, two former journalists and editors of Telugu newspaper have been elected to the upper house of parliament by the Congress Party in 1978 and 1982 respectively. M. Hanumantha Rao, a Communist leader and editor of the CPI(M) organ Prajasakthi was elected to the upper house with TDP support in 1988.<sup>152</sup>

Kammas had been trying to exercise power at the state level since in 1940s and had been competing with Brahmans and Reddis.

1980 marks the beginning of Kamma involvement, in a conscious way, in national level politics.

In Vijayawada, elections have not generated the kind of large scale violence and malpractices that is observed in several constituencies especially the Rayalaseema region of the state. The absence of violence could be because of several reasons. Leaders of major social /political groups did not contest from the same constituency. For example, Ranga and Nehru, rivals in their fields, contested from separate areas. Secondly the candidates' social background matched the caste/religion of the major social groups in the constituency. The MLA from Vijayawada south/west, has always been a Nagara or Muslim - the two major communities residing in the area. Kammals/Brahmins, likewise have won from the new city area - the south/east constituency. A third reason could be that most leaders of gangs /criminal activities were given municipal wards to contest, with only the top leaders contesting in legislative elections. This prevented conflict over seatallocation. Another important reason could be that the city's history of violence ensured a high order of security arrangements during elections.

Table 5.3.

## PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS: 1952 - 1991

## CANDIDATES ELECTED

YEAR OF ELECTION	NAME OF THE MEMBER	PARTY TO WHICH AFFILIATED
1952	H. CHATTOPADHYAY	INDEPENDENT
1957	K. ACHAMAMBA	CONGRESS
1962	K.L. RAO	CONGRESS
1967	K.L. RAO	CONGRESS
1972	K.L. RAO	CONGRESS
1977	G. MURAHARI	CONGRESS
1980	C. VIDYA	CONGRESS
1984	V.S. RAO	TELOGUDESAM
1989	C. VIDYA	CONGRESS
1991	V.S. RAO	TELUDU DESAM

Source: Secretary, A. P. Legislative Assembly

## CULTURE IN THE PROVINCIAL CITY:

A study of Vijayawada reveals that a provincial city evolves a cultural pattern of its own that bears the distinct stamp of the rich peasant class who are dominant in the region around the city. The culture of a provincial city is both vibrant and vulgar, superficial and at the same time rich in ideas and traditions. Vijayawada is a major pilgrimage centre, but it has also been extremely supportive of Communist/atheist movements. The cultural role of the city is neither heterogenetic nor orthogenetic. The rich peasant class retains important elements of its own culture.

and in interaction with urban/metropolitan/ Western culture, evolves a provincial culture with distinct characteristics.

Washbrook has stated that the Andhra deltas "brought forth a peculiar cultural composite"; "its regional culture was quite unique in South India".<sup>153</sup>

The typical economy and politics of the city, hence also play a role in contributing to the evolution of a provincial culture. In Vijayawada, the cultural aspects that are typically encountered differ from metropolitan high culture. Cultural forms are not born out of the need for self-expression, nor do they fulfil functions for the society at large. They evolve out of the need to display one's status, one's need to show awareness of the 'modern' and contemporary. The newly urbanized classes in Vijayawada feel a need to emulate upper caste, Western, metropolitan forms. This is expressed in patterns of consumption, life styles, eating habits, cultural forms such as cinema, literature etc. The importance of status symbols and the need to display status is greater in cities, where there is "little personal knowledge of one's position"<sup>154</sup>. As Veblen has shown, displaying status to others, involving conspicuous consumption, is a matter of self-respect.<sup>155</sup>

Hailing from rural backgrounds and lacking socialization into the norms of behaviour prescribed in cities, the peasant classes become the object of ridicule by established urban groups such as the Brahmins and Vaisyas, as well as others.<sup>156</sup>

The Justice Party and the Dravidian, self-respect movement in Andhra and Tamil Nadu in the 1920s and 1930s, constituted the first attempt by the Kammas and other non-brahmin communities to achieve mobility and attain a higher status.<sup>157</sup> In the 1930s and 1940s, the Kammas in Krishna District attempted a Sankritization process by emulating the ritual practices of Brahmins. There was even an attempt to train Kammas to become priests for officiating at various ceremonies.<sup>158</sup> In the post independence periods, the Brahmins had already started adopting Western lifestyles, ideas, practices etc. Hence the Kammas abandoned Sanskritization and instead tried to raise their collective status through participation in a number of movements as will be shown in the next section. Most social and political movements in Andhra were initially started by Brahmins.<sup>159</sup> However, Kamma and other dominant peasant groups gradually took over the leadership of these movements and used them to gain mobility, acquire control over various social institutions and mobilized people for political power.

However, despite their participation in a number of movements, the peasant classes could never attain the social status accorded to upper castes such as Brahmins. In the quest for social status, the peasant class in Vijayanada have attempted to assimilate a variety of cultural forms and symbols which has resulted in a unique cultural pattern. While the life style, literature and arts continue to be loud and vulgar, the support for various movements has meant that a number of progressive ideas

and cultural forms continue to persist even after the movements declined. It is seen that Vijayawada has a reputation for being at the vanguard of all progressive movements<sup>160</sup>. Therefore all current political and social movements which attempt to spread throughout Andhra choose the city as the starting point. This is the case for example of recent attempts at starting a 'dalit' political party in Andhra Pradesh, of the Telugu Desam Party, an extreme left Communist Party with a strong base in the north, a movement against superstitions and religious cults, a social reform movement led by freedom fighters etc.<sup>161</sup>

The city of Vijayawada is receptive to all kinds of ideas and issues, even esoteric issues tend to attract large supporters whenever meetings are organised.<sup>162</sup> Every issue has a core group of supporters who can mobilize a sizable crowd for public meetings and rallies. Vijayawada in particular, and the Krishna district are regarded as testing grounds. If a particular movement gets a good response, it is taken as a signal for the successful spread of the movement to other areas. This is so because historically, Communist, national, social reform, atheist and other movements have originated from this area and spread outwards with Vijayawada as the base.

However, the vibrancy and vitality of cultural responses in Vijayawada in terms of a readiness to support progressive causes and issues is matched by a contrasting vulgarity in cultural forms. This is mainly because of the large floating population in



the city which itself is an outcome of its trade - transport functions. However, the rich peasant class is also responsible for sponsoring and propagating vulgar cultural forms. As already mentioned, the peasant class has not gone through a long term intergenerational socialization process in the urban milieu. Its sudden prosperity as well as the quick rise to prosperity of Vijayawada has created "a state of normlessness" in Durkheim's terms<sup>163</sup>. The absence of clearly specified goals and clear criteria for assessing achievement has generated a condition of 'social degeneration'. As Becker states, in such cities, "some people make rules"<sup>164</sup> (the state, legislature, electorate consisting of all communities) "while others enforce them" (the dominant rich peasant class). Not only is there divergence between "cultural goals and institutionalised means of achieving them"<sup>165</sup> (Merton), but the goals themselves do not initially possess the sanction of the community at large. The goals derive from the specific needs of the rich peasant classes based on their perceptions of power and status. Consequently all other groups in the city tend to emulate the dominant groups in their lifestyles, ideas, attitudes and behaviour patterns. This is because these aspects represent both power and status.

These cultural aspects of Vijayawada are reflected in cinema, in the attitude towards law, the forms of literary expressions, in entrepreneurial behaviour, in the social movements that emerge and in the way the citizens react to the external world. There are discussed in the following pages.

The ubiquitous role of cinema in Indian society is well known. The success of film personalities in politics, and their role in various movements, especially in South India, has been fairly well documented<sup>166</sup>. The Telugu film industry is dominated by the Kamma community. Whether one considers film actors, directors, distributors, producers or financiers, the majority belong to the Kamma community.<sup>167</sup>

Krishna district is the home of several prominent film personalities including N.T. Rama Rao.

Vijayawada has about 50 cinema halls, the largest number for a city of its size and is a major centre for film distribution and financing<sup>168</sup>. Cinema influences the culture of the city in very significant ways. It is cinema that first strikes a visitor to the city, in the form of film posters occupying every inch of space on all roads, banners proclaiming the successful run of a film, processions by fans associations, felicitations to successful film actors/directors, functions to mark new releases

Fans associations are an integral part of the cultural scene in Vijayawada. Around forty such associations were counted during the period of field work, with new ones being formed with the arrival of a new film actor.<sup>169</sup> Associations exist for all actors, from the popular stars of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s to the latest newcomers who may have acted only in a single film thus far. Fans

associations are often formed to promote a film by the actors themselves. Likewise, many distributors also start associations to generate publicity for their films. Some are started by these who belong to the same caste as a particular actor. Others have as their members, the youth wings of political parties which is supported by an actor. Vijayawada also has the only association for a female star<sup>170</sup>.

A lot of money is invested in the fans association by distributors, actors, and others. For the unemployed youth, these associations represent a way of earning fairly regular wages. A lot of money and effort go into organizing processions, publicity and felicitation functions. Every new release of a film is an event for celebration which often degenerate into violence. Furniture in cinema halls are destroyed, seats ripped up, glass panes are broken and other destructive acts are indulged in<sup>171</sup>. An important avenue for employment is thus opened as hall owners employ youths belonging to any of a number of gangs to protect their halls.

On occasions when releases take place of more than one film starring rival actors belonging to different caste/political groups, celebrations and processions lead to physical confrontations between fans associations.<sup>172</sup> This has been true especially since the mid 1980s, when a groups of castes began mobilizing themselves as Kapus, against the Kammas. At the same time Chiranjeevi, a Kapu, rose to Prominence in Telugu cinema and is currently rated the most popular actor. Most other popular

actors are Kammas including the son of N.T. Rama Rao. The Kapu-Kamma conflict thus is also reflected in the rivalries between fans associations. Since the Kapu leaders are mainly with the Congress (I), a congruence emerges between the memberships of youth wings attached to political parties, caste groups and fans associations. Incidents pertaining to a particular kind of group rivalry tend to degenerate into conflicts between others kinds of groups.

A regular feature on the entertainment circuit is the felicitation of films which have had a successful run. Directors and actors connected with such films are felicitated after being taken in a large procession. Since most actors or persons close to them own cinema halls in the city, it is easy to manipulate the success of a film. Films are exhibited usually in a hall owned by a person who is close to the actor/director of the film. The person may be a film personality, politician or others.<sup>173</sup>

#### CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS, MEMORIAL TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS:

A large number of associations exist in Vijayawada, whose sole purpose is to felicitate various people and give away awards<sup>174</sup>. Typically, the need to be recognized is a prominent trait among the provincial rich class. If one cannot get an award through proper channels, it is always possible to pay any of a number of associations to receive an award for services rendered, of whatever nature they may be. If this is not possible, it is not a difficult task to set up one's own association. Trusts or

foundations set up in the name of promoting arts, science, literature, public service etc., mainly perform this function of giving titles, awards etc. The tendency 'to spend time, money and effort quite uselessly in the pleasurable business of inflating the ego', as Veblen puts it is an integral aspect of the culture of a provincial city.<sup>175</sup>

The city is also reputed for the way in which it remembers its citizens, especially political leaders who are no more.

#### REMEMBRANCES, MEMORIALS, COMMEMORATIONS:

An informant in Vijayawada made the remark that while other cities have streets named after national heroes, Vijayawada has a large number of streets named after "rowdies" and "goondas".<sup>176</sup> Over the last three decades, a large numbers of persons were killed in gang and political rivalries. In an effort to find ways of commemorating the dead, a number of means have been devised. One is to name streets, roads and neighbourhoods after them. Another is to start institutions named after the dead leaders. Thus there exist in Vijayawada, a number of educational institutions carrying the names of persons who have led violent lives, and some of whom have had violent deaths.<sup>177</sup> Organizations are started in memory of such persons. Devineni Murali Youth was set up in 1988, after Murali, a brother of an MLA was allegedly killed by Ranga Rao, an MLA. The Radha Mitra Sangham (Radha Friends Association) is in memory of Radhakrishna Murthy, a leader of a criminal gang and brother of Ranga. Numerous other similar organizations exists.

While birth anniversaries of the dead persons are rarely observed, the death anniversaries are an occasion for celebration. Since the number of prominent persons killed is large, hardly a month goes by without such celebrations. On these days, the main avenues in the city are decorated. Street corner functions are held, poems are composed to the departed leaders, and sung, the poor are fed and clothes distributed to them, fire crackers are burst till late in tehnight and rallies and processions ar taken out. In short, the whole city wears a festive look and most shops and offices are closed.<sup>178</sup>

It should be noted that these activities do not merely perform the function of commemoration/remembering the dead. They constitute one of the chief means of bringing the members of a groups together, of projecting their solidarity and strength. The activities constitute a base from which to carry on a sustained attack on rival groups.

The national celebrations on occasions like Independence and Republic days are also used for similar purposes. On such days rival groups though their affiliated political parties, show their strength by organizing meetings and processions which not infrequently end in physical confrontations.<sup>179</sup>

#### ATTITUDES TOWARDS LAW:

The typical culture of the provincial city includes an attitude towards law that is quite distinct. In the rural areas.

upper castes, by their dominant status have traditionally exercised extra judicial power, as well as the power to influence changes in the law. The migration of this class to cities also signify their entry into a larger system of social order, where legal norms of behaviour are more difficult to flout; and where a greater political authority imposes the code of behaviour. On migrating to the city, the dominant peasant castes not only continues to attempt to wield power through extra judicial means, but also twist the norms and procedures of institutions to suit their own style of functioning.

In Vijayawada, it is common to find that few persons are actually punished for the numerous acts of violence that they are responsible for<sup>180</sup>. The accused often come out on bail, and with the connivance of police, public prosecutors and judges, manage to prolong the case till it is forgotten. This becomes easy to do since public functionaries owe their positions to those in power. This is especially so since the 1980s, when leading gangs leaders joined political parties. With shifts in power, one or the other group places its own people at different levels in the executive and judiciary in the city. Thus Ranga Rao, a leader of a vast criminal enterprise, and a political leader could get away with his violent actions (including alleged murders) because the city police was for a long time staffed by persons belonging to his Kapu caste. When the Telugu Desam came to power, they identified and transferred these policemen out of the city<sup>181</sup>. What is interesting about the violent incidents in Vijayawada is that they

do not occur under the protection of darkness, in isolated places. Killings and murder occur usually in day light in public place, in front of numerous witnesses.<sup>182</sup> This springs from a distinct attitude towards law that derives from the possession of power. The spate of revenge killings also indicate, that affected persons rarely go to court. They would much rather take it out directly on their opponents.

Even ordinary disputes, are settled by private parties for this reason. An affected party will go to court only if he is sure that his opponent would also follow legal means. If the rival chooses to be violent, the rules of the game breakdown. Thus the citizens of Vijayawada prefer to settle their dispute outside the legal framework. Since disputes mainly relate to property and finance, which are often related to unaccounted earnings, it is not possible in any case to approach courts, in such cases.

#### LITERATURE AND EDUCATION:

In an earlier section, the widespread nature of pornography and obscene literature was mentioned.<sup>183</sup> In addition, there is a large market for cheap thrillers and crime novels. Writers of these novels and their publishers have become millionaires overnight. This phenomena has been observed as far back as in 1968 by Selig Harrison<sup>184</sup>.



While government policies were one reason for the rapid rise in literacy, another major factor was the perception of the importance of education by the rural classes, especially the migrants to the cities. In the case of the rich peasants, education was mainly an indicator of social status, not a means to livelihood. As mentioned earlier, even for professionals like doctors, medicine was a subsidiary occupation<sup>185</sup>. Lacking a cosmopolitan background, and socialized in the villages, as part of a class used to maintaining its dominance by force, and not having assimilated the ethos behind modern education, mere literacy only fueled an interest for entertainment reading material. This led to an outburst of cheap thrillers, pornography and 'yellow' journals. A large publishing industry exists in Vijayawada to cater to these needs. Frequent conflicts between the police and sellers/publishers of such material occur. The persons who are the target of the yellow journals also have violent confrontations with the writers and publishers<sup>186</sup>.

#### RELIGIOUS CULTS IN VIJAYAWADA:

Vijayawada has not had communal (inter-religious) riots as in other cities. However this does not mean that religion plays an insignificant role in the city. Especially, over the last ten years, religious cults have become an important aspect of life in the city. Two distinct cults deserve special mention. The first is the 'Ayyappa' cult. Devotees of this cult eschew non-vegetarian food, smoking and liquor, and make a pilgrimage trip to Sabarimala

in the state of Kerala. In the country as a whole, Andhra Pradesh reputedly sends the maximum number of devotees, after Kerala.<sup>187</sup> While the cult became popular a decade ago, it has already shown signs of decline in major cities such as Hyderabad. It continues to go strong in Vijayawada, with people ranging from ordinary citizens to politicians and businessmen observing the rituals and making the trip to Sabarimala. The cult also has an economic aspect. The large number of owners of buses in the city find it profitable to ply buses to Sabarimala, not only from the city, but also from neighbouring districts.<sup>188</sup>

The profit motive in promoting new cults comes out more clearly in the Shirdi Sai Baba cult. A number of temples have come up over the last decade, many of them funded by the Kamma community. Since devotees contribute money in large amounts during worship, the temples are often the centre of scandals, and Kamma and other trustees of such temples are often accused of having mercenary interests in such temples.<sup>189</sup> A profitable trade exists in transporting pilgrims to Shirdi in Maharashtra.

As we shall see in the next section, Vijayawada has been the centre for many progressive movements including social reform, atheist/rationalist and other such movements. These still retain a following in the city. However, frequently, the same people support, especially in a financial sense, both atheist/rationalist and religious activities.

It will be shown that the origin and spread of several social and political movements from Vijayawada, did not significantly influence the traditional pattern of social life, and that movements after a time declined. This was mainly due to the fact that the movements were usually taken up by the rich peasant class, as a vehicle for mobilizing the masses, as well as for their own social mobility. The takeover of these movements also helped them to dilute the original and progressive nature of these movements. Their participation in all kinds of diverse movements having contradictory ideologies led them to exercise control over different sections of society and crush any challenges to their dominance.

#### SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN VIJAYAWADA

It will be shown in the following pages, that the increasing agricultural prosperity and resultant rise in literacy, education and patronage of arts and cultural activities, were partly responsible for the rise of social movements in this region. The major argument that will be presented is that though the various movements were mainly started by members of the Brahmin community, they soon passed into the hands of non-Brahmins, especially, Kamas. These movements constituted a vehicle for social mobility and political power for the peasant classes, initially. After independence, from the 1950s onwards, control over these movements enabled the maintenance of political power and the achievement of social status in the context of a changed, more open social and

political reality. At the same time, the peasant class acquired access to a wide cross-section of social institutions and activities.

Thus, on the one hand, the city of Vijayawada acquired a reputation for being progressive and receptive to modern ideas and issues. On the other hand, since the motive for participation in these movements related to power, status and mobility, most movements after a period either declined or lost the potential to bring about significant changes in society. However, at the same time the large number of social/political movements that arose, left a lasting impact on the city/region. To this day, Vijayawada and Krishna district are receptive to and supportive of all kinds of social/political movements. Significant social and political changes continue to originate and spread from this area. Also movements which seek to spread throughout the state initially test the ground in Vijayawada, as will be shown in the following pages.

#### SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS

Traditionally, the Krishna and Godavari deltas have been supportive of social reform movements. The latter half of the 19th century and the first two decades of the twentieth century saw a profusion of individuals leading such movements pertaining to eradication of untouchability, inter-caste marriage, promoting education for girls/women and lower castes, abolition of the devadasi system/prostitution, widow remarriage etc.<sup>190</sup> The

individuals who participated in these activities were mainly Brahmins who were influenced by the Brahma Samaj such as Kandukuri Veeresalingam and numerous others<sup>191</sup>. R. Venkataratnam Naidu, a Kapu was one of the few exceptions.<sup>192</sup>

Prior to the 1920s, Vijayawada was not a big town and had few educational institutions as in the Godavari district towns. These towns also enjoyed the patronage of the local zamindars<sup>193</sup>. However, the impact of social reform was felt mainly in the districts of Krishna and Guntur.

Though the movements themselves declined after 1920, their influence continued to be felt till the 1950s. Most of the freedom fighters and Communist leaders in Vijayawada either participated in the reform movements or were influenced by the ideas of social reform. As late as the 1950s, widow remarriages and inter caste marriages continued to be performed in Vijayawada amidst stiff opposition for orthodox persons. A number of Brahmins and Kammas were involved in these activities, mainly belonging to the Communist Party.<sup>194</sup>

#### NATIONALIST MOVEMENT:

The nationalist movement was not strong in Andhra until 1920. The 1921 AICC session in Vijayawada, which was addressed by Gandhi, and his subsequent tour throughout Andhra provided an impetus to the movement.<sup>195</sup>

A review of the list of leaders who participated in the freedom movement from Andhra, reveals that a majority of them were Brahmins with a few Vysyas.<sup>196</sup> This was true equally of Vijayawada. However from the latter half of the 1930s, a few Kammas also participated. The Kammas were in the Justice Party and only after its decline from mid 1930s, did they come into the national movement.

The city was the venue for the first AICC session to be held in the south. Many Andhra leaders hailed from the Krishna and Guntur districts and naturally Vijayawada came to be chosen as the venue.

The Krishna district produced many leaders of a national stature in the Congress such as B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and A. Kaleswara Rao. In addition, Kamma leaders such as N.G. Ranga and T. Prakasam, Communist leaders like C. Rajeswara Rao (Kamma) and P. Sunderayya (Reddi) also operated from the region.<sup>197</sup>

Mutnuri Krishan Rao edited the first nationalist weekly from Krishna district. K. Nageswara Rao of Vijayawada started the first Telugu newspaper. The first Andhra reportedly arrested for nationalist activity, G. Harisarvothama Rao hails from this district.<sup>198</sup> Vijayawada played a prominent role in the Home Rule movement of Annie Besant and in the Non cooperation movement of 1920-22.<sup>199</sup> A special session of the Andhra Mahasabha an organisation to promote the interests of the Telugu people, was

held in 1918 in Vijayawada to reject the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.<sup>200</sup> As the head quarters of the Andhra Provincial Congress, Vijayawada attracted leaders from other areas who made the city their base. As such, the city acquired political importance from the 1920s onwards. The increasing prosperity of the surrounding hinterland brought in financial support for political activities. The increasing commercial and political activities led to a rapid increase in population and expansion of services/tertiary sectors and Vijayawada began to emerge as a dominant player in Andhra and national politics.

#### COMMUNIST MOVEMENT:

The Communist movement spread to Andhra in the early 1930s. The Congress Socialist Party found a ready response among the youth in Krishna, Godavari and Guntur districts. A number of youths joined the leftist forward Bloc of Subhas Chandra Bose.<sup>201</sup> M.N. Roy's Radical Humanist Party found supporters in Krishna district in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>202</sup> While Brahmans joined Communist and socialist organisations in large numbers, intermediate peasants of other caste who were agitating against the zamindari system also joined them.<sup>203</sup> The first Communist weekly in Telugu - Navashakti was published from Vijayawada in 1939.<sup>204</sup> In 1940 it became a daily Prajasakhthi. It is now the organ of the CPI (M) while Visalandhra is the newspaper published by CPI. Both are based in Vijayawada and have a wide circulation in Andhra Pradesh, even now.

Basing themselves in the city, the CPI led a number of anti-zamindari struggles in Krishna district in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>205</sup> In alliance with the All India Kissan Sabha, the CPI organized a massive peasant rally in Vijayawada in 1944. The rally was organized with the help of local Kammass living on the outskirts of the city. After the rally, a number of Kamma peasants move to the city and occupied land in the open spaces where the rally was held.<sup>206</sup> Their descendents still live there and are prominent businessmen and industrialists.

The historic Telangana armed struggle led by the CPI in the Hyderabad state in 1946-50 was controlled by leaders from Vijayawada (being at the edge of Hyderabad state). The city functioned as a base from which arms, food supplied and men were sent. P. Sunderayya and C. Rajeswara Rao, leaders from Vijayawada played a prominent role in the movement.<sup>207</sup>

The Kamma peasantry took control of the CPI from the 1940s onwards and retained it till the 1960s. The relationship between rich Kamma peasants and their role in the growth and decline of the CPI has been well documented by Selig Harrison.<sup>208</sup>

Intermediate peasants joined the CPI in order to acquire land and power which was then controlled by the Zamindars. Once the zamindari system was abolished, the CPI became a threat to them and hence Kamma peasants influenced the party to become less militant. Of the three national leaders from Krishna district who



exercised control over the CPI and CPI(M) for more than half a century, two - Rajeswara Rao and Basavapunnaiah were Kamas. The leader of the Peoples War Group of Naxalites also hails from Vijayawada. Currently, the Vijayawada leaders of the CPI and CPI(M) continues to be dominant in the parties. Likewise, the various splinter factions of the extreme left parties also have a dominant presence in the city.<sup>209</sup>

The nationwide split in the Communist party in 1964 had its impact in the city. Apart from the larger ideological and other reasons, the differences between the Communist leaders in Vijayawada, who occupied senior positions in the all India hierarchy, also was a major cause for the split. Further, by this time, lumpen elements had entered into the party cadre. Thus, 1964-66 saw a large number of violent conflicts between the splinter groups in Vijayawada.

Earlier in the 1940s as the CPI promoted progressive causes such as intercastes marriage and a widow remarriage and brought women into the public sphere, there was much opposition from orthodox sections of society especially groups in the Congress and the RSS. This generated its own share of conflicts.

The CPI played a major role in the movement for Visalandhra a larger state of Andhra Pradesh. Likewise in 1973, the "Jai Andhra" movement for a separate Andhra state was opposed by the CPI. Several violent incidents and standoffs between CPI cadres

and supporters of the movement occurred in Vijayawada which was the center of the movement.<sup>210</sup>

Vijayawada's continuing importance for Communist activities was seen in a national conference held in the city by the Indian Peoples Front.

#### ANDHRA MOVEMENT:

The Andhra movement had its genesis in the early decades of this century, in the widespread belief among the Telugus of Madras presidency, that the Tamils were dominating them in education, culture, arts and in the civil services. These feelings were articulated for the first time in the 1913 conference of the Andhra Maha Sabha.<sup>211</sup> The second conference held in Vijayawada resolved to demand from the British government a separate Andhra province.<sup>212</sup> The demand was made by persons from the Krishna and Guntur districts. Others were not so keen about it. The movement did not have support from all communities/regions. Kaleswara Rao and Nageswara Rao, Brahmin leaders from Vijayawada brought the different sections together.<sup>213</sup> However, Telugu Non-Brahmins were opposed to the demand. This was because the Andhra movement was led by Brahmins and the Telugu non-Brahmins perceived advantages in their alliance with Tamil non-Brahmins.<sup>214</sup>

In 1918, when a special session of the Andhra Maha Sabha was held in Vijayawada to select a delegation to represent their

demand for a province to E.S. Montagu, the Non-Brahmins held a separate meeting in the city to seek due representation in the Madras legislature.<sup>215</sup>

After 1947, the CPI, led by Kamma, revived the movement, as they perceived a greater possibility of coming to power in a separate Andhra state. After much violence and the fast unto death of Potti Sriramulu in 1952, a separate state was created in 1953. However Vijayawada which advanced a claim to be the capital of the new state was rejected in favour of Kurnool. This was due to the perception that Kamma/Communists would become powerful if Vijayawada were to be made the capital.<sup>216</sup>

In this context, it may be mentioned that one of the demands of the Andhra movement was a university, to be located in Andhra. The Madras government accepted the demand and the Andhra University was set up in 1925 with its headquarters in Vijayawada.<sup>217</sup> However C.R. Reddy, the first Vice chancellor of the university along with support from Madras government shifted it to Visakhapatnam in 1928. This was because leaders from Krishna district had voted in a non-confidence motion against the then chief minister. It was also felt that the Kamma would control the university if it were located in Vijayawada.<sup>218</sup>

The movement for a larger Andhra Pradesh consisting of Telangana in the Hyderabad state was also led by the CPI leaders from Vijayawada and supported by local Congressmen.

## ATHEIST/RATIONALIST MOVEMENT:

G. Ramachandra Rao, popularly known as Gora started the atheist movement in the 1930s.<sup>219</sup> He settled down in Vijayawada in 1940 and began to propagate his movement. The committee formed to invite him to settle in the city included Kaleswara Rao, an orthodox Hindu Congress leader.<sup>220</sup> The land for the atheist centre was given by a Kamma landlord, whose family continues to support the movement even today.<sup>221</sup> The landlords son is prominent in the transport industry and is married to Gora's daughter, twice Congress member of Parliament from the city.

The atheist centre apart from propagating atheism also supports social reform. Gora was a social reformer, and Gandhian freedom fighter. The centre now involves in social reform and social work, such as rehabilitating ex-criminal tribes and 'devadasis' and rural development.<sup>222</sup>

The Kammas of the city have tried to acquire control of the atheist movement without being successful. To a certain extent however, their activities are curbed, so that they do not challenge the power groups. Gora himself was a Brahmin and there is much resentment, that the movement should now be led by his son and other family members, when the Kammas had done so much for the movement.<sup>223</sup>

Radical supporters of the movement, sympathetic to communism, split in the 1960s to become part of the Rationalist movement.

Its leaders are based in Visakhapatnam and Hyderabad but activists continue to live and propagate their views in Vijayawada.<sup>224</sup>

Prominent Kammās including a famous poet Ramaswamy Choudary had started a rationalist movement in the 1940s in Krishna district. The movement however degenerated into an anti-Brahmin group and declined thereafter.<sup>225</sup>

#### LIBRARY MOVEMENT:

The Brahma Samaj leaders in Andhra had set up a number of schools and libraries including the famous Ram Mohan Library in Vijayawada. In the 1920s, Kaleswara Rao and Harisarvothama Rao, Congress leaders supported the library movement. It was Ayyanki Venkatramanayya who was responsible for the spread of the movement throughout Andhra.<sup>226</sup> With support from Vijayawada's politicians and traders, he started movement for setting up schools and libraries in the villages of Andhra. At the height of the movement between 1930-40, hundreds of villages were covered by the movement and it became a symbol of rejuvenation for Andhra culture.<sup>227</sup>

The popularity of the movement attracted Kamma peasants. From the 1940s the presidentship of the movement went to Kamma hands and it is so to this day.<sup>228</sup> The Kammās saw in the movement a potential for acquiring literacy and at the same time gain prestige as patrons of education and literature.

### **JAI ANDHRA MOVEMENT:**

The 'Jai Andhra' movement of 1973 articulated a demand for creating a separate state consisting of the Andhra region of Andhra Pradesh. 'Jai Andhra' movement was led by landlords and their urban associates, and also constituted a response to the Programme of land reforms that hurt the interests of landlords.<sup>229</sup> The lack of a leadership of the movement led to its decline into a violent agitation which targeted government property. The opposition to the movement by the CPI led to conflicts between the two groups in Vijayawada during 1973.<sup>230</sup>

### **KAPUNADU:**

Kapunadu is a conglomeration of several castes who came together and began calling themselves as Kapus. The term was first used to denote an assembly of Kapus in 1985 when members of Kapu, Ontari and Baliya castes came together for a conference in Vijayawada.<sup>231</sup> V. Ranga first mobilized the Kapus, who form the largest group in Vijayawada. His personal problem was posed by him as persecution of Kapus by the Kamma community. He received support from both the richer and poorer sections of the Kapu group of castes. The Kapunadu held a number of meetings throughout Andhra in 1988 and put forth demands pertaining to greater representation in politics, in education and in employment.<sup>232</sup>

The killing of Ranga saw the Kapus going on a rampage against Kammans in the coastal districts. Large scale rioting lasted for nearly a month in 1988-89. After his death, the leadership passed

into the hands of Godavari district Kapus, who were landowners and whose interests were different from those of the ordinary Kapus. The movement has split and the Vijayawada faction is now agitating for backward class status and has allied itself with the scheduled castes and other backward groups.<sup>233</sup>

The foregoing discussion indicates that Vijayawada and Krishna District were at the centre of vibrant movements for social reforms and political development. The contemporary situation of caste and party based factional violence with large scale involvement of criminal gangs, seems all the more improbable, when viewed against this background. The view presented here is that these movements initially had genuine motives of reform and progress. But different political groups from among the rich peasant class and the urban trading class/twice born castes soon infiltrated the movements in order to use them as sources of power and mobility.

While there may have been a number of reasons for the decline of various movements, the most important reasons are related to the lost of interest on the part of the movements leaders once the purpose of their involvement was fulfilled. The issues when they threatened to overthrow their own basis of power was also a major reason. Washbrook in seeking to explain the particular style of politics in the delta districts, mentions the case of Kaleswara Rao, who typically was distinguished by "his ability to batten on any public issue", which "kept him in touch with viable political

platform".<sup>234</sup> Up to 1920 many Brahman politicians played a similar role. This thesis presents the view that this style of politics came into its own after 1920, when the peasant classes entered the political arena on a large scale as in the case of Kammas in Vijayawada.

The way in which rich peasants in Vijayawada supported every movement led to the large number of social and political movements becoming part of the history of Vijayawada. However the absence of mass support for the movements and the lack of continuous support from the dominant castes/classes led to a decline of the movements. As opposition to the rich peasants classes became greater, they could no longer depend on raising 'traditional' issues and causes to mobilize people. Not only did they begin to whip up separatist sentiments as in the case of Jai Andhra movement, they were forced to take up sectarian (caste) issues in a more direct manner. They also began to directly indulge in violence as a means to maintain their dominance. This explains the apparent degeneration of the political culture of Vijayawada from the early 1970s onwards.



## Notes to Chapter V

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1. After 1956 the party headquarters shifted to the state capital-Hyderabad
2. Details are provided in the course of this chapter.
3. See P. R. Rao 1981,pp.76-85.
4. Ibid,pp.83-4.
5. Ibid,pp.94.
6. Ibid, pp.95.
7. Ibid.
8. Field notes. Most of these had joined the party in the pre-independence period.
9. P. R. Rao,op.cit.pp.107.
10. Field notes. This was the case of most political parties. Usually even politicians from nearby constituencies operated from the city.
11. On this see Dhanagare,1984,pp.142-44.
12. See Kaleswara Rao,1956.
13. Washbrook 1977,pp.182-3, and Kaleswara Rao,op. cit.
14. See Suryanarayana,pp.160-170.
15. Source:Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
16. Source:Andhra Pradesh Assembly;also interview with Lakshman Rao a Nagara leader.
17. See Suryanarayana,op.cit.pp.138-45.
18. Field notes, discussions with several leaders including Lakshman Rao and Mahbub Adam.
19. This includes the Challapalli zamindar from the district who has interests in the city.
20. Field notes; the communist leader Venkataratnam was allegedly responsible for the entry of criminals into the party; see also Janashakti,1989,pp.12-17..
21. See "Vangaveeti ".n Chapter 3.
22. Field notes. N. Sivaram Prasad, liquor contractor, builder, formerly with the Congress party and now with the TDP, and a major patron of gangs.
23. For a brief history of these conflicts see Ganesh-Banesh,1988,pp.18-21.
24. See the Hindu,dated,1 and 2 Nov.1985. ;also Hanumantha Rao,1985.
25. Hanumantha Rao,pp.262-66.
26. See Chapter 4.
27. Field notes. The actual murder took place in one of the patron's retail auto spare parts shop.

28. Janashakti, op.cit. pp. 21.
29. See report in the Hindu dated June. 27, 1993
30. See section on assembly elections in this Chapter .
31. See Chapter 3, for a description of the Kowtha family.
32. Chapter 3, . "Chennupati Family"
33. Ibid, "Jandhyala family"
34. Field notes; discussions with senior Communist leaders.  
also P. R. Rao, op.cit. pp. 117-8.
35. Ibid, pp. 118.
36. Ibid, pp. 117.
37. On Sundarayya see Sundarayya . 1979.
38. See Visaalandhra, 1992, pp. 3-7, for an early history of the communist party in Andhra.
39. Field notes; discussions with senior Communist leaders  
also see Satyanarayana, 1988, pp. 78.
40. On Ranga see Dhanagare, op.cit. pp. 142-44.
41. See Harrison, 1966, pp. 204-48, for a discussion of the Kamma domination of the CPI.
42. Rajeswara Rao was a long time Secretary-General of the CPI, and Sundarayya of the CPI(M)
43. Satyanarayana, op.cit. pp. 85-86.
44. Ibid; see also Sundarayya, 1975.
45. Sundarayya, 1975, pp. 23.
46. See Visaalandhra, op. cit, pp. 5.
47. See Chapter. 3, for details regarding these families.
48. Sundarayya, op.cit. for details.
49. P. R. Rao, op.cit. pp. 161-166.
50. Harrison, op.cit. pp. 110, 243-5.
51. This is the case of the descendants of the Katragadda and Chalasani families who were among the initial supporters of the communist party.
52. See Table 5. 3 this Chapter .
53. What little there was however was very intense. See Satyanarayana, op.cit. pp. 114-18.
54. Harrison, op.cit. pp. 231-32.
55. Interviews with key informants who were active during the period; also Janashakti, pp. 16-17.
56. Source: Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.
57. For a brief discussion of the conflicts between the two groups see Janashakti, op.cit. pp. 16-17.

58. Source:Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
59. Details in Chapter 4.
60. Ibid.
61. Field notes. Interview with Lakshman Rao.
62. Ibid.
63. The movement is more active in the Telangana region of the state than in coastal Andhra.
64. Municipal records,pp.
65. Municipal records.
66. See Table 5. 2 in this Chapter.
67. Field notes. Interview with party activists.
68. Field observation.
69. On the emergence of the T. D. P. see articles by Naidu and Shatrughna, in Matthew,1884.
70. On N. Bhaskara Rao see P.R. Rao ,op. cit,pp.185-201.
71. Source:Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
72. Most prominent was the Eenadu,whose proprietor/editor originally hailed from Vijayawada,but is now based in Hyderabad.
73. The party is still widely regarded as being supported by the BCs in the state.
74. Field notes. Interview with key informants.
75. He got elected from Kankipadu, neighbouring Vijayawada.
- 76 First Information Report filed by the police in the Radha murder case.
77. Field notes; also see Janashakti, op.cit.pp.25 and Balagopal, op. cit,pp.228.
78. Field notes. This became evident in the 1985 Assembly and 1987 Municipal elections when the TDP lost badly.
79. See section on "Kapuradu" in this Chapter .
80. Details in Chapter 6.
81. Field observation.
82. Interview with several Kamma intellectuals.
83. See Table 5. 3.
84. Source:Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
85. Table 5. 2.
86. The United Students Organization is supported by the TDP and is active in many colleges . It is a recruiting ground for the youth wing of the party and of gangs.

87. Field notes. Interview with key informants.
88. The RSS is the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh; see Anderson and Donle, 1988.
89. Field notes; Interview with senior communist leaders; see also Ganesh-Ramesh, 1989, pp. 9. and interview with Satyanarayana.
90. Interview with senior communist leaders.
91. Ibid.
92. Municipal records.
93. Source: Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.
94. Field notes. Interview with Nagara leaders.
95. Venkaiah Naidu, a former MLA and currently a Member of Parliament.
96. Field notes. Interview with key informants including some BJP activists.
97. Field notes. Discussions with members of the ATA.
98. Field notes; Vijayawada's citizens are very conscious of the fact and it is often articulated at all public fora.
99. Field observation; for a description of one such event which created a lot of tension in the city, see Janashakti, op.cit. pp. 23-24.
100. Vijayawada Directory, op.cit. pp. 33.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid, pp. 33-37.
103. Ibid.
104. Ibid; also interview with key informants.
105. List from Ibid, pp. 33-37.
106. Municipal records.
107. Outline Development Plan, 1988, pp. 72.
108. Suryanarayana, op.cit. pp. 21.
109. This included a prominent member of the Katragadda family.
110. For instance the Chennupati family.
111. Municipal records.
112. Ibid.
113. Ibid.
114. Vijayawada Directory, op.cit.; field notes.
115. From the list in Ibid, pp. 33-37.
116. This was the Koutha family.
117. See Chapter 3, the Pothina family.
118. These were Appalasastry and Chitti.

119. See Spatial Aspects of Violence in Chapter 8.
120. See Table 5. 2.
121. From the list obtained from Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.
122. For a brief description see Janashakti, op.cit. pp. 21.
123. Field notes. Interview with Ganapati Rao, a senior communist leader.
124. Field notes. The conclusion is based on records of the candidates elected to the Municipal Corporation.
125. Field notes.
126. Suryanarayana, op.cit. pp. 138-40..
127. Field notes. These became evident from a study of Municipal Council Minutes during the period.
128. Field notes. Interview with a senior Nagara leaders
129. Baker, 1975, pp. 120.
130. Field notes; see minutes of the meeting held on 30. 4 1933.
131. Minutes of municipal meetings held during 1933.
132. See Janashakti, op.cit. pp. 9, for a discussion on trade union activities in the transport sector.
133. Field notes. He was allegedly part of a group involved in the killing of two brothers working for Venkataratnam in the CPI and in his gangs.
134. Municipal records.
135. Field notes. Interview with some of Venkatanarayana's followers.
136. Municipal records.
137. Source: Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
138. Kaleswara Rao op.cit.
139. Source: Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
140. For details see Harrison, op .cit. pp. 204 245.
141. Source: Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
142. Table 5. 3.
143. Source: Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
144. See description of the Jai Andhra movement in this Chapter .
145. The Chennupati family, Chapter 3.
146. Field notes. Though not active in politics, he is still active in the co-operative movement in Krishna and Guntur districts.
147. Source: Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
148. See Sundarayya, op.cit.
149. Field notes. Over the last five years this group has been

- involved in a number of minor and major group clashes and acts of violence.
150. See Singh, 1984, for details of voting patterns of various parties.
  151. Source: Andhra Pradesh Assembly.
  152. Washbrook, op.cit.pp.
  153. Veblen, 1965, pp.58-8.
  154. Ibid.
  155. This is reflected in several discussions with informants in the city.
  156. On the Justice Party see Irschick 1977 ; also see Srinivas, 1972, pp.42. 103-11.
  157. T. Ramaswamy, the rationalist poet was one of the moving spirits behind this.
  158. See below, Social and Political Movements in Vijayawada.
  159. Ibid.
  160. Some of these were very transient movements observed during field work.
  161. This was frequently observed during field work.
  162. Durkheim, 1979.
  163. Becker, 1967, pp.15-16.
  164. Merton, 1967, pp.186-93.
  165. On this see especially, Dickey, 1992.
  166. Field notes. Discussions with persons in the film industry; this fact becomes evident even from a random selection of major film personalities.
  167. Source: Vijayawada Film Chamber of Commerce.
  168. Field notes. A representative sample of the names of fans associations is given in the appendix.
  169. Field notes. The association is for Vijayashanti, reportedly the highest paid actress in Telugu cinema.
  170. Field notes. Interviews with the owners of a few cinema halls.
  171. Field notes. Interview with Ganapati Rao.
  172. He may belong to the same party, caste, etc.
  173. These were observed during field work.
  174. Veblen, op.cit.pp.xix.
  175. Field notes. Interview with Murthy, a long time resident of the city.
  176. This includes a degree college named after D. Gandhi a gang leader.

177. This was observed on many occasions during field work.
178. Field observation.
179. Those who are convicted usually manage to get themselves acquitted on appeal to a higher court. This was the case for instance of C. Seshagiri Rao and his wife, C. Vidya.
180. As many as 152 policemen were transferred.
181. This was observed many times even during field work
182. See Chapter 4.
183. See Chapter 1, for Harrison's comments.
184. This comes out clearly in Census reports as well as in the study by Prakasa Rao, op.cit. Table 2.11.
185. Field notes; also see Chapter 6, for more details.
186. Field notes; this is a general perception of several informants, including pilgrimage tour operators.
187. Field notes; during the months of December and February, for instance, due to this reason, it becomes very difficult to travel to and from the city.
188. Field notes. Interview with some key informants.
189. See Ramakrishna 1984, for details.
190. Ibid,
191. Field notes. On Naidu see R. Venkataratnam Naidu, Telugu University, Hyderabad, 1991.
192. Towns like Rajahmundry and Kakinada for instance had good educational institutions.
193. Field notes. Interview with some communist leaders and with Lavanam, the atheist leader.
194. See P.R. Rao, op.cit. pp. 106.
195. See Ramanuja Rao, 1980, pp. 345.
196. Field notes. See P. R. Rao, op.cit. appendix, for brief references to these leaders.
197. P. R. Rao, op.cit. pp. 85
198. Ibid, pp. 95-7, 105-6.
199. Ramanuja Rao, op.cit., pp. 561.
200. P. R. Rao, op.cit., pp. 117.
201. Ibid, pp. 118.
202. Field notes; interview with senior Communist leaders; also see Dhanagare, 1980, 140-42.
203. Visaalandhra, 1992, pp. 135-38.
204. Sundarayya, op.cit., pp. 139-76.
205. Field notes. This is the Moghulrajapuram area.
206. Sundarayya, op.cit.

207. Harrison, op. cit., pp. 204-45.
208. Field notes. Discussions with activists of the group.
209. See "Jai Andhra movement" below.
210. Ramanuja Rao, op. cit., pp. 171-221.
211. Ibid., pp. 236-61.
212. Ibid.
213. P. R. Rao, op. cit., pp. 121.
214. Ramanuja Rao, op. cit., pp. 405-17.
215. See also Harrison, op. cit., pp. 213.
216. Ramanuja Rao, op. cit., pp. 279, and P. R. Rao, op. cit., pp. 121-24.
217. Field notes. The Vice Chancellor of the Andhra university at the time was a Reddy, rivals of the Kamma caste.
218. Visaalandhra, op. cit., pp. 9.
219. See Robb, 1980, pp. 76, for details regarding Gora; also see Gora, 1976.
220. Gora, Ibid., pp. 23.
221. The Chennupati family.
222. Field notes. Discussions with activists of the atheist movement.
223. Field notes; perception of Gora's son, the current leader of the movement.
224. Field notes. interview with Subba Rao, a communist atheist.
225. For details see T. Ramaswamy Chowdary, Telugu University, Hyderabad, 1991.
226. See Sarada, 1978.
227. Ibid.
228. Field notes. Paturi Nagabushana Rao and his daughter Sarada have been leading the movement since the 1950s.
229. See Hanumantha Rao, op. cit., pp. 262-66.
230. Field notes; discussions with communist leaders; also see Visaalandhra, op. cit., pp. 11.
231. File on Kapunadu in Newstime Reference Bureau; also Balagopal, op. cit., pp.
232. File on "Kapunadu" in Newstime Reference Bureau, Hyderabad.
233. Field notes. The leader of the Kapunadu movement in the city has resigned from the Congress party and is now a member of the BSP.
234. Washbrook, 1973, pp. 523.



**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."<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup> Scholars have shown that there is no concomitant relationship between city size and crime rates.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup> This occurred especially in the Kothapeta area and Nagaras were the main persons involved.<sup>10</sup> They were also involved in distribution of illicit liquor. There were several killings over petty incidents among the Nagara community in this period.<sup>11</sup>

A Nagara liquor contractor was responsible for several murders before he was himself killed.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> The Kammass 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.<sup>14</sup> After several other clashes, in 1933, a major incident occurred as Appalaswamy's man attacked Congress councilors during a municipal session.<sup>15</sup>

After the decline of the Justice party, the lumpen groups joined the Congress party and began to launch attacks on the emerging communist party.<sup>16</sup> 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,"<sup>17</sup> especially for involving women in public activities. These men belonged to religious *sabhas* and *bhajan mandalis*.<sup>18</sup>

## 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.<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> Between 1948 and 1951, when the movement was withdrawn, at least five activists were killed in the city.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup>

In 1948, in the aftermath of the assassination of Gandhi, the CPI clashed with RSS activists attempting to foment rioting in Vijayawada.<sup>24</sup> 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. Sriramulu fasted unto death in Madras city.<sup>25</sup> 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.<sup>26</sup> After Sriramulu's death, violent outbursts occurred across Andhra. Vijayawada was the centre for training

youth to agitate for a separate state.<sup>27</sup> After initial attacks on police, crowds partially destroyed the railway station and looted goods from several goods trains stranded in Vijayawada.<sup>28</sup> 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.<sup>29</sup> 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.<sup>30</sup> 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.<sup>31</sup> 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.<sup>32</sup> Attempts by Kamma patrons to eliminate those gang leaders who were becoming powerful, further intensified collective violence.<sup>33</sup>

Two major riots occurred during this period. A movement for a steel plant in Andhra degenerated into a congress faction fight in the city.<sup>34</sup> Local Kamma leaders led attacks on public property as well as on the followers of Sanjeeva Reddy's faction.<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup> There were clashes between the factions and with the CPI which opposed separation.<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup>

#### 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.<sup>39</sup> Kammals 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.<sup>40</sup> 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.<sup>41</sup>

The period saw a proliferation of gangs, an expansion of illegal enterprises and of consolidation of Kamma leadership in different spheres, especially in politics.<sup>42</sup>

#### 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.<sup>43</sup> A few other major gang leaders have also been killed.<sup>44</sup> 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.<sup>45</sup>

Vijayawada emerged as a centre for the Kapu caste to launch their movement for mobility, through political and constitutional means.<sup>46</sup> 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 Kammas and TDP activists.<sup>47</sup> 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.<sup>48</sup> 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 Kammas 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.<sup>49</sup>

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.<sup>50</sup> 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 1926 and 1992 and that are taken up for discussion in this chapter are presented in a brief manner in Table 6.1.



# MAJOR INCIDENTS OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE IN VIJAYAWADA 1926 - 1992.

DATE	DETAILS	LOCATION
1926	Intimidation of voters and rigging by Justice Party supported lumpen gangs led by Appalaswamy, during provincial elections.	Old Town
April, 30, 1933	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.	Municipality building
1942	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.	Kothapeta Governorpeta
January, 30&31 1948	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.	Gandhinagar Governorpeta parts of old town.
1948-51	Five CPI activists killed in different incidents involving attacks by the police acting in collusion with the Congress Party.	Mogulrajpuram Governorpeta old town.
December 16	Attacks by some CPI and Congress	Old town

1952	cadre as well as common people on public property, on the police and	Gandhi Nagar Railway station
	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 hutments and houses	Bhaskararaopeta
	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.	Bhramaramba puram, Pezzonipet.
31 October to 2 November 1966	Rioting by crowds demanding location of a steel plant in Andhra. In	Gandhinagar Railway station
	Vijayawada, rioting is targeted by one congress faction against another. Attack public property and persons of opposing faction.	Governorpet Bander Road.
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.	Gandhi Nagar Governorpet
January 16, 1969	V.Poornachandra Rao, a Kamma Faction leader and Panchayat Samiti President of Kankipadu, killed by a rival Kamma faction.	Labbipet

1970	<p>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.</p>	Giripuram
<p>July 13 1972</p>	<p>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.</p>	Bandar road
<p>24 December 1972 2 January 1973</p>	<p>Riots as part of a movement for a separate Andhra State. On 24, December attempts to stop a procesion by the chief minister led to rioting physical clashes and destruction of public property. 8 Person killed in police firing.</p> <p>On 2, January, a bandh (general strike) truned violent resulting in destruction of property and physical clashes with CPI activists opposing seperation; 10 killed in police firing.</p>	<p>Elure road Governorpet Gandhi Nagar Mogulrajpuram Mochavaram</p>
July 1974	<p>Attacks on CPI activists and their homes, and party offices in several areas as retaliation for killing of agang member belonging to Radha's gang.</p>	<p>Old town Krishna lanka Gandhi Nagar Bhaskarraopet Governorpet, Pezzonipet</p>
July,4 1974	<p>Munuswany, a gang activist of Radha's</p>	

	group, killed by nine members of a CPI affiliated gang in retaliation for a murder of one of their members.	Patanata
October, 28 1974	V. Radha, a gang leader and four of his associates killed partly in retaliaiton for attacks on CPI activists and for becoming a threat to the city's business elites. Attack coordianted by CPI activists and prominent businessmen.	Governorpet
December, 12 1979	D. Gandhi, a gang leader, former assocated of Radha and curent rival of his brother Ranga, killed by Ranga's group during students union election. 3 others injured.	Loyola college
May 16, 1980	4 killed as part of clashes between rival gangs.	Payaka puram
Nov.5 & 6 1980	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.	Gunadala
August 26 1982	Clashes between Congres and Lok Dal workers as rival procession came face to face. Several, including two ministers injured.	Bandur road
21 October 1985	P. Dasaratharan, an editor of a so called 'Yellow Journal' killed allegedly by Congress supported gang for writing exposures on ruling political leaders.	Governorpet

March 18	8 persons injured in clashes between rival TDP and Congress activists and associated gang members municipal elections.	Gunadala
March 22, 24,25 1987	Clashes between police and <i>pan</i> shop owners during raids against pornographic literature and sale of yellow journals.	Gandhi-nagar
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.	Suryarao peta
March, 10	D. Murali, brother of Nehru and a youth leader of TDP, killed by a groups of ten persons allegely at the behest of Ranga.	Chilakaluripet
1988		
March, 12 1988	Attacks on building and property of Congress activistis and members of Ranga's gangs in the wake of the funeral procession of Murali.	Along the road from Prakasan barrage to Gunadala.
December, 26 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.	Bandur Road
December 26-31 1988	In the wake of Ranga's murder, rioting and looting by Congress activists, Kapus, Rangas gang members, as well as ordinary people.	

Major bout of rioting on 28th, followed by continuous stray incidents for the next few days. Violence is mainly targeted against the Kammass community and other opponents of Ranga, the police and the state.

March, 25 1991	K. Venkatanarayana, an CPI leader, corporator and allegedly a gang leader, killed by a 9 member rival Congress affiliated gang.	Krishna Lanka
April, 1, 1991	One killed and five injured in clashes members of the Relli community and Muslims and subsequent police firing.	Wynchpet
May 21 & 22 1992	Rioting and looting in the wake of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi former prime minister of India.	S.N.Puran, Payakapuram. Ajitsingh naga
	Attempt to repeat 1988 pattern by targetting Kammass 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 1992	G. Venkateswara Reddy, Ex CPI(M) leader and a gang leader and two of his associates killed by a rival TDP affiliated gang.	Patamata

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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 than 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.<sup>51</sup> 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.<sup>52</sup> 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.<sup>53</sup> 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 become transformed into a rioting mob.<sup>54</sup>

## 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.<sup>55</sup> 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.<sup>56</sup>

### 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.<sup>57</sup> 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, political 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 group of persons. This has been seen especially in efforts to evict slum dwellers by builders using gangs.<sup>58</sup> 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.<sup>59</sup> 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.<sup>60</sup> In recent years, attempts to remove the slum on hill slopes has taken the shape of engineered landslides.<sup>61</sup> In the early 1970s, attempts to clear one of the oldest and largest slums - Giripuram involved direct physical violence.<sup>62</sup> 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.<sup>63</sup> 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 Kammas 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.<sup>64</sup> 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.<sup>65</sup> 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.<sup>66</sup> More

recently TDP, CPI and congress workers have clashed both during municipal and legislative elections and during other times.<sup>67</sup> 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.<sup>68</sup>

#### 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.<sup>69</sup> 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.<sup>70</sup> 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.<sup>71</sup> 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.<sup>72</sup> 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.

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 Kammias 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.<sup>73</sup>

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, Kammias have acquired leadership and patronage of almost all kinds of groups.<sup>74</sup> 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.<sup>75</sup>

Table 6.2

TYPES OF COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE:1926-1992

Riots	14
Group Clashes	12
Organized attacks on specific targets	28

VIOLENCE BETWEEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF GROUPS

Caste Conflicts	6
Gang Violence	18
Political conflicts	8
Others	22

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.<sup>76</sup>

Contrary to some sociological writings, gangs in Vijayawada are not 'elementary' organizations which "spontaneously" emerge.<sup>77</sup> 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.<sup>78</sup> 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.<sup>79</sup> 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.<sup>80</sup> 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.<sup>81</sup> 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".<sup>82</sup> 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<sup>83</sup>

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.<sup>84</sup>

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 Kammass. In the 1980s, conflicts reflect the aspirations of rising lower class groups whose mobility was blocked by both Kamma and Vaisya commercial groups.<sup>85</sup>

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 Kammass 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.<sup>86</sup> 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.<sup>87</sup>

### 3. TRADE UNIONS:

Vijayawada has a large number of trade unions. Almost each sector of the economy is unionized.<sup>88</sup> 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.<sup>89</sup> 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 be 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.<sup>90</sup>

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.<sup>91</sup> 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".<sup>92</sup> 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;<sup>93</sup> 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.<sup>94</sup> 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.<sup>95</sup>

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.<sup>96</sup> Later studies by historians and sociologists have shown that riot participants are often ordinary citizens who acts deliberately, and perform planned acts of violence.<sup>97</sup> 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.<sup>98</sup> 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.<sup>99</sup> 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.<sup>100</sup> 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.<sup>101</sup> Construction workers, transport workers and mutha labour have been the main participants in looting.<sup>102</sup> 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.<sup>103</sup>

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.<sup>104</sup> 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.<sup>105</sup> 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.<sup>106</sup> 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.<sup>107</sup> 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.<sup>108</sup> 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.<sup>109</sup> In 1973, hostility was directed towards a government procession. Only after the police firing, did the leadership lose control.<sup>110</sup> 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".<sup>111</sup> It has "no established organization, division of labour, recognized leadership, set of norms and no body of rules to guide its behaviour".<sup>112</sup> 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.<sup>113</sup> In targeting objects of hatred, they were careful not to target others in the vicinity.<sup>114</sup> 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.<sup>115</sup> Violence is seen as a reasonable and legitimate response to situations. As Tilly states, violence is often effective.<sup>116</sup> 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.<sup>117</sup> 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.<sup>118</sup>

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.<sup>119</sup> 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.<sup>120</sup> 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.<sup>121</sup> 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.<sup>122</sup> In 1966, a movement for a steel plant in Andhra, became focused on the rival faction led by Sanjeeva Reddy, then a union minister.<sup>123</sup> 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 Kammass 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 Kammass 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

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 Kammass was observed. In finding out the reasons for this hatred, the outline for this thesis emerged, especially ideas pertaining to the provincial class - the Kammass, 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 1966, in CPI - Congress clashes in 1973 and in TDP-Congress conflicts in 1988 and 1991.<sup>124</sup> 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.<sup>125</sup> 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.<sup>126</sup> 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.<sup>127</sup>

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 hostility.

i. Attractiveness of merchandise:

A majority of the attacks on retail outlets in 1988 were concentrated in Gandhnagaer 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 from 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.<sup>128</sup>

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.<sup>129</sup> 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 nearby slums mainly participated in attacks on households and shops, mainly with the intention of looting.<sup>130</sup>

A survey of the patterns for selection of targets indicates, that only rarely as in 1964-65, 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

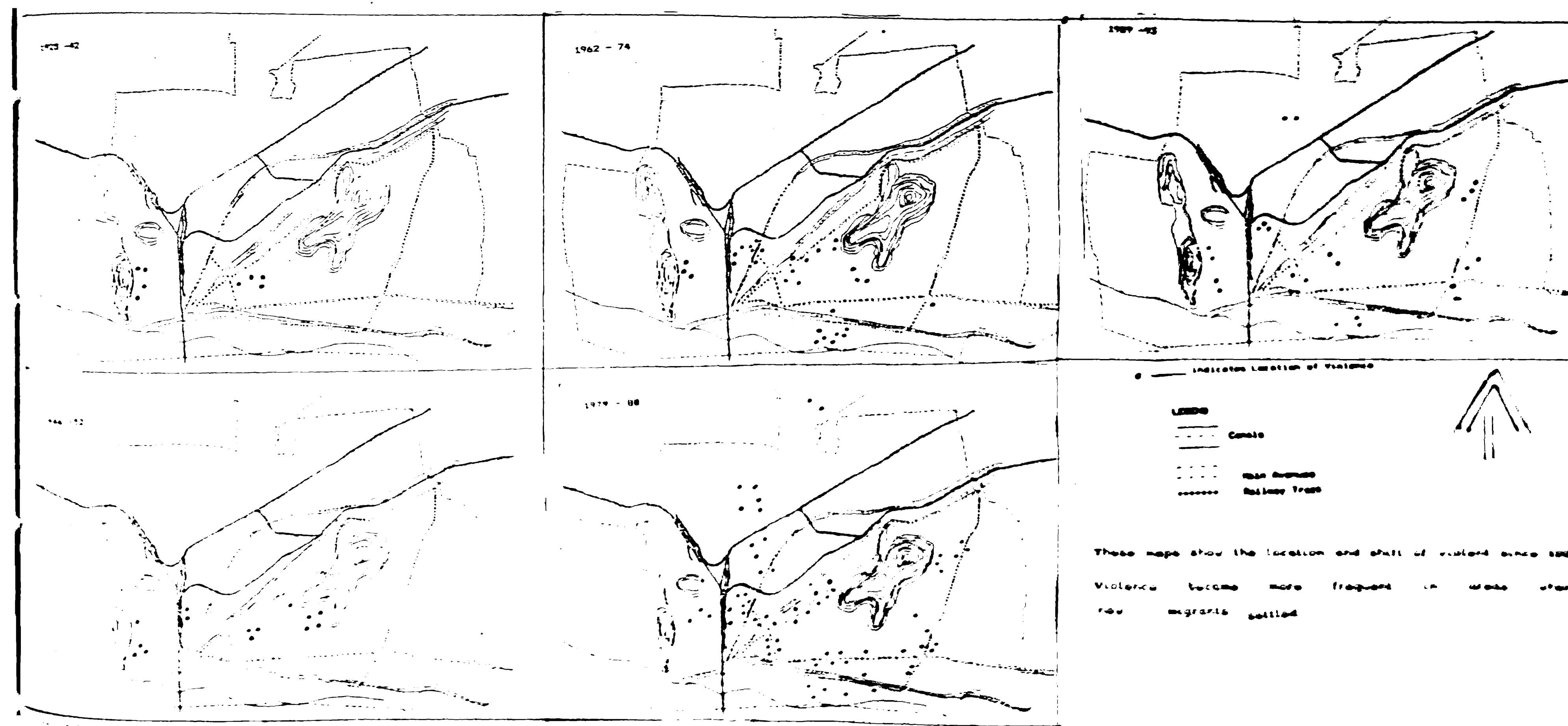
Historically, shifts have occurred in the spatial aspects of violence. These shifts paralleled the growth and development of the city. Changes in the location of incidents of violence can be observed in the different historical periods discussed earlier. It is shown in the following pages that first 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.<sup>131</sup> 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 Bhaskara<sub>y</sub>aopet became a major centre for criminal activities and violence.<sup>132</sup> 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: 1926 - 1992

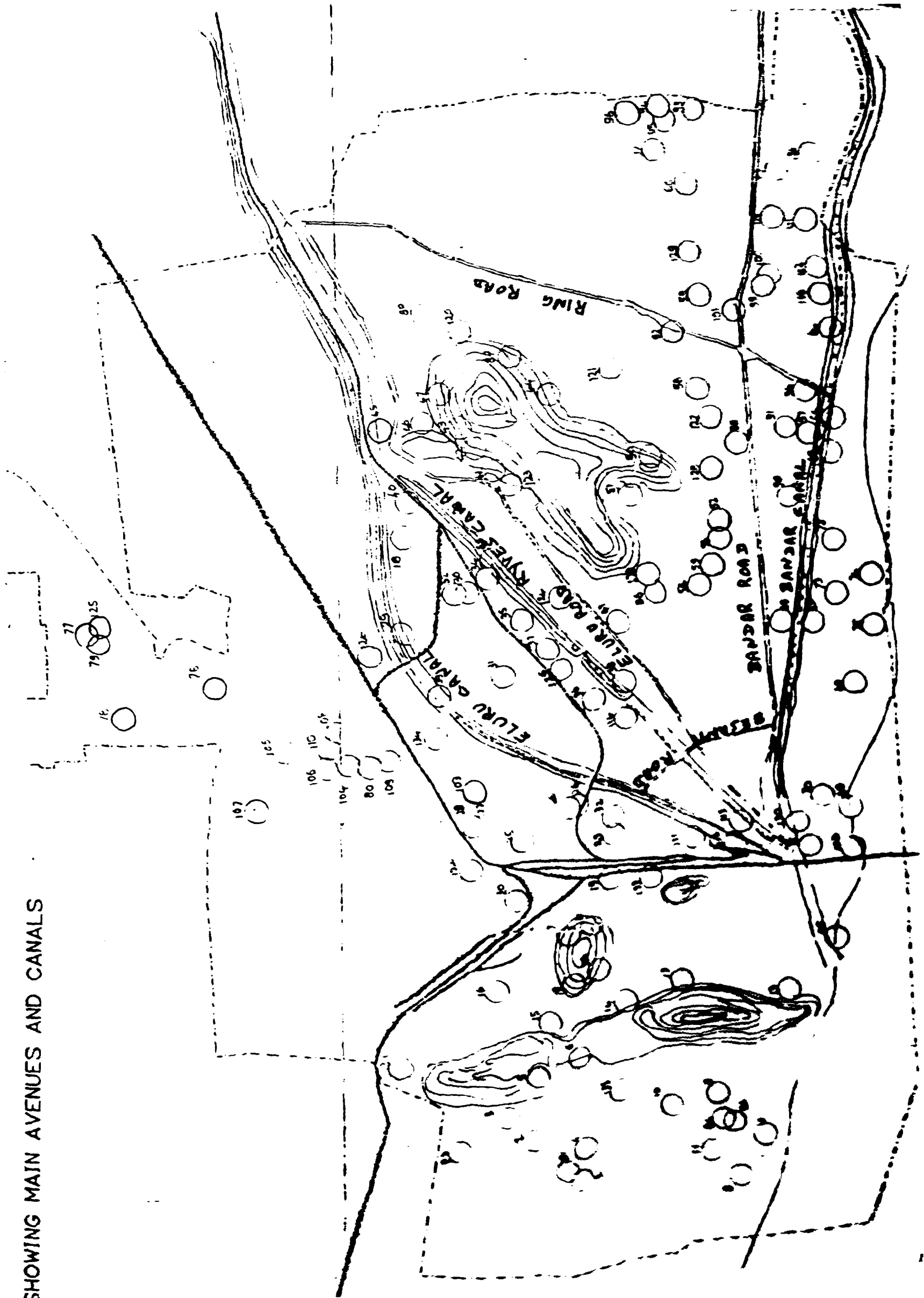


trade, unions and gangs, made the slums a fertile ground for crime and violence and group clashes. In the 1970s and 1980s, in addition to Gandhinagar and Governorpet, newly developed areas, especially Kamma residential areas such as Patamata and Gunadala and areas adjoining Eluru Road became centres for collective violence. Krishna Lanka, a residential area for rich Kammans and poor Kapus as well as other castes also became a major centre for gangs, and for violence.<sup>133</sup>

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 area as both the Justice party (between 1920-35) and the Congress party recruited many of these lumpen youth into their parties.<sup>134</sup> 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 Nagara is held to be the first martyr from the city during the crackdown on communists in 1946-50 in the aftermath of the Telangana struggle.<sup>135</sup>

MAP NO.7

MAP SHOWING MAIN AVENUES AND CANALS



Source: Overseas Development Authority, Vijayawada.

From the late 1930s and 1940s, both Kammals and Brahmins began to settle in the emerging new town, in areas like Gandhinagar, Governorpet and Moghulrajapuram. 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.<sup>136</sup>

By 1970, areas like Patamata and Gunadala had developed from agricultural areas to urban settlements, part of Vijayawada urban agglomeration. These were predominantly rich peasant residential

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, these two localities along with Moghulrajapuram, Krishna Lanka, Gandhinagar and Governorpet were the main centres of violence.<sup>137</sup> These were the

where new types of economic activities promoted by the rich community were located. Illegal economic activities

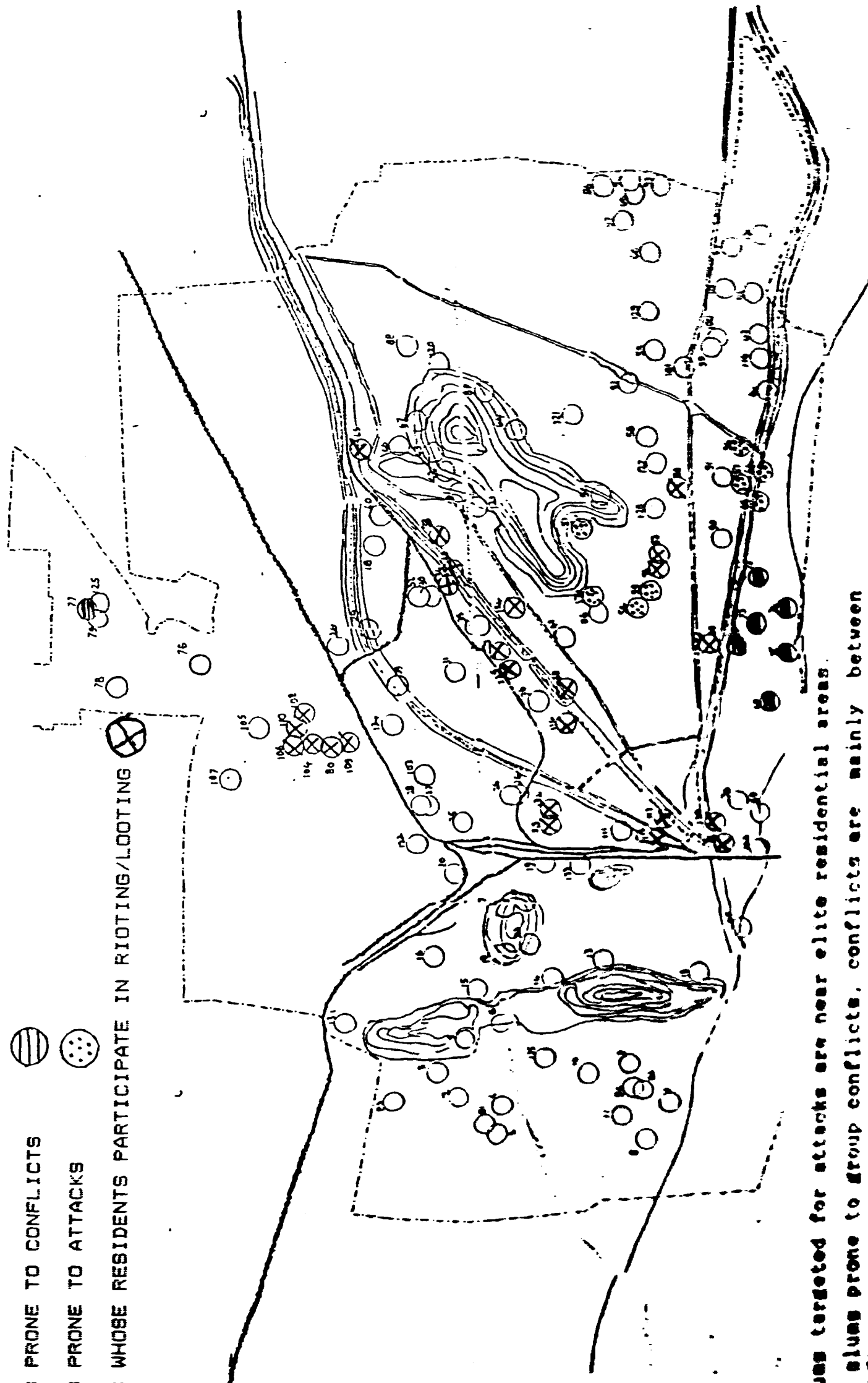
Various criminal gangs were also concentrated in these areas, all located in the eastern half of the city. Thus over period of time parallel with urban growth and migration, the entire range of collective violence shifted from the western half to the eastern half of the city.

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.<sup>138</sup> In Indian metropolitan cities, generally the newer parts of the city have not experienced frequent violent incidents.<sup>139</sup> 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 throughfares, 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: Information from the map is provided by the Department of Urban Development, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India.

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 Kmmas own commercial enterprises, hotels, cinema Halls etc.<sup>140</sup>

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.<sup>141</sup> 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.<sup>142</sup> 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.<sup>143</sup> Most of these areas are under the control of the major gangs in Vijayawada. These are also either the residential areas

for rich Kmmas 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

Year	Details	In Viyawada City	In the slum areas
1964	Number of Incidents	117	28
	House Destroyed		
	1. Thatched	1316	1002
	2. Tiled	21	13
	3. Terraced	15	5
1965	Number of Incidents	97	27
	House Destroyed		
	1. Thatched	270	59
	2. Tiled	2	0
	3. Terraced	5	0
1966	Number of Incidents	19	3
	House Destroyed		
	1. Thatched	1965	1182
	2. Tiled	10	6
	3. Terraced	6	5

These fire accidents were actually a result of group conflicts.

Table 6.4.

Locations of Rioting and Looting in the December 1988 riots	Locations of Gang Violence
--	----------------------------

1. Bandar Road
2. Eluru Road
3. Ring Road
4. Besant Road
5. Canal Road
6. Gandhi Nagar
7. Governorpeta
8. Gunadala
9. Krishna Lanka
10. Patamata
11. Hanumanpet
12. Ramavarappadu

1. Gandhi Nagar
2. Governorpet
3. Suryaraopet
4. Krishna Lanka
5. Patamata
6. Gunadala
7. Ring Road
8. Bandar Road
9. Eluru Road.



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.<sup>144</sup>

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 Kammass 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.<sup>145</sup> 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.<sup>146</sup>

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 latter's 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.

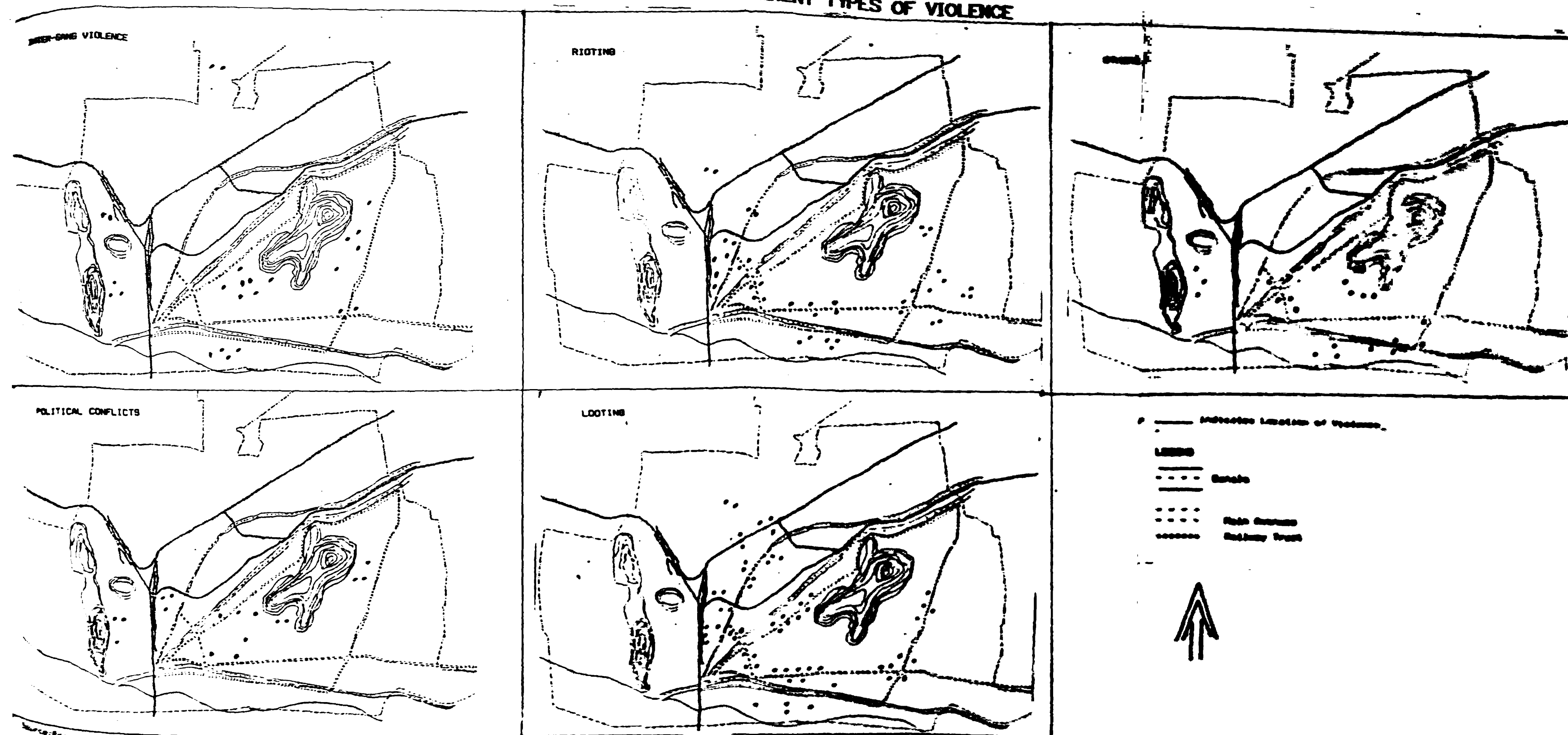
Gandhinagar with its prosperous commercial establishments, especially the film industry being located here, has been a strong base for a number of gangs. These gangs find sustenance from a large number of small slums in the area whose residents are some of the oldest migrants to Vijayawada.<sup>147</sup> 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

MAP No. 9  
LOCATION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE



Source: Prepared from base map provided by Overseas Development  
Company, Washington.

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:<sup>148</sup>

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 have to 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 Kamma 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 Kammars 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 Eluru 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 from 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

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.<sup>149</sup> 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.<sup>150</sup> Rival gangs whose leaders hold political positions within the Congress continue to clash even now.<sup>151</sup>

### 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 Kammars and Brahmins/Vaisyas.<sup>152</sup> 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 Kammas, 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.<sup>153</sup> 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.<sup>154</sup> In 1988, the violence following Ranga Rao's killing articulated and united Kapu interests in a much better way than was possible earlier.<sup>155</sup>

Even in the case of inter gang violence, violent action against opponents is also means for mobilization, 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.<sup>156</sup> 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.<sup>157</sup> These are just some violent examples of a larger process of mobilization. Just as Kammas 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".<sup>158</sup> "Hostile outbursts" were legitimized by "generalized beliefs" which encouraged illegal acts and violence by powerless groups.<sup>159</sup>

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."<sup>160</sup> 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".<sup>161</sup> Collective violence arises "when a group acts to defend or extend their own interests against others".<sup>162</sup> 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".<sup>163</sup> 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.<sup>164</sup>

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.<sup>165</sup> They were not spontaneous; on the other hand they were well organised, 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.<sup>166</sup> 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<sup>167</sup> 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".<sup>168</sup> 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, 1980, pp. 685. Also see Chapter I for a brief discussion.
2. For a discussion of their views see Chapter I.
3. Snelser, 1963.
4. Tilly, 1981.
5. Data obtained from National Crime Records Bureau. Table is give in the appendix Table 8.7. .
6. Venugopala Rao, 1978, pp. 143.
7. See the views of Spencer outlined in Chapter I.
8. Table 8.7 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.
14. Kaleswara Rao, 1956.
15. Minutes of the Council meeting, 30. April 1933.
16. Field notes. Interviews with Lakshman Rao, Mahbub Adam and Satyanarayana.
17. The term is used by Tilly in Tilly, <sup>et al</sup> pp. 249-250, 1975
18. See Janashakti, 1988, pp. 12.
19. For details see Sundarayya, 1977.
20. Ibid.
21. Field notes. Discussions with senior communist leaders.
22. Field notes; see also Vissalandhra, 1982 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.
25. Details in P. R. Rao, 1981, pp. 125-3.
26. See Harrison, 1968, pp. 234-7.
27. Ramannja Rao, 1981, pp. 465-78.

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, 1980, pp. 248.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid. pp. 262-66.
37. Field notes; discussion with CPI leaders.
38. Hanumantha Rao, op.cit. pp. 263.
39. Field notes. In this case it was V. Ranga Rao.
40. Field notes. It found open expression when the Congress party Kapu 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 Kammus in the political sphere, see preceding Chapter .
43. Both were elected in the 1989 elections - his wife from Vijayawada East and his brother from Vuyyuru 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 .
51. See Ramaswamy Iyer, 1958.
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, 1988 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 1990s.
59. See the incidents listed in Table 6. 1.
60. Such incidents occurred as recently as in 1992.
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.
69. Tilly, op.cit., pp. 249.
70. See Chapter III.
71. A notable incident of a street brawl turning into a riot took place in 1992.
72. Tilly, op.cit. "Conclusion".
73. See Chapter III, section on Kamma, 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 Ramarajam, 1989.
77. Miller, 1980, pp. 359-360.
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 climaxed during the 1988 riots and subsequent incidents of violence.

84. Field notes. Information collected from various sources regarding gangs currently operating.
85. This is the reason for the prominent role of Kapus in the politics of Vijayawada in this period.
86. This was the case of all non-kamma gang leaders.
87. The 1966 and 1973 incidents are discussed in Chapter V for details of incidents in the 1980s see Ganesh-Ramesh, 21-29.
88. Field notes. Discussions with trade union leaders, especially of the AITUC.
89. 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.
90. These were mainly by rickshaw pullers and Road Transport Corporation workers.
91. Hirst, op.cit. pp. 52.
92. Ibid, pp. 53.
93. Field notes. Interview with Ganapati Rao.
94. This was D. Gandhi, killed during students union elections in 1979.
95. Field notes. Based on an analysis of participants in various incidents in the period.
96. For a discussion on this see Milgram, op.cit. and Chapter I of this thesis.
97. Lynch. 1981, pp. 1426.
98. Field notes. Based on knowledge obtained regarding affiliations of various gang leaders.
99. Field notes. The Mayor was A. Ramulu of the CPI(M), and the MLAs included V. Ranga Rao and D. Rajanathar.
100. Field notes. See "1988 Riots" below.
101. Field notes. Discussions with key informants.
102. Ibid.
103. For a description see Prasad, 1981, pp. 51-52.
104. According to some reports they mainly consisted of Vaidharas and other low caste groups.
105. Field notes. Based on an analysis of past and present leaders and current activists in the parties.
106. Field notes. Discussions with a few activists.
107. Field notes. Discussions with a few activists, and others.

108. Field notes. The exceptions are the leaders of the larger gangs.
109. See details in "The 1988 riots", this Chapter.
110. Ibid.
111. Blumer, 1969, pp. 23.
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.
116. Tilly, op.cit., pp. 281-285.
117. This aspect is very clearly perceived and articulated by the groups.
118. See comments of Spencer on these aspects in Chapter I.
119. See Saiyed, 1990, pp. 114-115.
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, 1984.
133. Field notes. This was the base for V. Ranga 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 Maidu, 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 Ganesh-Ramesh, 1989.
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 Vargaveeti 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/Kannali origin, he was also married to a Kannan.
157. Field notes. Interview with some informants who mediated in these cases.
158. Tilly, op.cit., pp. 285.
159. Smelser, op.cit. pp. 247-253.
160. Tilly, op.cit., pp. 241.
161. Ibid. pp. 85
162. Ibid.
163. Thompson, 1971, pp. 78.
164. Tilly, pp. 86.
165. Ibid.
166. Thompson, 1971. and Lynch, 1981.
167. Tilly, op.cit. and Manor, 1988.
168. Smelser, 1963, pp. 222-259.



## CONCLUSION

The endemic collective violence in the city of Vijayawada is explained in this thesis as a causal outcome of the provincial traits of the city. A summary of the typical features of a provincial city derived from descriptions provided in chapters II to VI is presented on pp.19.

A general scheme outlining the differences between a provincial and a metropolitan city based on the present study and generalized from available literature, is provided here. The conclusion that can be drawn from the details provided in chapters II and III is that the city of Vijayawada owes its growth and importance to the migration of a rich peasant class (in this case- the Kamma community) to the city. In its attempts to extend its rural dominant status to the city, this class followed a particular set of means which had a unique impact on the city's economy, politics, social structure, and culture.

In the provincial city, castes are much more polarised and play a greater role than in metropolitan cities. The provincial rich dominate all aspects of society. The type of participation of rich peasant entrepreneurs in the economy evolved a distinct provincial economic structure. Still largely influenced by their origins in the rural milieu, the entrepreneurs create a "lumpen economy", with little employment growth, quick rates of profitability, a large illegal sector, and high degrees of criminal participation.

**TABLE 7.1**  
**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROVINCIAL AND METROPOLITAN CITIES**

CHARACTERISTIC OR TRAIT	TYPE OF CITY	
	PROVINCIAL	METROPOLITAN
1. LOCATION	Situated away from Metropolitan areas in an agricultural hinterland.	Is part of an industrial, urban agglomeration.
2. HISTORY	Usually has a long history of existence as an urban settlement	Of fairly recent origin: usually a creation of colonial economy
3. FUNCTIONAL TYPE	Trade, commerce, services or transport.	Industry.
4. POPULATION GROWTH	Rate of growth is uneven, moderate growth.	High, consistent growth rate.
5. LAND USE	Traditional, less functional segregation: the rich classes continue to live in central areas.	More segregated land use, city centers have commercial establishments and slums.
6. MIGRATION	High rates of upper class in migration.	In-migration of lower classes is lower than that of lower classes.
7. NATURE OF THE DOMINANT CLASS	Social, political and economic dominance by migrant rural rich.	Not the rural rich, but local groups are socially and politically dominant.
8. TYPE OF ECONOMY	Oriented towards trade and commerce.	Industry oriented.
9. TYPE OF INDUSTRY	small scale.	Combination of large, medium and small scale
10. INVESTMENT PATTERNS	Mainly private investment. Investment channelized into sectors producing quick profits.	Government and private investment. Investment also sectors with long gestation periods.
11. IMPORTS-EXPORTS.	Exports mainly agricultural produce.	Imports agricultural products. Exports manufactured goods.
12. NATURE OF THE WORKFORCE	Largely semi-skilled and unskilled. Greater self employment in services and informal sector. More rural migrants in the workforce.	Skilled and semi-skilled workers pre-dominant. Large salariat. More urban migrants in the work-force.
13. POLITICS	Highly politicized. High participation rates for all types of political events.	Less politicized
14. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOVEMENTS	Is an important centre for various social and political movements.	Movements spill over to the city from other areas due to its importance as a seat of power.
15. GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION	Usually not an administrative or government center. Whenever administrative power is exercised in the city becomes subjected to the influence of the provincial classes.	Is usually a seat of government. The administrative role has played a major part in the city.
16. CULTURE	Not indigenous: influenced by the culture of the dominant sections of the migrant class	Indigenously developed over a long period of time. High culture

In the political arena, from the beginning, rich peasant participation in the local politics generated conflicts, often of a violent nature; their participation created and provided impetus to new political groups, each clashing with other groups.

The cultural pattern of Vijayawada bears the distinct stamp of the dominant castes - vibrant and vulgar, rich in ideas and tradition and simultaneously superficial and imitative. Cultural forms reflect mobility aspirations of the peasant classes. This is seen in the importance ascribed to status symbols, the acquisition of leadership and participation in all kinds of social / cultural movements and activities, in their life styles

The illegal sectors and criminal participation in the economy have also contributed to the generation of a culture of violence. Violence in Vijayawada is not regarded as deviant norms; on the other hand violence has become a legitimate response. Violence has become normalized due to dominant class usage of illegal acts and violence in normal everyday activity

Collective violence processes have become part of normal politics. They constitute effective means of entering or remaining in political life. Following Tilly, this thesis presents the view that collective violence arises out of struggles by groups "to acquire or maintain entrenched places in the structure of power", in the context of a provincial city. The migration of the provincial rich class to the city, as argued earlier had as its primary motive, the maintenance of its position

**Table 7.2**

**DIFFERENCES IN TYPES OF VIOLENCE BETWEEN PROVINCIAL AND METROPOLITAN CITIES**

ASPECTS ON WHICH THE NATURE OF VIOLENCE DIFFERS	PROVINCIAL	TYPE OF CITY	METROPOLITAN
1. FORM OF SOCIAL CONTROL	Non legal forms of control such as social, norms, institutions, informal groups and and formal associations have a greater influence.		Legal procedures, judicial and government institutions have a greater impact and exercise more control.
2. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES	Non judicial bodies have a greater role. This includes Political parties/leaders prominent persons, caste organizations, mafia groups.		Greater role of legal bodies.
3. USE OF LEGAL PROCEDURES	Used as a threat; used for prolonging a dispute; to ruin opponents through costly delays; used when other methods fail or cannot be used.		Used for settling disputes.
4. RESPECT FOR LAW	Less respect; casual attitude towards law. Less fear of the law. Most crimes occur in broad daylight, often in front of numerous witnesses.		More respect and fear.
5. INDEPENDENCE OF LEGAL AND JUDICIAL BODIES AND THE POLICE	Greater control of police and judiciary by social forces.		More independent judiciary and police.
6. TYPES OF GROUPS INVOLVED	Wide variety of groups involved in conflicts Political groups, caste communities, business interests criminal groups.		More numerous or continuous conflicts between diverse pairs of groups. Occasional, issue based conflict between most groups, with exceptions such as communal conflicts.

7. CONSTITUENTS AND  
SUPPORT BASE OF GROUPS.

Political activists, caste groups, businessmen/traders, lumpen elements may all constitute a specific group. More direct links between caste, politics, business and mafia.

Absence of such varied support for groups involved in violent conflicts.

8. ROLE OF CASTE

Greater impact of caste in formation of groups, selection of targets for attack reasons for violence etc.

Lesser role of caste.

9. TYPES OF VIOLENCE

Conflict is expressed in different types of violence over a period of time; rioting, individual cases of assault/ murder, and attacks on specific targets.

Mostly large scale rioting.

10. NATURE OF VIOLENCE

No spontaneous outbursts. Less incidents of mob violence. Mainly planned attacks by existing political/criminal groups.

Both spontaneous and planned rioting. More incidents of mob violence.

11. SPATIAL ASPECTS OF  
VIOLENCE

Attacks on property and person are more common in upper class residential areas and modern shopping centers, major commercial streets.

Rioting in lower, lower middle class. Residential areas. Usually upper class commercial areas are not targeted.

New parts of the city are more prone to violence.

Usually old parts of the city are more conflict prone.

in the power structure in the context of political changes. This class attempted to do this by using means similar to those used in rural areas. The way in which this class acquired dominance and the progressive decline in the status and power of entrenched groups was a primary reason for collective violence.

In course of time as other migrant groups began to mobilize themselves for social mobility the dominant peasant class used both violent and non-violent means to prevent such mobility. This process also generated violence. In the course of attaining social mobility in the city the rich peasant class began to dominate a wide variety of sectors in the economy, polity and culture. Thus violence also spread to these sectors as other groups carried their mobility struggles to these arenas. Since the primary purpose of migration to the city was to acquire political power the dominant class invested in those sectors yielding "easy money", especially in illegal sectors. This led to an escalation in the patronage of criminal elements who were already being used in the political sphere. As the dominant class in Vijayawada predominantly belong to a single caste and as they tended to use the caste idiom both in their struggles for mobility as well as in the attempts to prevent the mobility of other groups, there came about a confluence of political, caste and gang violence.

As the dominant group implemented a variety of means to retain its status and power, an ideology developed among the rest of the population that violence and illegal behavior are legitimate. In such circumstances, violence became part of

everyday political processes. Violence in Vijayawada has become part of the structured response to situations and has taken within its ambit all established institutions.

The main argument of this thesis can thus be posed briefly as follows:

The main thrust that emerges from this thesis is that the migration and rise to dominance of a rural rich community in a provincial city, generates conflicts and violence by the ways in which this class intervenes in the economy, polity and in the social movements and struggles; further, the competition and conflict generated by the struggles for mobility by other communities, especially in the context of the particular means used by the provincial class in their own course of upward mobility, also lead to collective violence.

Caste conflicts, political violence and gang wars are not unique to Vijayawada; they are a ubiquitous aspect of many other cities. However in Vijayawada, these would have been less intense and violent, were it not for the specific manner of the interventions of the provincial rich class. Their patronage of the criminal groups, their uses of political groups in their attempts to achieve and maintain dominance and finally their usage of the caste idiom in the face of mobility struggles by other caste communities created the specific mix of caste, political and gang violence that has been a characteristic feature of Vijayawada.

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**Table 8.1**

**1. Classification of Slums into Different Population Groups**

**I**

S.No.	Population	No. of Slums	Percentage
1	1 - 1000	72	52.94
2	1000 - 2000	26	19.11
3	2000 - 3000	16	11.78
4	3000 - 4000	7	5.14
5	4000 - 5000	7	5.14
6	5000 - 6000	2	1.47
7	6000 - 7000	2	1.47
8	7000 - 8000	2	1.47
9	8000 - 9000	1	0.73
10	9000 - 10000	0	0
11	10000 - 11000	1	0.73

**II**

S.No.	Population	No. of Slums	Percentage
1	1 - 2500	107	78.6
2	2501 - 5000	21	15.44
3	5001 - 7500	6	4.41
4	7501 - 10000	1	0.73
5	10000	1	0.73

**2. Slums in Vijayawada - Basic Data - 1991.**

**NUMBER OF SLUMS - 138**

**TOTAL NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS - 54, 849.**

**TOTAL SLUM POPULATION 248866.**

**AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE - 4.53.**

**AVERAGE NO. OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH SLUM - 403.30.**

**AVERAGE POPULATION IN EACH SLUM - 81630.**

**LITERACY - 21.23percent**

### 3. CASTE WISE POPULATION IN SLUMS - 1991.

CASTE CATEGORY	POPULATION (percent )
SCHEDULED CASTE	17.4
SCHEDULED TRIBE	6.0
BACKWARD CLASSES	36.4
OTHERS	40.2

### 4. ECONOMIC STATUS OF SLUM POPULATION - 1981.

S.NO.	INCOME PER MONTH	PERCENTATE IN INCOME GROUP
1.	< 90	0.28
2.	100 - 200	3.35
3.	200 - 300	13.46
4.	300 - 400	35.61
5.	400 - 500	19.32
6.	500 - 600	16.91
7.	700 >	11.07

### 5. Location of Slums

Location	No. of Slums
1. Hills	22
2. Plains	96
3. Canal Berms	18.

### 6. Basic data on Slums 1987.

No. of Households - 10547

Slum population - 48383

No. of Census Localities with slums - 11.

7. Slums Population in Vijayawada 1967 - 1991.

YEAR	NO.OF SLUMS	NO.OF HOUSEHOLDS	TOTAL SLUMS POPULATION
1967	11	10,549	48,383
1971	11		54,764
1983		21,400	1,07,000
1991	136	54,848	2,48,886

**TABLE 8.2**  
**HOUSEHOLDS AND POPULATION IN EACH SLUM - 1990**

SLUM CODE NUMBER	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION	SLUM CODE NUMBER	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION	SLUM CODE NUMBER	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION	SLUM CODE NUMBER	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	POPULATION
1	168	162	36	461	1983	71	695	2844	186	151	791
2	69	273	37	553	2216	72	2147	10764	107	70	328
3	212	1884	38	664	2975	73	1632	6934	108	77	288
4	161	676	39	177	644	74	674	2850	109	64	391
5	671	3214	40	825	4226	75	766	3310	110	72	389
6	872	4237	41	173	883	76	1198	5049	111	164	750
7	1006	4328	42	327	1633	77	1596	7400	112	87	258
8	471	2044	43	238	1189	78	131	621	113	46	193
9	97	446	44	883	3581	79	133	642	114	115	500
10	94	447	45	1170	5114	80	169	256	115	39	163
11	183	774	46	281	1338	81	139	639	116	173	756
12	457	2021	47	383	1140	82	171	685	117	96	452
13	941	4221	48	659	2806	83	338	1514	118	355	1574
14	1776	8877	49	210	992	84	46	221	119	12	56
15	1872	4995	50	912	899	85	57	214	120	165	833
16	541	2491	51	492	2118	86	89	433	121	63	306
17	928	2572	52	243	1072	87	210	986	122	64	293
18	890	2403	53	418	2048	88	155	695	123	534	2411
19	172	897	54	547	2296	89	53	226	124	78	323
20	787	3343	55	547	1924	90	59	269	125	257	1238
21	189	898	56	70	1271	91	458	1635	126	563	2611
22	428	2112	57	726	3265	92	51	216	127	24	104
23	238	1226	58	182	838	93	73	337	128	30	134
24	157	829	59	193	883	94	37	181	129	86	402
25	121	595	60	83	333	95	163	744	130	144	703
26	70	392	61	159	702	96	33	158	131	128	522
27	178	891	62	137	652	97	47	232	132	111	633
28	178	891	63	33	144	98	121	647	133	39	150
29	208	1021	64	121	523	99	397	1985	134	146	631
30	42	203	65	673	3299	100	348	1340	135	33	159
31	13	63	66	23	103	101	30	203	136	33	169
32	13	63	67	23	103	102	20	118	137	33	169
33	13	63	68	23	103	103	20	118	138	33	169
34	13	63	69	23	103	104	20	118	139	33	169
35	13	63	70	23	103	105	20	118	140	33	169
36	13	63	71	23	103	106	20	118	141	33	169
37	13	63	72	23	103	107	20	118	142	33	169
38	13	63	73	23	103	108	20	118	143	33	169
39	13	63	74	23	103	109	20	118	144	33	169
40	13	63	75	23	103	110	20	118	145	33	169
41	13	63	76	23	103	111	20	118	146	33	169
42	13	63	77	23	103	112	20	118	147	33	169
43	13	63	78	23	103	113	20	118	148	33	169
44	13	63	79	23	103	114	20	118	149	33	169
45	13	63	80	23	103	115	20	118	150	33	169
46	13	63	81	23	103	116	20	118	151	33	169
47	13	63	82	23	103	117	20	118	152	33	169
48	13	63	83	23	103	118	20	118	153	33	169
49	13	63	84	23	103	119	20	118	154	33	169
50	13	63	85	23	103	120	20	118	155	33	169
51	13	63	86	23	103	121	20	118	156	33	169
52	13	63	87	23	103	122	20	118	157	33	169
53	13	63	88	23	103	123	20	118	158	33	169
54	13	63	89	23	103	124	20	118	159	33	169
55	13	63	90	23	103	125	20	118	160	33	169
56	13	63	91	23	103	126	20	118	161	33	169
57	13	63	92	23	103	127	20	118	162	33	169
58	13	63	93	23	103	128	20	118	163	33	169
59	13	63	94	23	103	129	20	118	164	33	169
60	13	63	95	23	103	130	20	118	165	33	169
61	13	63	96	23	103	131	20	118	166	33	169
62	13	63	97	23	103	132	20	118	167	33	169
63	13	63	98	23	103	133	20	118	168	33	169
64	13	63	99	23	103	134	20	118	169	33	169
65	13	63	100	23	103	135	20	118	170	33	169
66	13	63	101	23	103	136	20	118	171	33	169
67	13	63	102	23	103	137	20	118	172	33	169
68	13	63	103	23	103	138	20	118	173	33	169
69	13	63	104	23	103	139	20	118	174	33	169
70	13	63	105	23	103	140	20	118	175	33	169
71	13	63	106	23	103	141	20	118	176	33	169
72	13	63	107	23	103	142	20	118	177	33	169
73	13	63	108	23	103	143	20	118	178	33	169
74	13	63	109	23	103	144	20	118	179	33	169
75	13	63	110	23	103	145	20	118	180	33	169
76	13	63	111	23	103	146	20	118	181	33	169
77	13	63	112	23	103	147	20	118	182	33	169
78	13	63	113	23	103	148	20	118	183	33	169
79	13	63	114	23	103	149	20	118	184	33	169
80	13	63	115	23	103	150	20	118	185	33	169
81	13	63	116	23	103	151	20	118	186	33	169
82	13	63	117	23	103	152	20	118	187	33	169
83	13	63	118	23	103	153	20	118	188	33	169
84	13	63	119	23	103	154	20	118	189	33	169
85	13	63	120	23	103	155	20	118	190	33	169
86	13	63	121	23	103	156	20	118	191	33	169
87	13	63	122	23	103	157	20	118	192	33	169
88	13	63	123	23	103	158	20	118	193	33	169
89	13	63	124	23	103	159	20	118	194	33	169
90	13	63	125	23	103	160	20	118	195	33	169
91	13	63	126	23	103	161	20	118	196	33	169
92	13	63	127	23	103	162	20	118	197	33	169
93	13	63	128	23	103	163	20	118	198	33	169
94	13	63	129	23	103	164	20	118	199	33	169
95	13	63	130	23	103	165	20	118	200	33	169
96	13	63	131	23	103	166	20	118	201	33	169
97	13	63	132	23	103	167	20	118	202	33	169
98	13	63	133	23	103	168	20	118	203	33	169
99	13	63	134	23	103	169	20	118	204	33	169
100	13	63	135	23	103	170	20	118	205	33	169

TABLE 8.3

Population, Literacy & Occupation Structure, 1951, Ward-wise Percentage

LOCALITY NO	POPULATION	Percentage of Literates in Each Ward	Percentage of Culti. Owned in Each Ward	Percentage of Culti.Un-owned in Each Ward	Percentage of Culti. LabourersNon-culti.Labrs.Production in Each Ward	Percentage of Commerce in Each Ward	Percentage of Transport in Each Ward	Percentage of Services & Misc. in Each Ward		
1	4975	2.29	3.47	10.44	1.58	1.53	5.87	3.24	1.56	2.58
2	14885	3.87	1.89	2.69	7.21	1.66	10.35	5.69	6.10	7.96
3	7449	4.28	0.88	1.81	3.38	1.99	5.18	6.89	1.32	4.35
4	1377	1.31	0.86	0.88	0.88	1.83	0.88	2.23	0.18	0.62
5	1893	1.81	0.88	0.88	0.88	4.85	0.22	2.79	0.12	0.66
6	2453	2.78	0.89	0.34	0.45	3.45	2.24	4.54	0.28	1.65
7	11867	3.19	0.43	1.35	0.45	0.83	8.86	5.78	10.51	6.29
8	4904	3.48	1.88	1.35	0.88	1.69	6.88	6.81	3.34	3.24
9	6578	3.28	0.83	1.35	4.28	2.42	3.85	5.18	1.15	2.81
10	3133	2.88	0.52	0.88	0.88	0.98	1.77	3.22	0.47	1.85
11	3298	2.23	0.86	0.88	0.88	0.46	1.48	3.56	0.85	1.83
12	2153	2.28	0.86	1.35	0.98	1.83	0.68	2.55	0.42	1.22
13	4408	2.67	0.57	0.88	0.45	0.37	3.79	3.78	0.38	3.64
14	9997	4.23	0.48	4.38	4.28	0.56	4.92	2.12	0.48	3.38
15	2446	3.64	0.75	0.88	0.88	0.88	3.15	0.37	15.72	1.16
16	13571	10.48	17.34	22.98	4.93	21.84	9.23	6.88	6.11	0.55
17	8004	4.45	3.07	1.48	0.98	4.41	4.23	4.48	4.71	4.14
18	7404	3.94	2.44	3.37	0.23	3.97	3.88	5.45	7.63	6.99
19	12249	4.48	0.12	0.88	20.23	7.48	6.78	7.81	6.64	0.76
20	7993	1.46	0.82	1.87	0.88	11.88	2.52	5.45	3.88	3.69
21	7408	4.23	0.87	4.73	1.35	3.11	0.32	3.94	3.38	6.87
22	8888	4.23	1.35	1.48	0.48	0.46	3.95	4.15	0.38	6.51
23	7872	3.48	11.34	1.35	0.45	6.34	2.94	1.92	3.25	3.86
24	8773	0.55	14.74	23.38	12.48	2.75	5.43	3.88	3.25	7.87
	10000	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00



TABLE 8.5

Population, Literacy and Occupation Structure, 1971, Ward-wise Percentages

WARD NO	POPULATION	Percentage of Males in Each Ward	Percentage of Literates in Each Ward	Percentage of Total Workers in Each Ward	Percentage of Cultivators in Each Ward	Percentage of Agriculture in Each Ward	Percentage of Livestock in Each Ward	Percentage of Forestry in Each Ward	Percentage of Mining in Each Ward	Percentage of Quarry in Each Ward	Percentage of H.H. Industry in Each Ward	Percentage of Non H.H. Industry in Each Ward	Percentage of Construction in Each Ward	Percentage of Trade & Commerce in Each Ward	Percentage of Trans. & Comm. in Each Ward
1	6557	5.49	2.26	2.89	2.38	0.23	5.98	9.86	2.83	3.98	2.88	2.89	2.31	2.89	2.31
2	1465	0.31	0.53	0.43	0.23	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.47	0.03	0.06	1.27	0.06	1.27
3	7453	0.83	0.65	0.06	1.61	3.44	0.66	7.12	0.80	6.95	0.68	0.77	0.81	0.77	0.81
4	11278	3.77	2.77	3.73	2.53	6.85	1.97	1.64	5.57	5.81	5.64	2.81	2.97	2.81	2.97
5	4378	2.52	1.31	1.37	0.57	3.86	0.22	0.00	3.18	1.58	1.22	0.88	2.24	0.88	2.24
6	12219	12.39	3.00	4.35	1.38	1.68	11.79	0.53	6.54	5.54	3.91	3.58	4.75	3.58	4.75
7	4422	2.17	0.97	1.09	0.46	0.00	2.48	0.00	0.53	2.58	0.63	1.40	1.58	1.40	1.58
8	17925	11.83	3.97	3.08	0.92	1.76	0.87	0.00	22.82	4.38	1.53	3.11	5.72	3.11	5.72
9	29316	0.28	7.78	0.74	3.33	1.18	1.53	0.27	12.11	11.98	10.42	11.77	9.43	11.77	9.43
10	9779	0.82	3.28	3.13	0.34	1.48	0.46	0.00	3.89	2.53	2.25	5.53	1.85	5.53	1.85
11	17948	0.32	6.88	5.85	2.87	0.58	0.44	0.00	2.21	3.88	0.85	12.56	1.25	12.56	1.25
12	3146	0.87	1.26	1.81	0.49	0.88	0.22	0.00	0.62	1.18	0.32	1.52	0.58	1.52	0.58
13	7883	4.55	0.75	3.48	0.46	0.58	0.22	0.55	5.39	1.83	11.97	1.86	6.17	1.86	6.17
14	3788	0.99	1.89	1.25	0.88	0.88	0.22	0.55	0.00	0.92	0.48	1.44	1.18	1.44	1.18
15	2619	0.75	0.87	0.77	0.88	1.48	0.88	0.27	0.35	0.25	0.68	0.14	2.52	0.14	2.52
16	4889	0.12	1.67	1.39	3.74	0.23	0.44	0.27	1.77	0.84	0.82	1.55	2.18	1.55	2.18
17	16119	0.86	3.58	3.92	0.11	3.82	1.89	0.88	0.62	1.72	1.73	1.38	6.53	1.38	6.53
18	8888	0.48	2.86	2.85	0.46	0.17	1.89	0.88	0.53	2.86	2.56	1.89	3.33	1.89	3.33
19	1971	0.91	0.26	0.74	0.26	0.82	2.18	0.88	0.97	0.86	0.63	0.38	1.68	0.38	1.68
20	2889	1.17	0.95	0.88	2.87	2.82	0.88	0.88	0.89	1.57	0.32	0.38	0.67	0.38	0.67
21	2528	0.78	1.25	1.88	0.77	0.68	1.89	0.88	0.35	1.82	1.27	0.67	0.89	0.67	0.89
22	3488	1.53	1.46	0.84	0.23	0.88	0.88	0.27	0.89	0.16	0.82	0.89	2.97	0.89	2.97
23	18238	0.11	0.87	0.88	0.87	1.48	0.88	0.27	1.77	3.46	3.88	4.23	3.18	4.23	3.18
24	19148	1.79	3.48	3.85	0.23	3.27	2.48	0.88	3.39	3.58	5.63	3.79	2.73	3.79	2.73
25	7948	0.88	0.44	0.42	0.28	0.17	0.88	0.88	0.97	1.18	0.47	0.98	0.58	0.98	0.58

[illegible]



26	6208	0.87	1.65	1.31	1.72	0.88	0.53	1.34	0.21	1.42	2.82	2.53
27	18354	0.63	2.89	2.21	3.95	0.12	1.28	2.24	1.18	2.32	3.76	3.69
28	5949	0.63	1.39	1.11	0.61	0.24	0.22	1.61	0.13	1.12	1.95	1.65
29	15196	0.21	0.27	3.19	6.69	0.24	1.82	3.24	3.21	3.41	6.33	4.66
30	14291	1.41	3.28	3.17	3.14	1.38	4.25	3.18	2.11	3.14	3.98	3.89
31	7572	0.14	2.12	1.49	6.39	0.47	0.66	1.48	0.38	1.75	2.33	1.82
32	15773	3.18	2.98	3.46	7.48	2.19	2.65	3.46	2.45	3.48	2.83	2.94
33	7849	0.26	1.68	1.68	3.84	0.38	0.71	1.62	2.92	1.52	1.89	1.84
34	2886	1.25	0.47	0.46	0.51	0.86	0.49	0.47	0.88	0.43	0.92	0.61
35	3441	3.53	0.54	0.84	0.28	0.77	2.88	0.83	0.42	0.72	0.38	0.34
36	3171	0.44	0.74	0.64	0.51	0.53	1.86	0.62	3.34	0.69	0.67	0.65
37	2884	2.34	0.53	0.48	0.88	0.86	0.22	0.41	1.81	0.48	0.76	0.48
38	6498	2.52	1.18	0.95	1.22	0.86	0.27	0.97	1.86	1.87	3.66	1.28
39	6477	0.19	1.26	1.32	2.53	0.71	1.98	1.31	1.81	1.48	2.21	1.72
40	14849	0.86	3.26	2.96	7.89	9.17	2.79	2.83	0.89	3.15	2.41	2.85
41	6487	3.57	9.44	10.97	7.48	9.88	0.89	11.84	9.67	18.87	6.69	7.82
42	13849	3.26	2.79	2.88	2.78	18.89	0.85	2.69	18.14	2.95	1.97	1.98
43	18488	2.96	1.86	3.26	3.44	11.24	1.73	2.14	5.87	2.18	8.58	8.67
	69497	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38	188.38

TABLE 8.7

Crime Rates for Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam & Hyderabad, 1976-1991

City	Year	Crime Rate Murder	Crime Rate Attempt to Murder	Crime Rate Culpable Homicide	Crime Rate Rape	Crime Rate Kidnapping & Abduction	Crime Rate Dacoity	Crime Rate Robbery	Crime Rate Burglary	Crime Rate Theft
Vijayawada	1976	1.8		0	0.22	0	0	2.47	45.74	113.88
Vizado	1976	1.83		0	0.41	0.2	0.26	1.24	28.95	96.16
Hyderabad	1976	1.49		0.5	0.26	1.59	0.85	0.58	49.82	134.66
Vijayawada	1981	1.84		0	0.18	2.2	0	2.26	26.15	135.72
Visakhapatnam	1981	1.49		0	0.66	2.15	0.49	1.82	32.9	116.46
Hyderabad	1981	1.34		0.6	0.37	2.37	0.79	2.32	54.1	152.18
Vijayawada	1986	4.48	4.43	0	1.73	4.77	1.15	2.89	25.61	127.93
Visakhapatnam	1986	2.85	1.88	0	0.12	2.66	0.72	1.81	43.42	123.31
Hyderabad	1986	2.8	3.16	0.86	0.52	1.58	0.12	2.61	33.83	95.86
Vijayawada	1989	2.38	1.87	0	0.71	1.31	0.47	2.5	58.18	144.22
Visakhapatnam	1989	3.33	2.42	0.19	2.38	2.95	1.42	2.19	24.38	93.44
Hyderabad	1989	2.87	2.26	0.26	0.37	1.89	0.3	1.38	26.66	75.83
Vijayawada	1990	3.6	4.17	0	2.42	6.39	2.97	6.43	38.15	132.42
Visakhapatnam	1990	2.38	1.8	0.89	0.46	3.33	0.85	3.23	55.24	124.59
Hyderabad	1990	3.88	4.26	0.88	0.43	1.31	0.26	1.91	27.4	73.42
Vijayawada	1991	4.44	3.89	0	2.74	3.45	2.42	3.48	35.16	145.87
Visakhapatnam	1991	2.76	2.39	0.19	0.28	7	1.52	2.57	39.53	117.87
Hyderabad	1991	4.46	3.43	0.16	0.88	1.88	0.42	2.94	27.91	87.72



## **FAN CLUBS IN VIJAYAWADA**

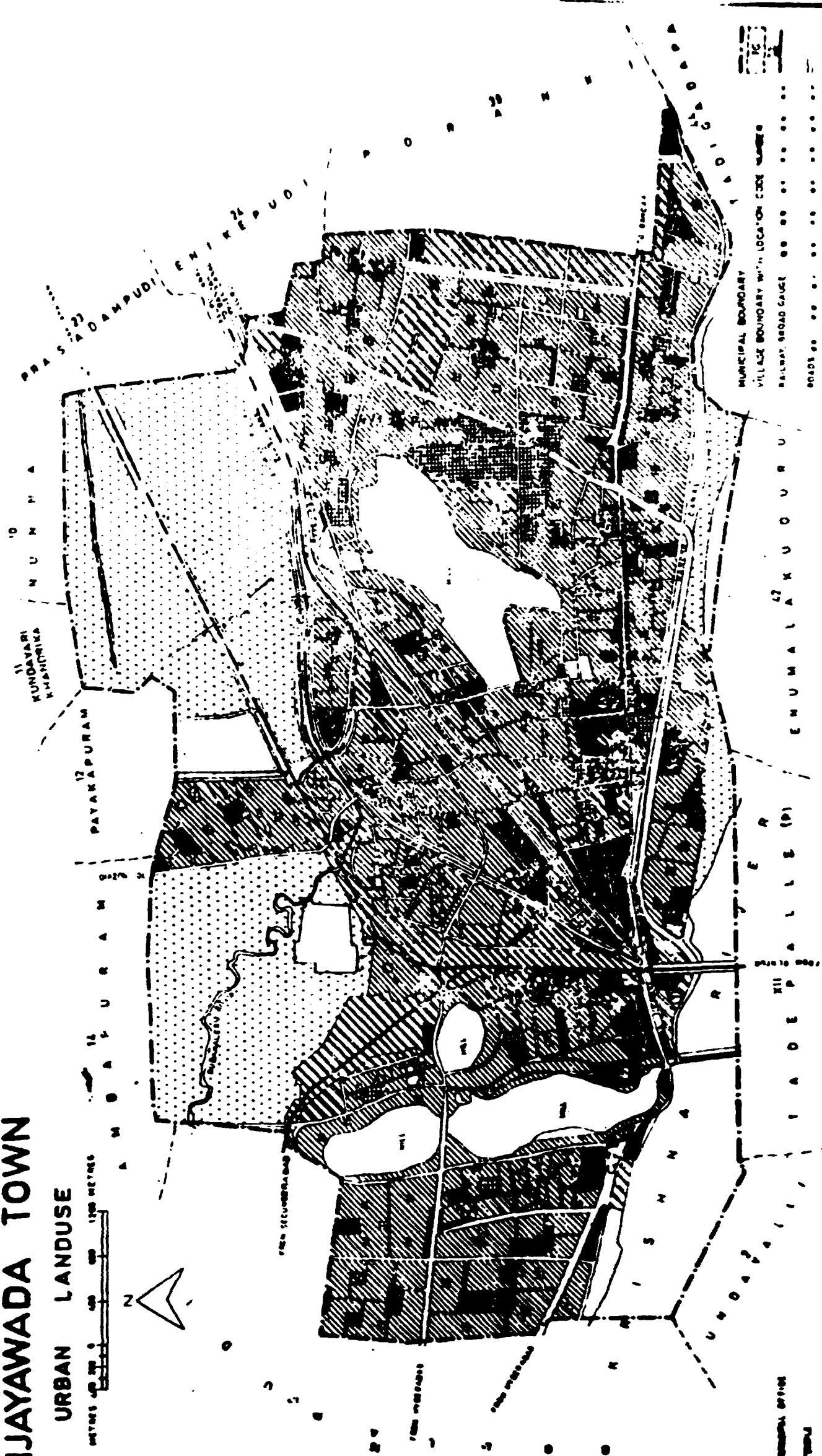
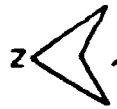
**Mighty Megastar Chiranjeevi Friends**  
**Mighty Megastar Chiranjeevi Favourites**  
**All India Chiranjeevi Fans**  
**State Wide Chiranjeevi Fans**  
**All India Chiranjeevi Fans and Cultural Association**  
**Famous Chiranjeevi Fans**  
**All India Chiranjeevi Yuva Sena**  
**Mega International Fans**  
**Dr.Rajasekhar Fans Association**  
**All India Rajasekhar Yuva Sena**  
**All India Rajasekhar Cultural Association**  
**All India Krishna Fans**  
**All India Superstar Krishna Yuva Sena**  
**Superstar Krishna Fans**  
**Triple Superstar Krishna Yuva Sena**  
**Vijayawada Sobhan Syndicate**  
**Natabhushan Sobhan Babu Fans Association**  
**All India Venkatesh Fans**  
**All India Sunan Fans**  
**All India Balakrishna Fans**  
**All India Balakrishna Yuva Sena**  
**All India Akkineni Nagarjuna Students Unit**  
**Allrounder Nagarjuna Yuva Sena**  
**Town Wide Natajyothi Vijayashanti Fans**

MAP NO 10

# VIJAYAWADA TOWN

## URBAN LANDUSE

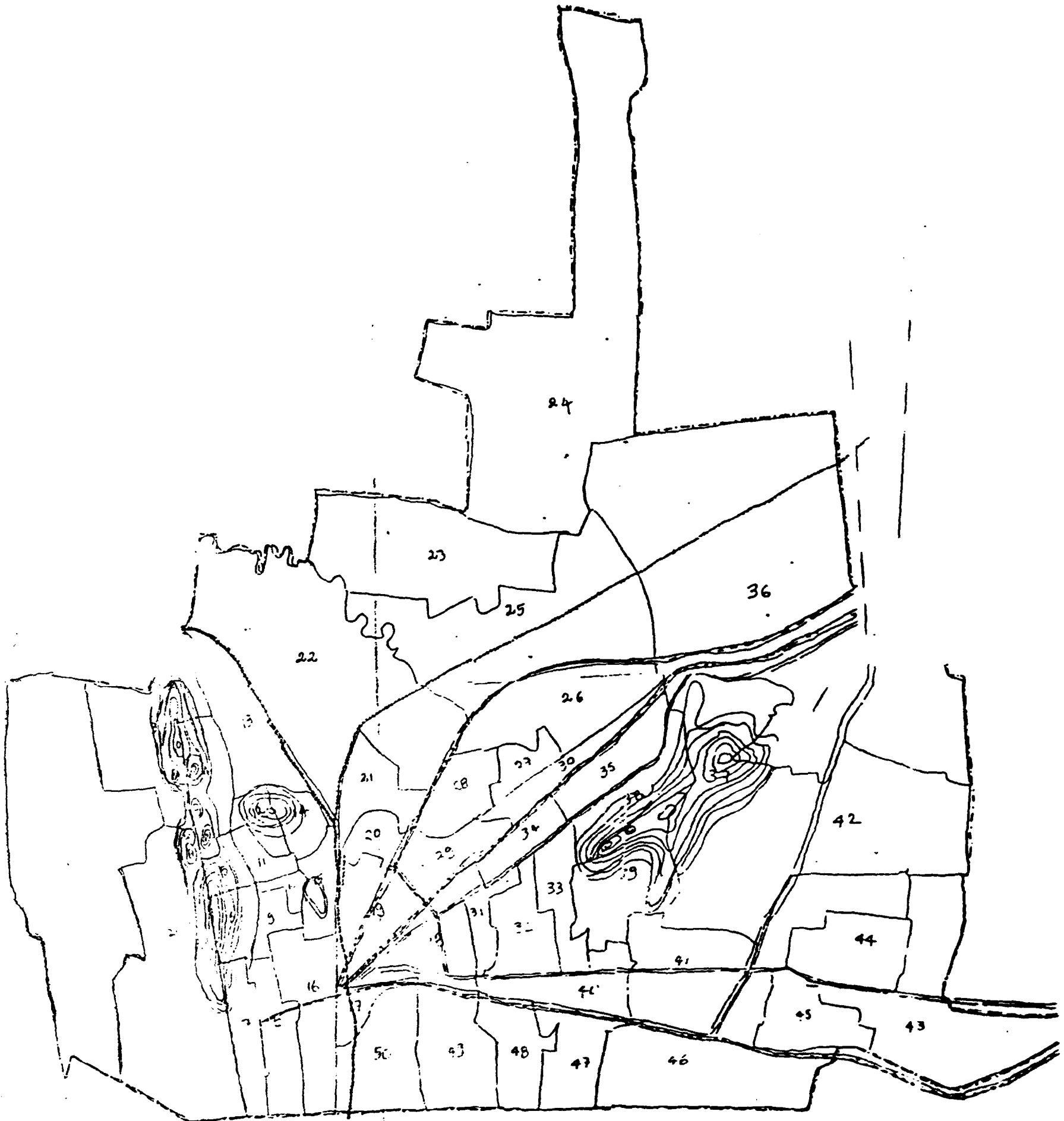
SCALE 0 500 1000 METRES



- 1 MUNICIPAL OFFICE
- 2 TEMPLE
- 3 DIST. HOSPITAL
- 4 TECHNICAL INSTITUTION
- 5 MARKET
- 6 POST OFFICE
- 7 GOVT. COLLEGE
- 8 STATION
- 9 OPEN SPACE

MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY	VILLAGE BOUNDARY WITH LOCATION CODE NUMBER
RAILWAY BROAD GAUGE	00 00 01 00 00 00
ROADS	00 00 02 00 00 00
BUSINESS AREA	00 00 03 00 00 00
INDUSTRIAL AREA	00 00 04 00 00 00
EDUCATIONAL AREA	00 00 05 00 00 00
RESIDENTIAL AREA	00 00 06 00 00 00
PUBLIC SERVICE AREA	00 00 07 00 00 00
RECREATIONAL AREA	00 00 08 00 00 00
ADMINISTRATIVE AREA	00 00 09 00 00 00
OPEN SPACE / ARABY LAND	00 00 10 00 00 00

# Ward Map of Vijayawada



Source: Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AITUC	All India Trade Union Congress
APIDC	Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Corporation
ATA	Automobile Technicians Association
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party
CONGRESS(I)	Indian National Congress (Indira)
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPI(M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPI(ML)	Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
INTUC	Indian National Trade Union Congress
KDLOA	Krishna District Lorry Owners Association
TDP	Telugu Desam Party
VGUDA	Vijayawada-Guntur-Tenali Urban Development Authority

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Census of India, 1911	<u>Vol XII. Madras. Part II. Imperial and Provincial Tables.</u> Government Press, Madras, 1912.
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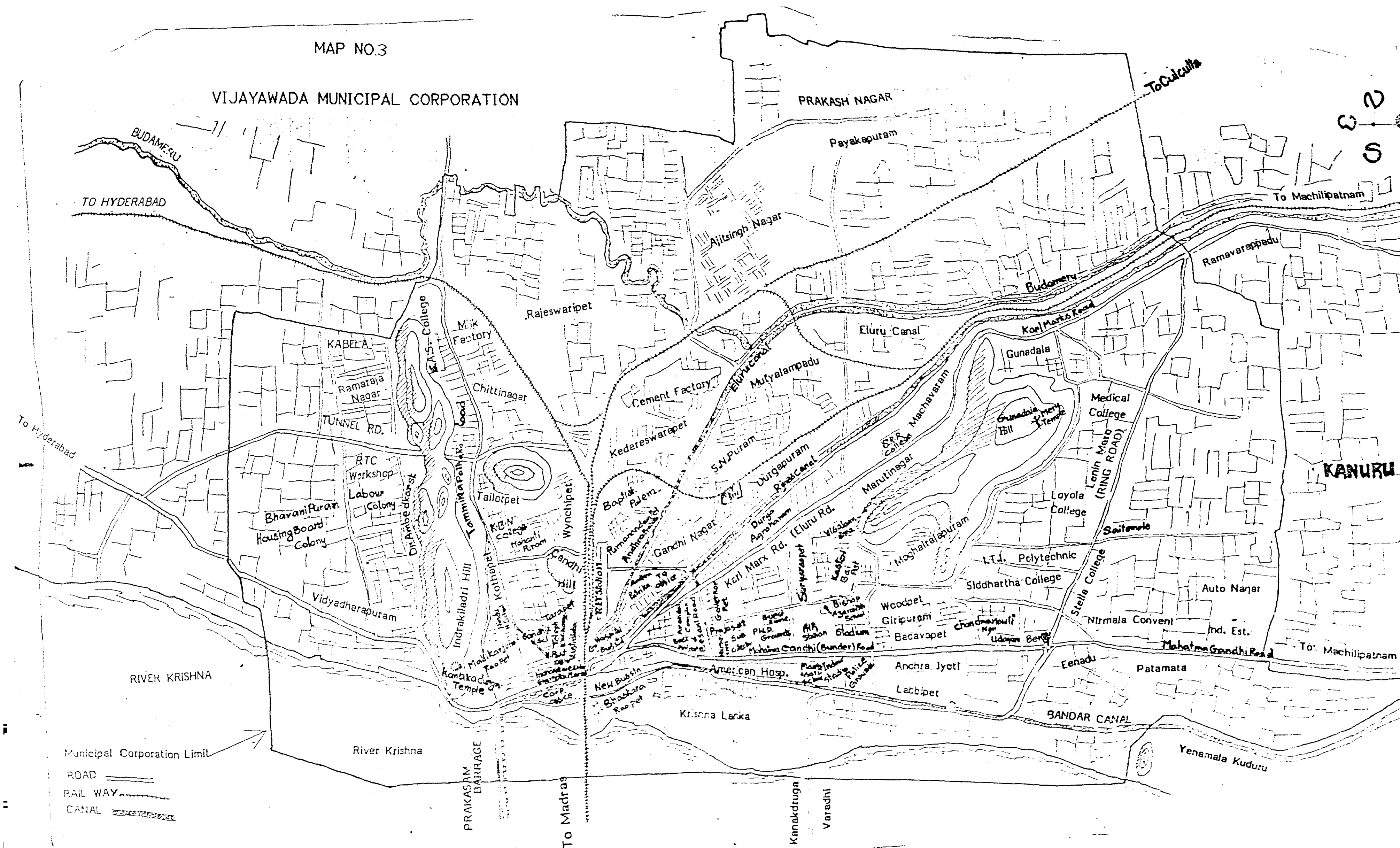
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Source: Visayawada Directory, Municipal Corporation of Visayawada.

The entire area west of the Ring Road is generally referred to as