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EDITED BY MAHENDRA LAWOTI AND ANUP K. PAHARI

THE MAOIST INSURGENCY IN NEPAL

REVOLUTION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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1 Evolution and growth of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal

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Introduction

The growth of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal around the turn of the century confounded the world by defying several layers of conventional wisdom about politics and society.[2] The Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) controlled a large swath of territory within a decade of launching an insurgency. The armed conflict led to the death of more than 13,000 people, in addition to many other costs of civil war such as destruction, displacement and gross human rights abuses (see chapter 15 for discussion of consequences of the conflict). Eventually, the Maoists successfully negotiated a peace settlement in their favor and went on to win the post-war election.

The first challenge to the prevalent understanding comes from the rise of a violent communist rebellion in the 21st century even as communist regimes fell one after another around the world. The communist insurgency expanded rapidly in Nepal despite the declaration of an end of ideology after the end of Cold War (see Fukuyama 1993) and despite lack of significant external support. In fact, the Maoist insurgency grew despite an adverse international climate, including the US-led War on Terror after Al Qaida's 9/11 attacks.

Second, Nepal had restored democracy in 1990 and democracy is supposed to defuse violence by transforming such tendencies into non-violent conflicts through electoral politics and non-violent protests (Ward and Gleditsch 1998; Hegre et al. 2001). However, the CPN-M launched the insurgency in February 1996 after taking part briefly in the fledgling democracy – it regularly engaged in petitioning and public protests in early 1990s and competed in the 1991 general and 1992 local elections. The predecessor of the CPN-M, in fact, had emerged as the third largest parliamentary party after the 1991 election. The launch and rapid growth of the insurgency challenged the notion that democracy could settle conflicts peacefully and that it was the only acceptable game in town (see Diamond 1999).

Third, the insurgency gained momentum even though Nepal was witnessing reasonable economic growth, expansion of development, and improvement in human development index (HDI) in the 1990s, including in the Maoist strongholds of the mid-western hills. The average real GDP (gross domestic product) for 1987–88 to 1994–95 was 4.1 percent compared to 3 percent during 1976–77 to 1986–87

(Sharma 2006: 1242).[3] The HDI had increased in 2001 compared to 1996 in most districts (UNDP 2004; NESAC 1998). Roads, schools, health facilities, universities, banks and other development infrastructure and service sectors expanded in the 1990s (Mahat 2005; Khanal 2007). Class-based rebellions are said to ignite when economic conditions worsen but the Maoist People's War was launched and gained momentum when national economic and development indicators demonstrated positive trends in Nepal.

Fourth, the escalation of violence surprised many because Nepal was considered a peaceful country. More than a hundred countries had endorsed the zone of peace initiative of King Birendra by 1990. Hence, it shocked many people when the country regarded as a 'Shangrila' turned into a bloody battlefield.

The growth of the insurgency in Nepal thus raises many interesting questions. How did a violent Maoist movement grow and succeed in the post-Cold War adverse global environment? Why did a party that had participated in a democratic election launch a violent movement and receive significant support? Why did people support the rebellion when economic and development indicators were showing improvements? Does the success of the Maoists in Nepal indicate resurgence of radical communism globally? The objective of the book is to contextualize and explain the growth of a violent communist rebellion. It will fill an existing void in academic analyses of the insurgency and connect the Nepali case to a broader literature on rebellions.

The chapters analyze factors that contributed to the insurgency's growth, strategies employed by the rebels and the state, and the consequences of the insurgency. The chapters cover issues that have not been explicated or analyzed thoroughly yet: indoctrination and recruitment of rebels, the role of the Maoist student organization and cultural troupe, organization, mobilization, and strategies of the rebels and the state, including the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Royal Nepal Army's (RNA), ethnic dimension of the class-based rebellion, external factors, revolutionary governance, and the role of electoral democracy and liberal market economy.[4] The chapters also build onto existing analyses and review and retest the role of economy, geography, incentives of leaders and recruits, ideology, literacy, road density and so on.

We have brought together scholars working in different fields employing a variety of approaches and methods to unravel different aspects of the insurgency. Scholars from multiple disciplinary backgrounds – anthropologists, economists, political scientists, sociologists, and conflict experts – with particular disciplinary expertise have tackled different questions and gleaned valuable insights. The chapters are based on original fieldwork as well as analyses of secondary data and the contributors have employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. Fieldwork-based chapters have marshaled rare ethnographic data of the conflict and provide rich, thick descriptions and analyses while chapters employing sophisticated econometric tools have identified causes of the insurgency based on available quantitative data. Chapters that have studied the rebellion from a comparative perspective, on the other hand, have produced valuable insights through rigorous analyses and filled an important methodological gap (among few exceptions are Marks and Palmer 2005; Bownas 2003; Ramirez 2004; Nickson 1992).

History of the communist movement in Nepal

The communist movement arrived in Nepal via its southern democratic neighbor India, and not, in fact, directly via communist China, the northern neighbor. The Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was established in 1949 in Calcutta, India, with the active assistance of Indian communists. The party was banned from 1952 to 1956 during the interim democratic period. The communists tied with the People's Council to win the most seats – six out of 18 – in the first adult franchise-based election for Kathmandu municipality in 1953 but won only four seats out of 109 in the first election to the Parliament in 1959 (KC 1999).

The communist movement spread clandestinely during the Panchayat period (1960–90) when the regime was more focused on tackling the overt challenges from the Nepali Congress, whose two-thirds majority government King Mahendra had dissolved in 1960. The common strident nationalist agenda between the communists and the palace sometimes brought them closer. Many communist cadres, especially the more radical ones, however, were jailed or killed during the period.

The communist movement in Nepal has faced a chronic problem of factionalism and frequent splits. There have been around a dozen communist parties and factions in the country at any one time since the 1960s (KC 1999; Khadka 1995; Maharjan 2000; Rawal 2047 v.s. (1991)). The splits began when King Mahendra seized power in 1960 and banned the political parties. The 'Russian communists' or those that were closer to the USSR were supportive of the royal action whereas the 'Chinese communists' or the group that followed the Beijing line remained aloof. Both the CPN factions split numerous times. The splits and factionalism often occurred over minor differences in interpretations of policies and strategies or personality clashes among the leaders. In 1974 the more extremist leaders of the mainstream communist movement – notably Nirmal Lama and Mohan Bikram Singh – established the Nepal Communist Party (Fourth Congress). The top Maoist leadership hails from this group (Maharjan 2000; Thapa and Sijapati 2003).

The Nepali communists launched a violent movement for the first time in 1971. Influenced by the violent Naxalite Maoist movement in West Bengal, a group of young communists killed several 'class enemies' in Jhapa district in east Nepal. The campaign was brutally crushed by the state. Nevertheless, the group went on to form the Communist Party of Nepal-Marxist Leninist (CPN-ML) in 1978 and became the largest communist faction by 1990. It merged with CPN-Marxist, a party with well-known leaders but a weak mass base, to become the CPN-United Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) in 1990 and emerged as the major opposition party after the 1991 general election. It formed the first democratically elected communist government (minority) in the world after the mid-term election in 1994 but lasted for only a year

The communist movement had grown considerably by the 1990s, even though it was split into numerous factions. The utopian ideals and wide-ranging promises to

Table 1.1 Votes and seats received by communist and non-communist parties in parliament

Political parties	*1959*		*1991*		*1994*		*1999*		*2008*	
	Vote %	*Seats*	*Vote %*	*Seats*	*Vote %*	*Seats*	*Vote %*	*Seats*	*Vote %*	*Seats*
Communists	7.2	4	36.26	82	33.15	87	39.51	75	56.98	353
Non-communists	76.48	101	53.79	120	54.8	106	52.74	128	40.48	222

end all forms of inequalities and injustices have attracted the poor, youth and marginalized groups into the communist fold. The communist movement has also received considerable support among the clerical government workers, labor unions and public school teachers.

The political parties that call themselves communist range from the radical Maoists to moderate groups like the CPN-UML. Nepali communists are highly nationalist, unlike the international communist movement. Many moderate communist parties also do not uphold many other elements of the communist ideology anymore. Many accepted the constitutional monarchy and multiparty parliamentary democracy after 1990. Likewise, since 1990 many communists have adopted market-friendly policies.

The communists collectively received 36, 33 and 39 percent of votes in 1991, 1994 and 1999 respectively (see table 1.1). Collectively they received more votes than the Nepali Congress, the largest party, only in 1999. The communists finally obtained more votes than all the non-communist parties in 2008. The brief history of the communist movement shows that by early 1990, communists had firmly established themselves as a major political force in Nepal despite the fact that the world was headed towards a post-communist global order.

Evolution of the Maoists

The Maoists were a small communist faction among a number of extremist communist parties before 1996. Scholars identify the origin of the Maoists with the establishment of the CPN-Fourth Congress in 1974 under Nirmal Lama and Mohan Bikram Singh. After a number of splits, some of the persons and groups involved in the CPN-Fourth Congress, except Mohan Bikram Singh and the CPN-Masal he led, formed the CPN-Unity Center (CPN-UC) on 23 November 1990.[5] The CPN-UC was made up of the CPN-Fourth Congress led by Nirmal Lama, CPN-Mashal led by Prachanda aka Puspa Kamal Dahal who had replaced Kiran, and the breakaway faction of the CPN-Masal led by Baburam Bhattarai, the Maoist ideologue. The CPN-UC established a political front headed by Baburam Bhattarai – the United People's Front Nepal (UPFN) – to participate in the elections (Maharjan 1993).

Before the 1994 mid-term elections, the CPN-UC and the UPFN split and the faction led by Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai boycotted the elections partly because their front was not recognized by the Election Commission. In 1995,

Prachanda-led CPN-UC held its Third Plenum during which the party renamed itself as CPN-Maoist and decided to begin an armed insurgency (Thapa and Sijapati 2003).[6] On 4 February 1996, the UPFN led by Baburam Bhattarai submitted a list of 40 demands on nationalism, people's democracy and livelihood with an ultimatum to initiate insurgency if they were not met.[7] The demands included a range from genuine concerns (land rights to tenants, secular state) to wishful issues (employment guarantee to all). A majority of the nine demands on nationalism related to Nepal's relations with India. The people's democracy subsection included demands concerning indigenous nationalities, women and Dalit. Some others points were ideological and questionable in terms of democratic credentials, such as restricting the activities of NGOs. One demand called for the abolishment of royal privileges but did not call for a republican state, which became a major issue during different phases of the insurgency. The list included a demand for a new Constitution to be drawn by people's representatives. Four days before the ultimatum expired, the Maoists launched the insurgency on 13 February 1996 by attacking rural police posts in three districts – two in the mid-western and one in the central region (Maharjan 2000). The insurgency grew rapidly. The next section discusses major factors that contributed to the initiation and growth of the insurgency.

Conditions for rebellion

Poverty and economic inequality

Poverty and inequality, and how they are perceived – relative deprivation or the gap between expected and achieved well-being – can increase alienation and push groups towards violent conflict (Muller and Seligson 1987; Gurr 1968). A lot of work has focused on poverty and economic inequality and their contribution to the initiation and growth of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal.

Economic indicators, however, as discussed earlier, showed improvement during the 1990s. Infrastructure and service sector also expanded more rapidly in the 1990s. The total road length increased from 7,036 km in 1989/90 to 15,308 km in 1999/2000. The number of commercial banks increased to 17 in 2004 from five in 1990. Internal air traffic saw a growth from 228,000 a year in 1989/90 to 1,209,000 in 2002/03. The primary, lower secondary and secondary schools increased by 45, 83 and 122 percent in a decade. Private education expanded in primary, secondary, university, vocational and technical education (Mahat 2005). The 1990s witnessed print and media booms and the communication network expanded rapidly: telephone connection per thousand increased from 3.1 in 1990 to 13.1 in 2001 (World Bank 2006, cited in Khanal 2007). Do these data contradict the poverty, inequality and relative deprivation theories? A closer look at the data shows that the theories are relevant.

First, Nepal remained mired in extreme poverty despite the growth and progress in the 1990s. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. Its GNI (gross national income) per capita was US$290 in 2006, the lowest in South Asia except for Afghanistan. Even the better off in Nepal were poor. For instance, "over

40 percent of medium and large landowners in the hills were classified as 'poor' in 1996" (Deraniyagala 2005). Thus, in many parts of the country, especially in the hills and mountains, poverty affected a large proportion of the population. Poverty intensified and expanded owing to an increase in population and decrease in land productivity in the 1990s: "unlike in previous generations, it is no longer possible, for a significant proportion of the poor, to cultivate new public land and ameliorate poverty at the household level . . . the size of intergenerational transfer of agricultural land has become progressively smaller" (Mishra 2004: 22). The intensified poverty had direct consequences on people's basic daily needs. Macfarlane's (2001) ethnographic study provides a vivid picture of everyday ramifications of increasing poverty: in a hill village in central Nepal, where he has frequently returned, a wage earner could buy a chicken with a day's wage in the late 1960s whereas in the mid-1990s it took eight days of wages.

Second, the absolute number of poor increased in Nepal. Government statistics show around 40 percent of the people as poor – people unable to access basic human needs, including a minimum defined basket of food. Even though this proportion remained constant in the decades from the 1970s to the 1990s, the absolute number of poor increased in huge numbers. For instance, between 1977 and 1996 "the absolute number of the absolutely poor persons nearly *doubled*" (Mishra 2004: 22; NESAC 1998).

Third, expansion of infrastructure and services benefited more people than before; but with an increase in the absolute number of people owing to a population boom, access to the benefits of development and services may have continued to elude large segments of the population. Further, many of the development projects, infrastructure and services such as expansion of banking and air transportation benefited the better-off section of society living in and around urban areas.

Fourth, findings of econometric analyses, which demonstrate that rugged terrain (hill), road density and so on explain intensity of conflict (Bohara et al. 2006) also indirectly support the inequality and poverty theses. The rugged hill regions have fewer roads, are deprived of infrastructure and many other services, and are generally poorer (see Tiwari; Acharya, this volume).

Finally, inequality increased in Nepal despite improved national economic indicators. Nepal had become the most unequal country in South Asia in the 1990s with the highest Gini Index of 0.426.[8] The growth in a few select areas and stagnation in others led to this ironic situation. Inequality in Nepal existed among different sectors: geographic regions (mountain and hills and Tarai, and east to west), rural and urban areas, and gender, ethnic and caste groups (Murshed and Gates 2005).

The improvements in GDP, growth in output, and exports and international reserve brought about by the deregulation of the market since the mid-1980s occurred through an expansion of the urban-based modern sector and did not close the inequality gap. Poverty levels are significantly higher in rural areas (44 percent) than in urban areas (20 percent). The nominal income of the people living in urban areas increased by 16 percent per annum (from US$126 to US$285) during 1988–96 compared to only 4 percent for the rural population (from US$95 to US$125). Large parts of the rural areas stagnated while the urban centers,

especially the Kathmandu valley, developed into pockets of wealth and consumption. Sharma (2006: 1242–43) argues that "[w]hen the average annual rate of inflation is taken into consideration, the growth in rural income is in fact negative. This not only increased poverty in the rural areas but also increased rural–urban inequality." The growth in urban areas and stagnation in the rural areas widened the perception of inequality further among rural residents (Deraniyagala 2005).

Poverty is also more widespread in the mountains, where its incidence is 56 percent, compared with around 40 percent in the hills and plains. The incidence of poverty in the central (67 percent) and mid- and far-western (72 percent) hills/mountains also far outstrips that in eastern (28 percent) and western (40 percent) regions (Deraniyagala 2005). The Maoist stronghold districts had relatively low human development indicators (Bray et al. 2003; UNDP 2004).

The stagnation of rural regions during the 1970s through the neglect of the periphery, the increasing pressure on limited land in the hills, and the erosion of traditional jobs and sources of income was portrayed vividly by, among others, *Nepal in Crisis* (Blaikie et al. 1980). Economic and demographic indicators demonstrate the continued neglect of rural regions. This neglect contributed to the rising inequality. Poverty levels were 33 percent in 1976–77 but rose to 42 percent by 1995–96. The "income share of the top 10 percent of the people increased from 21 percent in the mid-1980s to 35 percent by the mid-1990s, while the share of the bottom 40 percent shrank from 24 percent to 15 percent by the mid 1990s" (Sharma 2006).

Poverty and economic stagnation had a more detrimental impact on the rural residents (87 percent in 2001) because they were dependent upon the stagnating agriculture. Annual growth rates of agricultural output (major crops) declined from 1961–62 to 1991–93. The growth rate was a negative 0.07 percent for all crops in Nepal during the period while other South Asian countries witnessed an increase. The stagnation was due to the government policy of import substitution industrialization – the government invested in industrialization in urban areas at the cost of peasants and rural areas. Sharma (2006: 1241–42) writes that agriculture, the major source of employment and income for 80 percent of the people, "has not received more than 26 percent of development expenditure in any development plan since the mid 1950s . . . Nepal, which had the highest agriculture yield (per hectare) in South Asia in the early 1960s fell significantly behind other countries by early 1990s."

Land ownership patterns also contributed to poverty and inequality. Despite the relatively small size of land ownership in general, land ownership reflects the persistence of the feudal system: "44 percent of households in the country are marginal landowners [0–0.5 hectare], but this group only accounts for 14 percent of total privately owned agricultural land. In contrast, the 5 percent of agricultural households who own plots greater than 3 h[ectare] account for around 27 percent of total agricultural land."[9] Land and land-based resources such as forests and water are very valuable in an agricultural society like Nepal and their unequal distribution has contributed to conflicts (Upreti 2004). Land scarcity contributed to environmental degradation as people and animals attacked forests and exploited less fertile land.

Environmental degradation in turn decreased productivity and increased poverty and inequality (Bhurtel and Ali, unpublished paper).[10]

Socio-cultural inequality

Nepal not only faced class inequality, but extreme socio-cultural inequality also existed among numerous linguistic, ethnic, religious, racial, caste and regional groups.[11] The Caste Hill Hindu Hill Elite Males (CHHEM) monopolized the political, economic, social and cultural power. Bahun, Chhetri, Newar and Tarai 'high caste' have better access to material resources while Dalit, indigenous nationalities, mid-level Madhesi caste, and Muslims are generally worse off. The HDI of Brahmin was 135 in 1996 compared to national index of 100 while the indigenous nationalities, Dalit, Madhesi and Muslim, had 92.21, 73.62, 96.28 and 73.67 respectively (NESAC 1998). Not only are groups like Dalit, indigenous nationalities and Muslim poorer, but even the decrease in the incidence of poverty among them is slower compared to Bahun, Chhetri and Newar. While between 1995–96 and 2003–4 poverty declined by 46 percent among Brahmin and Chhetri, it declined only by 6, 10 and 21 percent respectively for Muslims, hill indigenous nationalities and Dalit (Tiwari 2008). Within all groups, women generally face discrimination but the incidence is higher among Muslims and 'high caste' Hindus.

Only Bahun and Chhetri are among the effective executive head in Nepal.[12] They are politically dominant to such an extent that even ideological opponents hail from the same group. Neupane (2000) found that the CHHE overwhelmingly dominated 12 influential sectors in 1999: the executive, judiciary, Constitutional Councils, civil administration, parliament, political party leadership, local government heads, and leadership of industrial and commercial, academic, professional, cultural, science and technology, and civil society associations. In fact, presence of the indigenous nationalities decreased in some institutions during the post-1990 democratic era compared to the Panchayat and the first parliamentary democratic (1959–60) periods (NESAC 1998; Neupane 2000; Lawoti 2005). The gap between the dominant and other groups further widened in the bureaucracy. In 2001/2002, the CHHE made up nearly 90 percent of civil service exam graduates. The extent of domination can be conveyed by the case of the Dalit. Not a single Dalit was inducted into the cabinet and only one Dalit was elected to the House of Representative in the entire 13 years from 1990 to 2002 (Lawoti 2008).

CHHE domination in the mainstream civil society sector was/is overwhelming as well. The CHHE and Newar dominated around 90 percent of the top positions in prominent Nepali NGOs and human rights groups in 1999 (Neupane 2000). Onta and Parajuli (2058 v.s. (2001–2)) found that CHHE made up 80 percent of media elite (editors, publishers and columnists). This shows that most power, both at the state and civil society, was effectively enjoyed by CHHE.[13]

In addition to this political, social and economic domination, the marginalized groups face cultural discrimination, perhaps the most important feature because it was the foundation of discrimination in other realms. Even socio-economically well-off groups like Newar, Thakali and Tarai Brahmin face socio-cultural

discrimination, formally as well as informally. The state was declared Hindu, discriminating against other indigenous and non-indigenous religions. Khas-Nepali enjoyed special privileges compared to other native languages. Citizenship discrimination occurred based on racial markers. The government-formed Citizenship Commission stated that in the 1990s more than 3 million adult Nepalis, mostly Madhesi but Dalit and indigenous nationalities as well, were denied citizenship (Upadhaya 2052 (1995)); the state awarded citizenship certificates only after the 2006 political transformation. Cultural imperialism, or the imposition of the dominant group's language, religion and values on the rest of the society, was a consequence as well as cause of ethnic domination. The CHHE performed better in schools taught in their native language and their social standings were enhanced because their culture and values were projected as superior by the communal state (Maddox 2003; Lawoti 2005). On the other hand, free residential education in Sanskrit up to PhD, fully supported by the state, provided social mobility opportunities to CHHEM while comparable opportunities did not exist for others.

Modernization, social change and fluidity

Many of the inequalities had existed for a long time but unequal societies can be stable, as Nepal was before the 1990s. Modernization that began in the 1950s and 1960s, however, began to create conditions for conflict by changing societal conditions and introducing uncertainty and fluidity. The spread of education challenged traditional norms and practices and lessened respect for the older order based on reinforcing hierarchies of class, ethnicity, caste, gender and age. Education also enabled dissatisfied groups to form alternate collective imaginations, including a revolutionary one (Fujikura 2003). Penetration of markets eroded traditional professions, for instance by making available cheaper clothes and shoes – resulting in loss of work for the artisan Dalit. Globalization and the communication revolution enabled educated but unemployed youth to be aware of opportunities in other societies through television, cable, radio and internet while remaining deprived of opportunities locally. On the other hand, specific state policies contributed to the marginalization of some groups. For instance, land reform policies took away the community-owned land of indigenous peoples by mandating individual land ownership. The displacement eroded their identity, which was intertwined with the land, increased poverty and destabilized their communities (Joshi and Mason 2007; Guneratne 2002; Caplan 2000, revised edition).

These multi-level changes eroded the old order, created fluidity and destabilized society. Groups in fluid conditions are prone to mobilization and often support forces that recognize them (Davidheiser 1992). The Maoists recognized the plight of the fluid groups like the marginalized indigenous nationalities, women, unemployed youth, de-skilled Dalit and others, and mobilized and incorporated many among them into the armed insurgency. For instance, youths who could not get jobs, afford college education or residence in urban centers, nor receive recognition from the age-based social hierarchy in rural areas, joined the insurgency, where they received recognition and reward (Pettigrew 2003).

Agency, ideology and strategy of the Maoists

Conducive conditions for rebellion, such as poverty and inequality, had been present in Nepal for a long time; hence, the existence of fertile conditions alone does not explain the rise of the Maoist rebellion. Unless a committed group exploits favorable conditions to build an organization and engage in large scale mobilization, a successful rebellion may not occur. The role of professionals in rebellions – an educated middle class that wants to change the society – is very important (Migdal 1975). The professionals adopt or construct ideology, create awareness, form organizations, train cadres, develop networks and mobilize people, including the poor and the peasants. To date, scholarship in Nepali rebellion has paid less attention to the agency, ideology and organization side of the People's War (the few exceptions are Khanal 2007; Mishra 2004; Graham 2007). This volume will help to fill the gap.

Leadership and ideology

The role of Maoist leadership in developing and refining a 'correct' ideology, building and expanding organization, mobilizing people, exploiting available conditions and developing strategies to outsmart a more resourceful enemy was very significant in the growth of the rebellion. The leadership began with a long preparation for the People's War. Mishra (2004: 10), a close left-movement observer in Nepal, notes that "The CPN-UC engaged in an intense five year intra-party struggle to develop and sharpen a 'correct' ideological line, 'purge' the 'minority faction' and eventually transform the 'majority faction' of the CPN-UC into CPN-M in 1995." The Maoist leaders claim that before launching the insurgency they thoroughly analyzed why the communists were successful globally in attaining power but not in retaining it.[14]

The Maoists organized awareness and training programs in their strongholds to prepare cadres and supporters for the People's War. They developed a collective political imagination for social justice and a better Nepal among their cadres that helped to overcome the initial costs of engaging in a dangerous violent conflict. The long ideological preparation benefited them significantly in the long run. Scholars have argued that rebel outfits that take time to indoctrinate their cadre ideologically end up with a disciplined cadre base that does not plunder, harass and kill indiscriminately during the war. On the other hand, if the rebel leadership takes the easy route and recruits cadres by distributing resources, the process could be easy in the short run but problematic later on. The undisciplined cadres could undermine rebellions through rapacious actions and haphazard violence (Weinstein 2007). The absence of lootable natural resources, which has been identified by some as a cause of civil wars (Collier and Hoeffler 2004), turned out to be a blessing for the Maoists.

The Maoist built a well-oiled party organization and established an army – the PLA – and a United Front – the United Revolutionary People's Council Nepal (see ICG 2005). They formed many sister organizations and fronts to assist the party and the PLA. They were often instrumental in recruiting and providing initial exposure to the party and its programs (see Eck; Mottin; and Snellinger, this volume). The party's numerous organizations and fronts, which often operated in a decentralized manner, were coordinated to achieve the common objectives. For instance, the PLA was used to attack and raid targets identified by the party, and the party and sister organizations aided the PLA during the raids. On the other hand, when the party and PLA were unable to launch attacks, the sister organizations – the student front, trade unions or ethnic fronts – organized street protests and strikes and/or blockaded towns, district headquarters and the capital. These activities filled gaps when the party and PLA were facing setbacks and generated huge psychological dividends by bewildering the state and boosting the morale of cadres. The PLA deputy chief credited the synergy between war and political struggles in the success of the rebellion.[15]

The role of leadership in the growth of the insurgency also becomes clear through their success in avoiding the 'break-up disease' that the communists in Nepal and Maoists in India were afflicted with. Some commentators point out that Prachanda, the top leader, is skilled in balancing different factions and leaders, for instance, through incorporation of issues raised by others into the official party line. Many commentators consider that the line following which they joined the multi-party system was originally propounded by Baburam Bhattarai; Prachanda co-opted it as the party line and prevented break-up of the party in the Chunwang plenary in 2005. Likewise, in late 2007 Prachanda co-opted the line of hardliners who were supported by many cadres in the national conference in Kathmandu.[16]

Mishra (2004) argues that the ideology of the rebels contributed to preventing splits within the party. The argument is plausible because before the party adopted the Maoist ideology and changed name, the predecessor party had frequently split; however, once the party adopted the Maoist ideology and launched the insurgency, the party avoided splits despite major disagreements and debates within the party – leaders gave up positions and personal advantages and were committed to a clearly articulated ideology and the goal of establishing communism.

The party followed Mao's strategy of guerrilla warfare and mass political mobilization in pursuit of a communist republic (Spence 1999). Initially they adopted Mao's three-stage strategy for people's revolution that had worked in China: strategic defense, strategic balance and strategic offence. Accordingly, they first mobilized the peasants and the poor in rural areas. The goal was to surround the center with rural peasant mobilization in the classic Mao mould. It was a good strategy because it allowed the Maoists to expand organization and build support away from the center's reach in early and weaker years.

Once the insurgency got going, a large pool of communist cadres and voters facilitated the rapid spread of the Maoists. First, converting communist sympathizers, who were familiar with ideology and political culture, into Maoist supporters/cadres was much easier than indoctrinating non-communists into Maoist cadres. Second, hardcore communists, who were frustrated with parties like the CPN-UML that had begun to demonstrate ambivalence towards the core communist ideology by the mid-1990s, were attracted to the Maoists. The discourse on revolution had been initiated in the 1970s and it had created cadres who looked forward to it. Third, after the CPN-UML split in late 1990s and the factions began

harassing supporters of the other side, many disillusioned cadres joined the Maoists, among others, for security reasons.

The Maoists had also been flexible and adaptive in their approaches, strategies and ideology. Once the Maoists realized that rural mobilization was not sufficient to pressure the center, they revised their strategy and complemented it with urban mobilization – subsuming the dual rural–urban mobilization strategy within Prachanda Path or Prachanda Line. Second, despite being a primarily a class-based insurgency, the Maoist recognized the salience of identity issues in Nepal. It may have come from the recognition that the Dalit, indigenous nationalities, and women – at a later phase the Madhesi – offered potential recruitment and mobilization opportunities owing to the groups' marginalization by the state controlled by the dominant group. Nevertheless, this was a significant leap ideologically, and the mobilization produced rich rewards, especially because the mainstream political parties were either lukewarm or hostile towards identity issues. The Maoists formed many ethnic fronts, established autonomous ethnic regions, and raised ethnic and caste issues to mobilize the Dalit and indigenous nationalities. The inability of ethnic parties and movements, who raised the issues vociferously, to get concessions from the state, helped the Maoists because it alienated marginalized groups from the mainstream political process and ethnic movements that did not appear as effective vehicles for change.

The indigenous nationalities, Dalit and women (as well as the Madhesi in later years) participated in the Maoist insurgency in significant numbers. Their participation here was much wider than it was in the mainstream political parties and the state (Lawoti 2003a). The Dalit and indigenous nationalities, especially the Kham-Magars, filled the ranks of the PLA and provided recruits for the party and numerous sister organizations and fronts.

Selective deployment of violence

Violence and its threat is probably the most potent power of rebels, but if it is not used judiciously it can backfire. In Peru the indigenous peasants initially supported the Shining Path, but after the rebels began employing violence indiscriminately against the civilian population, the communities formed civil defense groups and pushed back the rebels (see chapter 7) and contributed in the decline of the movement. In Nepal, to a large extent the Maoists used violence judiciously to push the state away from rural areas, eliminate enemies, control rural areas, collect resources and implement their policies. The Maoists in Nepal faced reactions against extreme brutalities and extortions in some regions – notably in Dailekh (Shah 2008) – but it was not widespread and the Maoists were quick to diffuse strong community reactions through apologies and withdrawal of strong reaction-generating activities. They killed many innocent people, but they did not use violence indiscriminately and hence avoided large scale resistance.

The Maoists used violence and its threat selectively to expand their organizations. In new areas the Maoist had begun to infiltrate, they would post anonymous notices in public places such as schools and government offices prohibiting certain

activities and threatening actions against those who did not conform. When after their activities increased the Maoists still did not feel safe in an area, anonymous threat letters would be sent to individuals whom the Maoists perceived as 'enemies' or potential donors. In regions under their control, a few or a large group of Maoists would make personal visits to threaten individuals if they were perceived to be working against their interest (Shneiderman and Turin 2003). In new areas, the Maoists visited during the night to beat people who resisted their dictates. The members of these violent teams were often unknown to the victims to avoid future retaliations in new areas (de Sales 2003). The activities were quite effective without much repercussion for the Maoists. People followed the Maoist dictates because of fear – the mobile Maoist army or militia could visit any time to take 'actions,' which could include minor punishment, public humiliation through garlanding with shoes and the shaving of heads, torture or even death.

The level of fear was quite widespread in rural areas, as anthropologists have pointed out (Pettigrew 2003a, 2003b). The Maoists deliberately created fear to control the population: "For the Maoists, the spreading of fear functioned as an exceptionally powerful means of control" (Graham 2007: 238). They often killed village elite to gain wider publicity. They also engaged in public demonstrations of torture and killings and often advertised such actions in newspapers, newsletters and cultural programs to demonstrate their strength (Fujikura 2003). The fear spread through threat and intimidation, real or implied, and backed up by mobile PLA and militia that could cover a wide area, enabled the Maoists to control large swathes of rural areas with limited cadres (Lecomte-Tilouine, this volume).

The Maoists also used coercion in recruitment. In some regions, they adopted a policy of "one person for PLA from one house." The Maoists abducted teachers, school children and political opponents and took the abductees around their rallies and programs for initial exposure to the Maoist ideologies (Eck, this volume). Some of the abducted children became political cadres, PLA foot soldiers, porters and medical assistants. The Human Rights Watch (2007) estimated 3,500 to 4,500 child soldiers to be part of the Maoist fighting force.

Another important function of violence was the displacement of the state and its agencies and opposition political cadres from rural areas. As the rebels attacked police posts and government offices and looted arms, ammunition and cash, the state agencies were shifted to more secure areas. This created voids in rural areas, and the Maoists filled them without much resistance from the local population. With the lack of protection from the state, villagers and cadres of other political parties were unable to resist the Maoists. People who were considered an enemy by the Maoists were harassed and many were expelled while others migrated out of fear.

The deployment of violence against local elite and state agencies in rural areas enabled the Maoists to win support from poor peasants. The Maoists had not been able to gain the support of the poor and disadvantaged groups before the insurgency, as is demonstrated by their inability to garner votes during elections, despite raising their issues, because the poor peasants were under the patronage of the local elite. The peasants voted as dictated by their patrons and against their class interest. Once the Maoists broke down the patron–client network with violence against the

local elite, the former 'clients' became free to support the Maoists (Joshi and Mason 2007). Alternatively, a slightly different mechanism may have been set in motion, but with the very same results; namely, with the breakdown of the old order and the inability of former patrons to protect or constrain, poor peasants supported the Maoists who emerged as the new masters with violent capabilities. The Maoist patronage, however, was perceived as progressive by many and probably was less harmful to supporters because it was not strongly rooted, as village chiefs and party cadres were frequently transferred.

Revolutionary governance and provision of public goods

Guerrilla warfare cannot sustain without the support and compliance of the people. "Civilians are strategic actors, and as such they have the capacity to provide or withhold their participation and support" (Weinstein 2007: 163). Rebels have to win the hearts of the people while at the same time obtaining supplies. The Maoists attempted to win support in villages by providing different "public goods."

One of the better-known and successfully advertised public goods by the Maoists was actions against unpopular village elites, money lenders and 'slack' public school teachers. They confiscated the property of their opponents and distributed it among their supporters and the poor in some regions. The Maoists prohibited public sale of liquor in many areas and punished men engaged in domestic violence. The actions against untouchability, ethnic prejudice and sexism created a pro-people image for the Maoists and attracted committed cadres to the Maoist fold. Many people, especially those who were targeted from these actions, were offended but often were not able to resist owing to the breakdown of the state support system. The Maoists attempted to increase the legitimacy of their governance by holding elections in base areas and appointing Dalit, indigenous nationalities and women, who were rarely nominated or elected to public offices, as heads of different levels of people's governments.

The Maoists also engaged in the building of infrastructures, such as roads and bridges. Road-building was quite widespread in the hilly areas, even though many of the roads were never completed and vehicles never plied along them. Even though the Maoists mostly used 'voluntary' labor for construction projects, the people were not totally against such development initiatives.

A successful governance tool innovated by the Maoists and that affected more people was the People's Court, which adjudicated conflicts in villages and punished Maoist opponents. The courts often addressed the immediate needs of the rural people because the formal conflict resolution mechanism – the district court system – was far away, slow, costly and often corrupt. Many people were relieved when minor conflicts were settled quickly in villages at much lower cost.[17]

The Maoists governed the areas under their control with some level of "consensus." In many instances, they listened to the common people, who had rarely been asked for opinions before by "big people" (Shneiderman and Turin 2003). The Maoists levied "revolutionary" taxes,[18] collected food, took goods from shops on "credit," forced "voluntary" labor for "development" projects, restricted people's

travel to district headquarters in some regions, and exerted local power in other ways. But in most cases their activities did not reach intolerable levels. For instance, they did not collect food without leaving any for villagers. They often presented their claims and demands on the people as a necessity for waging a war to better the lives of people. This attempt at "consensus" governance prevented strong reactions from the villagers even though they may not have been happy with forced contributions. When the policies of the Maoists generated strong and wide reaction and resistance, they were quick to defuse this through modification or withdrawal of policies, forming investigation committees and offering public apologies.

Exploiting contradictions and creating opportunities

The Nepali Maoists brilliantly exploited contradictions at all levels – at the family, household, local, national and international levels – to their benefit. The Maoists often used binary oppositions such as oppressed–oppressor, proletariat–feudal, reactionary–revolutionary, just and unjust wars (Lecomte-Tilouine 2006) to exploit the contradictions for recruiting and mobilizing people. If there was conflict in the family, they would take one side. Likewise, the Maoists often took sides in village disputes. Taking sides in a conflict allowed them to gain a foothold in villages and provided access to information about villagers and local political dynamics (de Sales 2003; Pettigrew 2003a).

To compete with other political parties, the Maoists successfully projected an image of a party that most vociferously raised the issues of the poor and the oppressed. Likewise, in addition to class issues, as discussed earlier, they exploited identity and socio-cultural contradictions to attract the marginalized indigenous nationalities, Dalit and women. As the ethnic and caste claims were largely against the state controlled by the dominant group, oppositional positions of the marginalized groups and the Maoists vis-à-vis the state converged.

At the political level, the Maoists effectively played on the fault lines and divisions among establishment political forces. For the first half of the insurgency, while their movement was still weak, they deliberately avoided antagonizing the Royal Nepal Army. The Maoists have publicly said that they had some sort of understanding with late King Birendra, who refused to deploy the army against "its own people." Without the well-equipped and trained army breathing behind their back, the Maoists established an army, trained them, equipped them with looted arms and ammunition, gained fighting experience in conflicts with the less prepared police and established base areas (see Mehta and Lawoti, this volume). The Maoists selectively attacked the cadres of the ruling Nepali Congress at the beginning while calling for unity among leftist and nationalist forces. The moderate communist factions and rightist groups were unmoved – if not pleased – by attacks against their arch political opponent which they felt was abusing state powers to undermine them politically. When the moderate left formed the government, the Maoists began attacking their cadres. This turn of events pleased Nepali Congress and the royalists. When the Maoists targeted the rightist cadres, the NC and

CPN-UML seemed to be least bothered. The Maoists began to highlight the republican demand after King Gyanendra began intervening in politics. The mainstream political parties were allowed by the Maoists to operate more freely in rural areas after that. By mostly attacking the cadres of the ruling party, the Maoists did not provide grounds for all establishment parties to form a joint coalition against them. The Maoists brilliantly exploited the lust for power and conflicts of interests among the mainstream political forces (the king and different political parties).

At the international level also, the Maoists changed their positions and tactics for attaining strategic goals. For instance, they raised anti-India rhetoric initially to attract nationalist support among the educated elite and middle class. When the Maoist leadership had to take shelter in India, the rhetoric took a backseat. They raised the specter of Indian expansionism again and even dug trenches to allegedly resist the invading Indian forces after the Indian government captured some Maoist leaders in India after the turn of the century. Eventually, they reached an agreement with the seven parliamentary parties in India under the supervision of Indian officials after King Gyanendra irked the Indians (see Upreti, this volume). This brief discussion shows that the Maoists brilliantly exploited contradiction and opportunities in pursuit of their goals.

Exclusionary democracy and the weak state

A fertile environment and committed insurgents are important and necessary conditions but not sufficient for the success of rebellions. Rebellions are launched against a state and their success and failure are dependent to a considerable extent on the capability, coherence and responsiveness of the state (Skocpol 1979; Goodwin and Skocpol 1989; Davidheiser 1992; Gurr 1968). An effective state can improve societal conditions so that insurgency-favorable conditions no longer remain, or are lessened. Capable states can also successfully repress rebellions. Rebellions have been repressed in many countries such as Peru, Malaya, Bolivia, Sri Lanka (Maoist rebellion) and India (1960s Naxalite uprising).[19] On the other hand, Goodwin and Skocpol (1989: 505) argue that narrow, incompetent and corrupt regimes are vulnerable to revolutionary takeover: "Revolutionary coalitions have formed and expanded in countries in which one finds . . . political exclusion and severe and indiscriminate (while not overwhelming) repression." Cuba, Vietnam and China are examples of successful revolutions. Despite the important role of the state in rebellions, the nature of the democratic state in Nepal and its role in the growth of the Maoist rebellion has not received thorough attention (a few exceptions are Lawoti 2003b, 2007b; Khanal 2007; Hachhethu 2004).

With the restoration of democracy in 1990 and universal adult franchise, the Nepali state appeared to have become more inclusive than before. Extremist communist groups like the CPN-UC (predecessor of the Maoists), in fact, participated in elections in the early 1990s before launching the insurgency. The question is why did the Maoists abandon the electoral path (only to eventually return to it)? What was the role of the state in the growth of the rebellion?

Exclusionary democracy

Scholars have pointed out that majoritarian democracies with the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral method and unitary structure are more prone to violent conflicts than power-sharing democracies with federal system and proportional representative electoral method (Cohen 1997; Saideman et al. 2002; Horowitz 1994; Lijphart 1977). Others have pointed out that new democracies in fact could incite violence by exacerbating tensions through competition for power, especially if the yet to be consolidated rules of the game are not perceived as fair (Gurr 2000; Snyder 2000; Jarstad and Sisk 2008). Nepal had the formal trappings of a democracy, such as regular elections and parliament; but Nepal's state institutions and democracy were exclusionary. The winner-take-all majoritarian democracy Nepal adopted in 1990 alienated ideological and cultural minorities through denial of political space in governance. It was instrumental in pushing a party that participated in the 1991 general and 1992 local elections to an insurgency (Lawoti 2005).[20]

Democracy was defined very narrowly during the 1990s in Nepal. The prevalent notion was that the party that won a majority of seats in the Parliament had the right to rule in whatever way it pleased. The state structure and political culture gave little role to the opposition in governance, while the ruling party often abused the state machinery and resources to undermine and harass opposition parties. The FPTP electoral method and the unitary system facilitated the concentration of power in a narrow majority. Further, the parliamentary committee system was weak, because of which opposition had no significant role in making legislations and holding the government accountable. As a result the non-ruling political party actors, including the Maoists, and citizens, felt excluded from the governance processes (Lawoti 2007b).

The Maoists raised issues with different governments in the early 1990s and called many strikes to attract the attention of the government. The 40-point demands submitted to the Sher Bahadur Deuba government before launching the insurgency was the final list – they expanded the demands over the years as they petitioned successive governments. The various governments from 1991 to 1996 were not responsive to these demands.

The Maoists also suffered from the extreme partisan governance. To have an upper hand in the local political conflicts, the Nepali Congress government at the center used the local administration under it to imprison, torture and implicate cadres of its competitor – the CPN-UC – in false cases in Rolpa and Rukum in the western hills (INSEC 1999). During the initial counter-insurgency activities in the Maoist heartland of the mid-western hill districts, the police burned houses of Maoist suspects and villagers, looted cash and other goods, raped women and arrested hundreds of people, and thrashed common people and Maoist sympathizers. Operation Romeo, launched in 1995 prior to the insurgency, and Operation Kilo Sera-2, launched in 1998, have been cited as very brutal and repressive actions that pushed the common people into the Maoist fold (INSEC 1999). Often, the would-be Maoists instigated the conflicts by beating cadres of other political forces

but the administration usually targeted only the Maoists for harassment (Gersony 2003). Even the Maoist-elected local government officials were not spared. Owing to the issuance of warrants for arrests and repression, many Maoists went underground (incognito).

The repression was capped by the non-recognition of the Maoist faction by the Election Commission in 1994. When the UPFN, the political front of the CPN-UC split, the Election Commission recognized the UPFN allied to Nirmal Lama and did not recognize the outfit led by Baburam Bhattarai. Stung by non-recognition, the UPFN led by Baburam Bhattarai boycotted the 1994 mid-term election. Would the Maoists have launched the insurgency if they had won seats in the Parliament in 1994? It is hard to know whether electoral victory could have worked against launching the insurgency. Perhaps they would have continued to utilize the electoral opportunities if the political environment had not been turned against them (Thapa and Sijapati 2003; Lawoti 2005).

As the repression continued and conflict escalated, the Maoists launched the insurgency. Regan and Norton (2005: 324) write: "As state increases repression, more people will mobilize around the rebel cause to avoid the abuse at the hands of the state," especially if they are suspected by the state of being rebel sympathizers. Many victims of the police brutality joined the Maoists for protection if not for revenge.

The highly majoritarian and centralized democracy excluded more than two thirds of the marginalized Dalit, indigenous nationalities and Madhesi from governance, as discussed earlier. A state that is weak owing to exclusion can endure if there are no challenges, but if a challenge emerges it could dismantle rapidly, especially if the rebel forces mobilize the excluded people. The exclusion in Nepal did not manifest into political ramification in pre-1990 years because radical groups could not mobilize owing to restrictions on political rights and civil liberties. The continued exclusion in the post-1990 open polity, however, meant that the Maoists had opportunities to exploit the situation, which they did rather effectively. The increase in awareness of inequality, exclusion and discrimination among the marginalized groups, on the other hand, made the Maoist task easier.

While the majoritarian democracy excluded and pushed the Maoists towards the insurgency, it also provided the Maoists with basic rights that allowed them to organize and prepare for the People's War. The Maoists could openly organize political activities and expand party organization and mobilize people after 1990. The intelligentsia was sympathetic and the free media covered the insurgency extensively. The due process and habeas corpus guaranteed by the 1990 Constitution protected Maoist cadres' rights to some degree through release from arbitrary detentions. The Maoists benefited from these limited rights because the restored democracy, however flawed, guaranteed basic political rights and civil liberties.

In addition, once the Maoists launched the People's War, the government could not repress it as brutally as in pre-1990 years. The government was constrained to some degree by the free press, human rights groups and the norms of a democratic regime. Thus, unlike in 1971, when the state successfully repressed a violent communist movement in east Nepal, the government in the 1990s was tied because of the nature of the regime.

Weak state and divided establishment

Democracy may constrain unrestrained repression, but as states have legal monopoly over the use of violence, capable and strong states can and do repress rebellions. The Nepali state, however, was weak, incoherent and detached. It not only could not repress but, in fact, contributed to the growth of the Maoists by neither formulating substantive reforms to address problems, nor developing a coherent and comprehensive policy towards the rebels.

The Nepali state had not effectively penetrated the countryside and hence did not reach a vast segment of population. The health sector and physical infrastructure provide some examples of shortages of services: in the mid-1990s, 11 out of 75 districts did not have public hospitals; there was one doctor for nearly 14,000 people in 1993/94; and only 754 health posts and 117 primary health centers were operating by 1997 (NESAC 1998: 61). Likewise, black-topped roads per 10,000 persons stood at 2 km and only five persons out of 1,000 had telephone connections (NESAC 1998: 16). Kathmandu's HDI in the 1990s was above 0.6 while 21 rural districts' HDI ranged between 0.2 and 0.3, and another three districts had lower than 0.2 (NESAC 1998: 42). As the state had not done much for the people, a large segment of the population demonstrated ambivalence towards the state when the Maoists emerged to challenge it.

The historic apathy continued in the 1990s because of the continuation of extractive policy and absence of substantive reforms. The restoration of democracy in 1990 had raised high hopes among many people but the state failed to meet the aspirations. Substantive reforms with regard to land distribution, devolution and citizenship were not introduced. The CPN-UML minority government introduced some reforms in 1994 but they were minimal.

The centralization of power in Kathmandu and within the executive at the center rendered the parliament and other agencies of the state ineffective. They had no power to formulate and execute public policies. On the other hand, concentration of power in the executive meant that its scope was wide and made it impossible to focus on priority issues. When the executive failed to deliver, the overall state failed because other branches and agencies lacked authority to deliver (Lawoti 2007b; Huntington 1968). The local governments were weak despite the 1999 decentralization act because they were not empowered with fiscal and political authority. Likewise, the police and civil administration was still controlled by the central government. The weak local governments also could not provide services or protect the people.

The centralized but ineffective and unresponsive state contributed to governance crises in the 1990s and eroded the performance legitimacy of the state (Riaz and Basu 2007). Power abuse, corruption and a culture of impunity became widespread and administration was politicized for partisan purposes. Absence of effective accountability mechanism further fuelled power abuse and corruption. The crises increased dissatisfaction among common citizens. As the political parties, especially the ruling party, abused state power and administration to influence electoral outcomes, elections in particular and democracy in general began to lose

legitimacy, the more so because the open polity allowed the articulation of dissatisfaction (Lawoti 2007b).

The state not only failed to repress the insurgency, but its counter-insurgency activities, as discussed earlier, fuelled the insurgency because of the haphazard deployment of force. Further, the Maoist rebellion grew rapidly owing to the irresponsible response of the state. When the Maoists began attacking rural police posts and government offices, the state agencies were withdrawn to district centers and other safe areas. For instance, between 2052 v.s. (1996) and the second restoration of democracy in 2063 v.s. (April 2006), 1,271 police units out of nearly two thousand total units (around 65 percent) were removed from rural areas and merged with units in secure towns and district headquarters (Lawoti, forthcoming, 2009). The aim may have been to prevent overrunning of the units and looting of weapons by the Maoists but it allowed the Maoists to occupy the vacated space and consolidate their hold in the rural regions. Even locals who opposed Maoist ideology could not resist because the state failed to provide them with security.

Once the insurgency got going, the state failed to come up with a coherent and comprehensive policy to deal with the rebellion. One reason for failure was probably the state's denial of potential armed conflicts in Nepal. The state and its military did not envision any internal threat, as the absence of RNA's preparation to deal with the internal threat suggests (Mehta and Lawoti, this volume). The government's projection of Nepal as a peaceful society and its attempts to declare Nepal as a zone of peace, despite many small scale conflicts (Lawoti 2007a; Dastider 2000), may have created a 'mental block.' The state may have begun to believe in the myths it had manufactured, and this denial undermined not only its preparedness but also its ability to recognize the depth of the problem and to respond accordingly.

The divisions and factionalism in the establishment side also contributed to the polity's ineffectiveness. First, as discussed earlier, the RNA was deployed late because of mistrust between the king and the political parties as well as suspicion between the political parties and the RNA. Second, frequent government changes meant that attitudes, strategies and policies towards the Maoists kept on changing. There were 11 governments during the decade-long insurgency. The division and infighting within the establishment side allowed the Maoists to grow without effective resistance from the establishment. The mainstream political parties led by leaders who confined themselves in the capital did not launch an effective joint resistance against the Maoists even when their cadres were harassed, displaced or killed. The infighting among and within political parties was primarily driven by clientelistic politics. Politicians needed to distribute resources to expand and maintain support among cadres as well as voters. Because of centralization, resources could be had only if one was in the government.

The divisions among the establishment finally dropped victory into the Maoists' lap. With King Gyanendra's February 2005 coup, the division sharpened and the state became isolated. The parliamentary political parties reached an understanding with the Maoists while most international actors opposed the move and suspended aid to the government. India, the main arms and ammunition supplier to the RNA,

conducted a volte-face and facilitated the understanding between the parliamentary parties and the Maoists. This new development resulted in the successful mass movement of April 2006 that forced the royal regime into capitulation and facilitated the Maoists' ascension to state power.

External factors

External conditions affect revolutions through influence on local conditions, institutions and actors. Military competition and war, intrusion from abroad, international support to rebels or the establishment side, and transnational economic conditions could create revolutionary political conditions by affecting economic development and administrative and military coherence or breakdown (Skocpol 1979). The Maoists themselves have pointed to international factors as structural causes of the rebellion in Nepal. They have alleged that "capitalist imperialism" and "Indian expansionism" have caused underdevelopment in Nepal characterized by "semi-colonialism" and "semi-feudalism" (Bhattarai 2003). Scholars have found in other contexts that "historically developing transnational economic relations have always strongly (and differentially) influenced national economic development" (Skocpol 1979: 20), which is true for Nepal as well. The Nepali market has been flooded with cheaper Indian goods and this has had a detrimental impact on traditional goods produced by artisans as well as on manufacturing industries.

The global economy has affected the insurgency indirectly through remittance economy, which is a large contributor to the income of many Nepali households, particularly outside Kathmandu. With their 'donation' networks spread across the country, the Maoists tapped into remittance earnings in a significant way. The majority of those who go abroad for work are from villages and the Maoists taxed people who returned for holidays as well as when they sent money home to their families. The seasonal and longer migration, especially that to India facilitated by an open border and working rights, which had worked as a safety valve to diffuse revolutionary potential for decades by allowing poor villagers to earn and pay their debts and meet other household monetary needs, were tapped by the Maoists for collecting resources in an otherwise resource-scarce society. The Maoists also received funds from the large Nepali diaspora in India organized by the All India Nepali Unity Society (AINUS). The Maoists also benefited from INGO development projects, either directly taxing them or taxing people who worked in such projects. Projects like road construction circulated cash in rural areas and this enabled the Maoists to collect donations.

The amount of funds collected by the Maoists from remittances, INGO projects and AINUS is not known. Likewise, transnational economic relations' affect on the insurgency has not been analyzed. Of the few scholarly works that have analyzed the impact of external factors on the Nepali insurgency, some have pointed to India's attempt to exploit the Maoist insurgency by allowing the Maoists free movement in India for possible leverage to extract concessions from Nepal (Shah 2004; Mishra 2004). Others have shown that India aided the Nepali state by providing large amounts of arms, ammunition and training to the RNA (Mehta 2005).

With the end of the Cold War, the Nepali Maoists did not receive significant material support from their brethren, unlike during the Cold War years when the global communist powers encouraged and aided communist movements with arms, ammunition and other resources. In contrast, in the post-Cold War and post-9/11 environment democratic countries like India, the US and the UK considered the rise of the Maoists as a threat. The US and India labeled the Maoists as terrorists and provided equipment, training and other support to the state army. Upreti's chapter discusses the role of different external actors in the Maoist insurgency and how change in India's attitude after February 2005 became detrimental to the monarchy and benefited the Maoists.

Overall, perhaps apart from transnational economic relations affect on the Nepali society and indirect fund collection from development projects and the remittance economy, other international factors did not directly aid the Maoists. In fact, the external environment was adverse. Thus, it may be safe to conclude that non-external factors were more salient in the growth of the Maoist insurgency.

Chapter plan

Part II includes chapters on agency, ideology, organization and support. In chapter 2, Eck discusses the importance of agency in rebellions through an analysis of the Maoist recruitment drive. In chapter 3, Mottin provides a rich ethnographic analysis of a Maoist cultural troupe's contribution to the insurgency and Cultural Revolution via its artistic representations and programs. Snellinger in chapter 4 argues that the motivation of the Maoists – students in her study – came from their notion of being involved in a struggle for societal transformation. In chapter 5, Joshi argues that failings of the electoral democracy and liberal market economy alienated rural people and the aggrieved population supported the Maoists.

Part III consists of chapter 6, where Lecomte-Tilouine provides a rare glimpse of revolutionary governance in a Maoist base area. Part IV consists of two chapters that look at the ethnic dimension of the insurgency. In chapter 7, Lawoti shows that, based on a comparative study of Nepal, India and Peru, higher ethnic participation contributed to differential trajectories of the three rebellions. In chapter 8 Kantha points to the contradiction between the Maoist positions and Madhesi aspirations and how it pitched the two forces against each other and impeded the Maoist infiltration among the Madhesi.

Part V is composed of two chapters on the state and military. In chapter 9 Mehta and Lawoti point out the reasons behind the failure of the well-equipped, trained and bigger state army to contain the rebel army. Pahari, in chapter 10 argues that inferior organization of the Naxalites in West Bengal in the 1960s and 1970s led to its suppression by the state while superior organization of the Nepali Maoists contributed to it success. In chapter 11 of Part VI, Upreti analyzes the role of external actors in the armed conflict as escalators, mediators and insurgency supporters.

In chapter 12 of Part VII Tiwari analyzes the role of various structural variables in the conflict with two dependent variables while Acharya in chapter 13 adds

political economy variables such ideology and political activism to identify the causes of the conflict.

Part VIII contains two chapters on the post-conflict trajectory of the Maoist movement. In chapter 14, Lawoti argues that the Maoists obtained electoral victory not only because people aspired to change; intimidation and threat by the Maoists also contributed to their victory. In the last chapter, Lawoti and Pahari assess the revolutionary impact of the Maoist rebellion and project possible trajectories of the Maoists and the Nepali polity.

Notes

1 A few sections of the chapter draw liberally from Lawoti (2005, 2007a; forthcoming (2009)) and chapter 28 from Malik et al. (2008).
2 We will interchangeably use the terms insurgency, rebellion, People's War, armed conflict and civil war in this volume to describe the armed mobilization of the CPN-M from 1996 to 2006.
3 Deraniyagala (2005: 54) found GDP real growth at 1985 prices for 1981–85, 1986–90, 1991–95 and 1996–2000 as 5.0, 4.8, 5.0 and 5.0 percent respectively. Growth rates were less than 3 percent in the preceding one-and-half decades.
4 We failed to get chapters on gender and Dalit dimensions. See Manchanda (2004) and Pettigrew and Shneiderman (2004) for analyses of women's participation in the armed conflict.
5 The CPN-Fourth Congress split in 1983 into CPN-Masal led by Mohan Bikram Singh and CPN-Fourth Congress led by Nirmal Lama. The CPN-Masal broke into two in 1985: CPN-Masal led by Mohan Bikram Singh and CPN-Mashal led by Mohan Baidya aka Kiran. See Thapa and Sijapati (2003) and Rawal (2047 v.s. (1991)) for a detailed history of the breakups.
6 The CPN-Fourth Congress had adopted a proposal for an agrarian revolution in 1979 (Thapa and Sijapati 2003: 25).
7 See appendix A for the 40-point demand. It was divided into Nationalism, People's Democracy, and Livelihood sections which included 9, 17 and 14 points respectively.
8 Inequality, as measured by the Gini Index, was less in the 1980s in Nepal (0.300) than in India (0.312), Sri Lanka (0.341) and Pakistan (0.326)(Wagle 2007).
9 The analyses of the Nepali insurgency have not engaged on the ongoing debate in the third world revolution literature on whether smallholder peasants or property-less laborers and sharecroppers are revolutionary. Some argue that property-holding peasants have material and organizational advantages to offer collective resistance (Wolf 1969), while others claim that smallholding peasants are normally conservative and quiescent (Paige 1975).
10 Despite his earlier prediction of environmental degradation from the population boom in a hill village in central west Nepal, Macfarlane (2001) found that outward migration had taken off the pressure on land and forests. Likewise, community forestry that had begun since the 1970s and expanded rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s also contributed to the protection of the environment to some degree (Agrawal and Ostrom 2001; Varughese 2000).
11 Nepal has four religious groups (Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim and Kiranti) with more than 3 percent population, more than 100 linguistic groups and numerous caste and sub-caste groups, and the government has recognized 59 nationalities. The groups can be broadly categorized as Caste Hill Hindu Elite (CHHE), Dalit ('untouchable' caste, according to Hindu tradition), indigenous nationalities and Madhesi (plain dwellers) of North Indian origin. Muslims are counted as Madhesi. They number approximately 31, 15, 37 and 17 percent respectively. The Madhesi population would become 32 percent if Tarai indigenous nationalities and Dalit are included in the count.

12 Monarchs are considered as the effective executive head during the Panchayat in this count.
13 Some of the larger ethnic groups are less marginalized or even dominant in areas of their origin but once they come into contact with the centre or its representatives at district levels they become marginalized. Studies have shown that local CHHE use their caste network at district and national levels to enhance their economic, political and social positions (Caplan 2000, revised edition; Holmberg 2006).
14 Interviews, Maoist leaders, summer 2006 and 2008.
15 Interview, August 2008.
16 Subsequently the Maoist quit the government and launched street protests demanding postponement of the Constituent Assembly election and an end to monarchy.
17 In many instances the people's court delivered controversial and partisan judgments but the point is that they provided useful service to the people as well.
18 In one hill village in east Nepal I visited in summer 2006, the Maoists had collected 'taxes' at least once from everyone, including the poorest. The lowest amount was a day's wage, at the time 25 rupees.
19 The states were successful in counter-insurgency not only because of repressive capability but because they introduced reforms to improve societal conditions.
20 The Maoists claimed that they had participated in the election to expose the parliamentary system but such rhetoric is common among communists. In fact, another extremist faction – CPN-Masal led by Mohan Bikram Singh – boycotted the 1991election but did not launch a violent rebellion. It has participated in subsequent elections. Likewise, even the CPN-UML was initially very critical of the 1990 Constitution.

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Part II

Agency, ideology, organization, and support

Contents