Emma Björnehed

Ideas in Conflict

The effect of frames in the Nepal conflict and peace process
Abstract


In 1996 the state of Nepal was challenged by a Maoist insurgency, resulting in a decade-long civil war. During the course of the subsequent peace process the parliamentary parties found themselves agreeing to significant political changes, including a republican constitution. This study approaches the Nepal case on the assumption that the discursive aspect of social relations is one important factor in understanding how specific events unfold and why actors do one thing and not another.

Two frames are investigated using frame analysis in terms of their representation of problem, cause and solution: a terrorism frame from the period of conflict and a peace frame from the period of conflict resolution. The terrorism frame is categorised as a negative frame and the peace frame as a positive frame. This overarching difference is found to have implications for the effects of the respective frames.

In contrast to traditional frame analysis, which tends to focus on the success of a frame and the effects on a specific audience, this study investigates the effects of frames on the actors involved in the framing process in terms of their perceived manoeuvrability for action. This approach is formalised in a model of four types of logic of actor effects that is applied to the Nepal case. The analysis of frame effects is based on first-hand interviews with key actors, such as former prime ministers and top leaders of political parties and civil society. From this material, the study gives insight into how the two frames influenced the actors’ perceived manoeuvrability. This actor-centred approach shows that the frames affected the actors in both enabling and restrictive ways and thus influenced the outcome in Nepal. For example, it is shown that frames created during the conflict were considered a prerequisite for the legitimate use of military force. The study also shows the unintended effects of framing, captured in the model as the effect of self-entrapment, and highlights the coercive character of ideas in making actors perceive themselves as forced to take a certain action or position.

Keywords: framing, frames, Nepal, conflict, conflict resolution, peace process, entrapment, self-entrapment, resonance, terrorism, perceived manoeuvrability, elite interviews

Emma Björnehed, Uppsala University, Department of Government, Box 514, SE-751 20 Uppsala, Sweden.

© Emma Björnehed 2012

ISSN 0346-7538
ISBN 978-91-554-8422-4
urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-179193 (http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-179193)

Printed by Elanders Sverige AB, 2012
To my parents

In memory of my grandfather
Acknowledgments

Throughout this project numerous people have proven invaluable to me in a professional and a personal capacity and some truly patient persons have proven themselves in both these capacities.

This project would not have amounted to anything had it not been for those people who generously gave of their time and shared their experiences during my field research in Nepal. This study to a large extent rests on the material provided by the interviewees and I am immensely grateful for their contribution and courtesy. My field trips to Nepal were a rewarding and fantastic experience and they were made so due to the commitment of several people. Here I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to my two contact persons, Padma Ratna Tuladhar and Sadip Bahadur Shah, who devoted much time to helping me arrange meetings and showed me such hospitality. I also want to thank the Bhatta family and Ganesh Bhatta particularly for giving me a home during my stay in Nepal, for making me part of the family and showing me such generosity and kindness. As the research trips constitute such an essential part of this research project, I also would like to thank the Borbos Erik Hansson’s Foundation for making my trips to Nepal possible.

Several people have assisted me during this dissertation project, but none more so than my supervisors, Bo Bengtsson, Maria Heimer and Stefano Guzzini. Your patience and dedication when reading the numerous versions of the text have been far above the call of duty and your comments have proven invaluable for the final product. Throughout, you have challenged me at the right moments, made me stop and think when I have had a tendency to speed ahead and most importantly, you have always possessed the ability to make me feel enthusiastic about my work.

Many others have also taken the time to engage with the text over the years and their comments have contributed to increasing the quality of the work. I would like to especially thank Fredrik Bynander and Helena Wockelberg at the Department of Government for comments both early on and at the end of the project. I also would like to thank Kristine Eck at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research for comments on the text and for our discussions and shared experiences as a result of us both working with, and in, Nepal. I am also grateful for the generous comments given by Li Bennich-Björkman, Nils Hertting, and Roxanna Sjöstedt in conjunction with the script conference for this thesis. I especially want to thank Josefina Erik-
son for offering continuous comments and for always being prepared to discuss framing. Also, I would like to thank Sten Widmalm and Per-Ola Öberg, for your comments and suggestions. I also wish to thank Arthur French and Stephen Gilliver for proofreading the manuscript with dedication and commitment.

To all my other colleagues and friends at the Department of Government, I want to thank you for making these past years a rewarding and fantastic time. You create a wonderful atmosphere and great camaraderie. I especially want to thank my friends at the forth floor and I am so grateful for your academic and emotional support, and for aiding me, and at times actually feeding me, during the process of writing this thesis.

A special thank you to all the members of my cohort: to Gina Gustavsson for your refreshing ability to putting words to thoughts; to Jenny Jansson for your perfect embodiment of the sensibility and strength of the north; to Maria Johansson for being able to project kindness and caring even from afar; and to Johanna Söderström for your ability to always foresee what I ought to do and what I need before I think of it myself.

Even though the Department of Government has been my home for the main part of my time as a PhD student I have also had the privilege to have been a part of the Department of Eurasian Studies and here I would like to thank Stefan Hedlund, Claes Levinsson and Lena Wallin for your tremendous support and for making it possible for me to begin my doctoral studies. I also wish to thank Eva Dreimanis, with whom I have been fortunate enough to work wherever I have been situated over the years.

As is to be expected for a project this long, there have been both ups and downs. I am fortunate and so grateful to have around me the best of people who possess the ability to make the most of the ups and levelling out the downs. My old friends, my new friends, my nerd friends, you make my life so wonderfully exciting and every single one of you is perfectly and truly awesome. I especially want to thank Maddalena Lee for being who you are, strong, wise and fearless. I am so glad to have you.

To Erik Bovin I want to extend a sincere thank you for never failing to educate me on the proper tactics in Heroes, as if I would need it.

Lastly, I want to thank my family. Erik, thank you for being a fantastic brother, for being there for me and always having my best interest at heart.

Mum and Dad, you are so precious to me. Your support and encouragement over the years has been invaluable and I have you to thank for everything.

Finally, my precious Martin, I am so blessed to have you in my life, and I cannot wait for our future.

Emma Björnehed

Uppsala, August 14, 2012
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments........................................................................................................... vii

1. The state of Nepal and the realm of ideas: a frame analysis perspective on a conflict and peace process.................................................................................. 13  
   Research question and purpose............................................................................. 16  
   What is a frame and what does it do? ................................................................. 18  
   Previous approaches to frame effects ............................................................... 24  
      Focus on success .............................................................................................. 24  
      The dominance of resonance and the audience .......................................... 25  
   Contributions of the study .................................................................................. 25  
   Frames in a conflict and peace context .............................................................. 27  
      Nepal as a case of frames in conflict and peace ........................................... 28  
   Actors, frames and effects ................................................................................... 30  
   Structure of the dissertation .............................................................................. 31  

2. Theoretical perspective: An actor and effect centred frame analysis.......33  
   The focus of frame analysis................................................................................ 33  
   Frame construction .............................................................................................. 36  
      The object of framing—what is being framed? ............................................ 39  
      The static tendency of frame analysis—an internal critique ................... 41  
      The strategic use of frames ........................................................................... 43  
      Strategy in the face of frames ........................................................................ 47  
   The effect of frames—a model for analysis ..................................................... 48  
      The concept of resonance ............................................................................ 52  
      The successfulness of frames—as effectiveness and effects ................... 54  
      Perceived resonance and effects beyond the audience ............................ 55  
   Four logic of actor effects................................................................................... 58  
      Self-serving .................................................................................................... 59  
      Persuasion ..................................................................................................... 59  
      Entrapment .................................................................................................... 59  
      Self-entrapment ............................................................................................. 62  
   Summary of the theoretical and analytical framework .................................. 62  

3. Method and material—approach and process ................................................. 64  
   Field studies ....................................................................................................... 65  
   Approaching interviews—choices and reflections .......................................... 67  
      On interviewing elite actors ......................................................................... 68
Types of questions and structure of interviews ........................................ 75
Follow-up questions .................................................................................. 78
Language ........................................................................................................ 80
On or off the record? .................................................................................... 80
Transcribing, treatment and presentation .................................................. 81
Written material ............................................................................................ 82

4. Overview of Nepal: main actors and events ........................................ 84
Parties to the conflict .................................................................................. 84
The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) .................................................... 85
The main parliamentary parties ................................................................. 87
The Palace ..................................................................................................... 90
Period of conflict ........................................................................................ 91
Democracy and the beginning of fragmentation ...................................... 91
The Boycott of the 1994 Elections and the 40-point demand ................. 92
Negotiation and military involvement (2001) ........................................... 93
Dissolution of parliament (2002) .............................................................. 94
Second negotiation phase (2003) .............................................................. 95
The king takes over (2005) ......................................................................... 96
Negotiation and peace process (2005-2006) ............................................ 97
Elections to Constituent Assembly (2008) ................................................. 98

5. Construction of the terrorism frame ....................................................... 100
Framing the Maoist: the parliamentary parties 1994-2001 .................. 101
Alternative frame of the Maoist problem ................................................. 104
The Maoist as terrorists—a new problem representation .................... 109
A Maoist centred problem ....................................................................... 110
Tying the Maoist to the terrorism frame ................................................. 112
Allowing a military solution ................................................................... 116
The Maoist reactions and counter frame ................................................ 117
Concluding discussion .............................................................................. 125

6. Effects of the terrorism frame ............................................................... 127
The effect of the frame on the parliamentary parties ............................ 127
Perceived internal resonance ................................................................... 129
The effects of the frame ............................................................................ 132
Caught in their own frame?—self-entrapment of the parliamentary parties ................................................................. 135
External resonance of the terrorism frame ............................................. 138
The effect on the Maoist—creating distance to the label ...................... 143
Entrapment of the Maoists? ..................................................................... 147
Negative and Positive frames: Rejection and Identification .................. 148
Risk of external resonance ....................................................................... 149
Negative and Positive Frames: Challenge and Compliance ............... 151
War, the Palace and the Parliamentary Parties ........................................ 152
Reasons given for the alliance ................................................................. 154

7. Construction of the peace frame........................................................ 155
   The peace frame of the Seven Party Alliance ...................................... 156
   Peace bringers: the self-framing of the Seven Party Alliance .............. 160
   The peace frame of the Maoists ..................................................... 166
   Differences, commonalities and underlying perceptions in the two peace frames ................................................................. 169
      Peace and Democracy in which order? ........................................... 169
      The role of the king in the problem representation ......................... 178
      Constituent Assembly Elections .................................................. 180
   “Monopoly on political opinion“: Focus on the Maoists ..................... 184

8. Effects of the peace frame on perceived manoeuvrability for action...... 189
   The self-serving effect of the peace frame ....................................... 189
   Persuasion—a partial effect in the SPA ............................................ 192
      External resonance and the peace frame ....................................... 198
      Discrediting democracy: lack of credibility of the SPA .................... 201
   Entrapment within the peace frame—isolating alternatives ............... 207
      Resonance and republic—entrapment of the SPA ............................ 210
      Strategy in face of perceived external resonance ........................... 216
   Self-entrapment of the SPA .......................................................... 221
   “Just keep singing”—the power of the positive frame ....................... 224

9. Findings and concluding discussion .................................................. 228
   Main empirical findings and conclusions ......................................... 228
      Effects of the terrorism frame .................................................... 229
      Effects of the peace frame ......................................................... 232
   Theoretical implications of the findings .......................................... 236
   The usefulness of the new approach and the actor effect model .......... 239
      The object of framing being a subject ......................................... 239
      Modified resonance .................................................................... 240

Interviewees ......................................................................................... 243

References ........................................................................................... 247
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Constituent Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPN-UML/UML</td>
<td>Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCD</td>
<td>Nepali Congress Democratic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWPP</td>
<td>Nepal Workers and Peasants Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNA/NA</td>
<td>The Royal Nepalese Army later the Nepalese Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RJP</td>
<td>Rastriya Janshakti Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPP</td>
<td>Rastriya Prajatantra Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>Seven Party Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCPN (Maoist)/CPN (Maoist)</td>
<td>Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) previously Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNPM</td>
<td>United National People’s Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPFN</td>
<td>United People’s Front of Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SoE</td>
<td>State of Emergency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. The state of Nepal and the realm of ideas: a frame analysis perspective on a conflict and peace process

In the mid 1990s, amidst a process of democratic consolidation, Nepal, a state with a long tradition of monarchical and autocratic rule, found itself challenged by a Maoist insurgency. The civil war that followed lasted for ten years and ended with the signing of a peace agreement in November 2006. During the period of conflict, the state apparatus changed hands, alliances were forged and broken and old antagonists found common political ground. The Maoists went from being a rural rag-tag army to winning the post-war democratic elections, with their leader assuming the office of Prime Minister.

Only two years before their decisive electoral victory, the Maoist party was labelled a terrorist organisation by the government, prices were placed on the heads of Maoist leaders and red corner notices had been issued via Interpol. Not only did the Maoists succeed in winning the elections, the political landscape of Nepal was drastically changed through their re-entry into politics. The peace process resulted in a constitution writing process, with the king being ousted and republicanism introduced. Nepal was turned into a secular state and a federalism project was initiated. These issues were part of the long-standing demands of the Maoists, central to which was the formation of a Constituent Assembly, which had been the lynchpin and the downfall of two previous negotiation attempts.

In relation to the events in Nepal there are political areas of interest with regard to both process and outcome, such as: How did the insurgents manage to dominate the political agenda once they returned to mainstream politics? How was a republican constitution agreed upon even by the most pro-monarchical of the political parties? As former adversaries, how was the alliance formed between the insurgents and the parliamentary parties? Why did the parliamentary parties, the so-called democratic forces, not win the Constituent Assembly elections?

The way to approach these questions is a matter of perspective and focus. They could, for example, be addressed from a negotiation perspective with a focus on actor-to-actor interaction, analysing bargaining tactics and parties'
underlying interests to explain the negotiated outcome. Alternatively, the process and the outcome in Nepal could be analysed in terms of material power relations and the use of physical coercion by actors to achieve their goals. Conditions in the Nepal case lend merit to both of these approaches. Both parties in the conflict possessed significant material capabilities and coercive power, although the government was never toppled and the insurgents were not subdued using purely military means. Instead, the war was brought to an end through several negotiated agreements between the parliamentary parties in the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).

Yet, leading the discussion regarding Nepal in the direction of an explanatory focus on war versus negotiation or coercion versus cooperation is misleading. It could be argued that with the commencing of negotiations, the material reality of war gave way to the realm of ideas. However, negotiation is not void of coercion and disputes and conversely violent conflict is not void of ideas and discourse. Rather, forceful ideas about both conflict and peace were central in shaping the discursive context in which war was played out and peace was created and this context affected the way in which the actors acted.

This study approaches the Nepal case on the assumption that the discursive aspect of social relations is one important factor in understanding how specific events unfold and why actors do one thing and not another, that ideas influence the creation of our social reality and thus have an effect on action, be it in conflict or peace. William Gamson places this relationship between ideas and action at the centre of politics in that: “political actors act on the basis of their perception of meaning”. This approach to politics has a dual implication in that firstly the political can be viewed as a discursive struggle over meaning and secondly that the discourse influences action by affecting actors’ perceived manoeuvrability. Frank Fischer also stresses the discursive aspect of politics when he states that: “not only is one of the basic goals of politics to change an existing reality, but much of what is important in the struggle turns on the socio-political determination of the assumptions that define it”.

By adopting a perspective for analysis that stresses the discursive context and its impact on action this thesis looks at both process and outcome. By analysing the Nepal conflict and peace process in terms of the relationship between ideas and action this study provides one important part of the answer to the questions mentioned above. The kind of ideas that were propagated and the way in which they influenced actors in decision-making positions can thus explain why the Maoists came to dominate the political landscape in Nepal. The conflict of ideas can also explain why an over 300-year-long monarchical tradition was abandoned in favour of republicanism. Similarly, the reason that the Maoists won the election and the parliamentary parties lost it can be traced back to ideas about the conflict that in turn shaped ideas about the peace.

However, this thesis in not only concerned with mapping the discursive context and the struggles that constructed that context. Instead, emphasis is placed on the relationship between these ideas and the actions taken by the actors involved in the processes. In order to understand this relationship I turned to the actors themselves and their own perceptions of how the discursive influenced their manoeuvrability. Hence, the data are to a large extent based on first-hand interviews with key actors, such as former prime ministers and top leaders of political parties and civil society. From this material, the study gives insight into both how the discursive context was constructed during the period of conflict and the process of peace and how this was perceived to influence the actors’ manoeuvrability for action. With this focus, the study provides an ideational and actor-centred approach to understanding the course of the developments and the specific outcome seen in Nepal.

In order to conduct this study I use frame analysis to identify central actors’ problem representations, or frames. Studying the conflict and peace process from the perspective of frames shows the importance of the relationship between ideas and action and the study reveals several aspects of this relationship. For example, the study shows that frames created during the conflict were considered a prerequisite for military force and were used to justify it. Also, studying the peace process from a frame analysis perspective highlights the coercive character of ideas and how the actors perceived themselves forced to take a certain action or position.

As well as being interesting from the point of view of the specific outcome, the case of Nepal illustrates diversity with regard to frame and effect constellations. In some instances the frames during the conflict and peace processes were constructed by the actors with a clear goal or policy in mind, but at other times the frame appeared to be less strategic. However, regardless of both the level of awareness with which these frames were constructed and who constructed them, they had a variety of effects on what the actors themselves perceived they could, or could not, do. In some cases the frames were seen to enable a desired action, but at other times they were perceived
to be restricting, counter-productive even. In some instances a previously desired action made available through a particular frame hindered the actor at a later stage, resulting in a sense of entrapment. This sense of entrapment could be caused by a frame propagated by another actor or, and even more interestingly, the frame could entrap the actor originally responsible for its construction.

The way that this study uses frame analysis in the case of Nepal shows the fruitfulnness of such an approach in capturing factors that actors themselves perceive to have influenced them in their actions as well as their inactions.

Research question and purpose

With a research focus on frames and their effects on the actions of actors, this thesis rests on the assumption that language and definitions construct what is perceived as social reality and that these perceptions have an impact on further actions and consequently on relations between actors. Yet, instead of focusing mainly on the construction of meaning, leaving the effect on actions as an assumption, this study focuses specifically on the effect on actions, the impact of the discursive, in the form of frames. Thus, the overarching empirical research question for this thesis is: How did frames affect the perceived manoeuvrability of actors in the Nepal conflict and peace process?

This approach to the effect of frames places the actors involved in the framing process at the centre of the study in terms of where the effect of frames is investigated. In contrast to more traditional frame analysis that sees a specific selected audience as the object of study in terms of effects, this study investigates the effect of frames on the actors involved in the framing process, such as the actor responsible for the framing. This is not to say that studies of effects on the audience are without merit, only that shifting the focus to the effect on actors in the framing process allows other kinds of effects to be seen, effects that would be obscured if an audience were the focus of inquiry.

The main area of interest, as highlighted in the research question, concerns the relationship between frames and action and the focus in terms of effect is the actors' perceived manoeuvrability. To capture this relationship the study was therefore conducted from an actor perspective. Thus, instead of indirectly investigating the effect of frames based on, for example, policy decisions or actions taken, this thesis uses interviews as its primary material in order to establish the effect of frames as perceived by the actors them-

---

This micro-level approach to studying the effect of frames makes it possible to directly study the effect of frames on action. Due to the way that frame effects are regarded in this study, I see interviews with key actors as essential and the most appropriate way to answer the research question. After all, it is the actors, and only they, who can provide their perception of a situation and their reasons for acting or not acting in a certain way.

Thus, focusing on the effect of frames on the actors involved in the framing process and using actor-centred data makes it possible to determine how a frame affects the manoeuvrability for action, as experienced by the actors themselves.

This study acknowledges the dynamic interaction between the process of meaning creation and, within the context of frame analysis, framing and action, and the analysis will take both these aspects into account. Yet, although the study investigates both the process of meaning construction and its effect on action, the effects are what primarily drive the research.

This thesis analyses the effect of frames in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action. The use of the word ‘perceived’ has been argued to indicate an ontological position that holds that there is a true reality. This connotation is for example stressed by Gofas and Hay in a discussion on how to regard and speak about interests. Even though I use the word perceived in relation to effects and not interests, the argument put forward by Gofas and Hay illustrates how it is seen to be connected to an ontological position.5

Here I want to point out that the use of the word perceived in the research question is not to dispute the ontological claim from the constructivist perspective. However, as is shown in Chapter 2, the theoretical approach to this thesis credits the actor with a significant level of awareness, that is, the actor is seen as capable of being aware of his/her own constructed interests. This means that it is considered possible (which is not to say that this is always the case) for an actor to strategically select a frame for, for example, an issue that is seen to serve that actor’s interests. This, however, does not presuppose that the interest expressed by an actor is his/her true, underlying interest, or even that such an interest exists.

The term perceived in the context of manoeuvrability for action is used to indicate the focus of the study in terms of discursive effects rather than claiming an ontological position. It is true that the influence of a discursive context could result in, for example, the inability of an actor to conceptualise or imagine a certain action, yet even though such restricting capabilities are not disputed, this study does not focus on what the frame obfuscates in terms of conceptualising ability. What is part of the research interest here is a situation where the actor is aware of certain options in terms of action, yet per-

ceives some actions to be viable and others not due to the discursive context, in this case a specific frame. Thus, ‘perceived’ is used to stress the aspect of effects where, for example, the actor may be aware that an action is theoretically available to him/her, but does not regard it as such in practice.

For the purposes of this study, I found the existing frameworks within frame analysis limited in their capacity to capture frame effects as I define them. As a result, and in order to utilise the potential of frame analysis, I have developed a new approach to studying the effect of frames. The approach is based on the abovementioned focus on the effect on the actors involved in the framing process. The new approach also re-conceptualises the conventional concept of resonance. These two theoretical reconfigurations together generate an approach that makes it possible to capture the unintended effects of framing and thus to identify and analyse more instances of frame effects than conventional approaches.

The new approach is formalised into what I refer to as an actor effect model. This model can be utilised in analysing cases of framing both where the object of framing is another actor and where it is an issue, and cases of both types of object are included in the study. Through its design the model captures effects from strategic and non-intentional framing, as well as both intended and unintended effects on perceived manoeuvrability for action. In this study the actor effects model is applied to the case of Nepal. However, it is formulated in general terms and thus allows a general understanding of how frames affect the perceived manoeuvrability for action beyond the case under study. This makes the new approach and the actor effect model the main theoretical contributions of the thesis.

The new approach and model will be presented in detail in Chapter 2. Here I turn to a brief introductory discussion of frames and frame analysis.

What is a frame and what does it do?

That framing an issue in alternative ways influences the preferences of an actor was demonstrated by Tversky and Kahneman in their oft-cited 1981 study in which they tested the assumption and requirement of rational choice theory that “the preference between options should not reverse with changes of frame”, i.e. that the ideational should have no effect. In their study they showed that framing the same problem in different ways produced a shift in preferences in respondents. In this case the pattern observed was a shift in preference from risk aversion, when the problem was framed in terms of gains, to risk taking, when the problem was framed in terms of losses. Despite being the exact same problem, the alternative frames produce different

---

(in this case opposite) preferences.\textsuperscript{7} Thus, the framing in itself made the actors perceive the same situation in different ways and this influenced their choice of how to act.

Similarly, a study in clinical psychology demonstrated that different framing of information affected the judgment and decisions of individuals.\textsuperscript{8} Using an experiment that was designed to enhance “the evaluation of some situation or behaviour”, framing was used to influence the goals of an individual. An example of this type of frame manipulation is a situation where attention in one frame is focused on potential gains and in another on loss prevention. One can then determine which of these frames is the more potent enhancer of the same behaviour.\textsuperscript{9} One such goal framing study found that women presented with the negative consequences of not engaging in breast self-examination (BSE) were more inclined to perform regular BSE than women presented with the positive consequences of BSE.\textsuperscript{10}

The studies presented above show that how something is portrayed or framed might influence and alter the behaviour of an actor. They also show the potential to generalise with regard to the kind of behaviour or action that can be expected in the presence of a certain type of frame. Fundamentally however, the studies illustrate that there is a relationship between frames and action, and thus seeing how something is framed is an important factor in understanding action.

The essential elements of meaning construction, and thus framing, are ideas. One approach in security studies, a sub-field of international relations, has embraced this notion and consequently regards security as a construction\textsuperscript{11}. This view of security departs from the more traditional perspective, which holds that a security issue can be objectively observed and defined. The contributions of the Copenhagen School and its self-denoted constructivist approach sparked a debate within the field on the character of security threats. For example, Thierry Balzacq makes a distinction between what he refers to as institutional and brute threats, where brute threats are defined as “threats that do not depend on language mediation to be what they are—hazards for


human life”. In this case Balzacq uses natural disasters as an example of a brute threat. Yet, even though naturally hazardous, our understanding of disasters comes from a definition of the problem, which is constructed. To illustrate this, a flood, which in Balzacq’s terminology is a brute threat, can be described in different ways: as the result of a neglectful government, global warming, irresponsible farming or the wrath of God. In none of these descriptions are the physical phenomenon or attributes of a flood altered, but the framing of it is. In the above studies it was shown that behaviour and action were influenced by the kind of framing and similarly, in the example of the flood, the framing of what the flood ‘is’ has consequences for how it is dealt with. If it is framed as the result of bad governance this places blame on the government and one solution to this might be calls for re-elections, impeachment of the prime minister or the sacking of culpable ministers. If the flood is instead framed as the consequence of farming practices, this places the blame on individual farmers and might lead to civil lawsuits or national education programmes on farming techniques. Thus, how an issue is defined does more than simply describe it, it gives meaning through language and brings with it a causal interpretation as well as an implicit solution.13

Scholars in the frame analysis tradition argue that frame analysis provides an analytical framework to focus on aspects of the relationship between ideas and action and allows the “discursive work required to articulate and elaborate the array of possible links between ideas, events and action”.14 Its wide applicability can also be seen in the use of frame analysis in several disparate social science research fields, such as media studies, cognitive psychology, sociology, political science and policy studies.15 It is also applied at different levels of analysis, from macro discourse analysis of conceptual changes to micro-level psychological studies at the individual level.

In addition to its wide application at different levels of analysis and within different fields of the social sciences, frame analysis is also disparate in its classification, having been referred to as a “theory, paradigm, model, or perspective”. Similarly to frame analysis, frames themselves are defined in different ways. In the section below I will outline some of the features of frames stressed by different scholars in the field.

One way of conceptualising a ‘frame’ is to define it as mental structures in line with Erving Goffman’s oft-borrowed description of frames as “schemata of interpretation”, with an individual frame allowing the user to “locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms”. A similar definition by Gamson and Modigliani describes the frame as the “central organising idea…for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue”, a kind of reference tool that enables individuals to organise external impressions and thus to construct meaning. These definitions are representative of a more cognitive perspective of frames, in line with Johnston’s view on frames and frame analysis: “for purposes of verification and proof, the “true location” of a frame is in the mind…and ultimately frame analysis is about how cognitive processing of events, objects, and situations get done in order to arrive at an interpretation.” Similarly, in the definition by Schön and Rein in the field of policy analysis, frames are viewed as “underlying structures of belief, perception, and appreciation” on which policy positions rest.

What is more or less implicit in the above definitions is the influence a frame has on the kind of interpretation, not just the ability to interpret, that the individual has. This aspect of frames is made even more clear in Entman’s definition, which states that: “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.” In this definition the selectivity of the frame is stressed, making it clear that a frame never constitutes a neutral description of events or issues, but always offers one interpretation based on a specific perception of reality given by the frame.

16 Stephen D. Reese, Oscar H. Gandy, Jr. and August E. Grant, Framing Public Life (New York: Routledge, 2010), xiii.
The three aspects of what the frame does in terms of problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation found in Entman’s definition are present in several analytical frameworks of frame analysis. These three aspects identify the ‘central organising idea’ by looking for the problem definition, the cause of the problem and the solution in the material and constitute an analytical framework for analysing frames. The problem-cause-solution framework will be used when studying frame construction in this thesis and a more in-depth description of what it entails will be given in Chapter 2.

It is worth noting here that none of the definitions of a frame given above requires a strategic component and that the process of framing can be regarded as a purely cognitive and unconscious exercise by the actor. However, one aspect of ideas’ influence on action that is also present in frame analysis frameworks is the strategic use of ideas. From this perspective ideas are seen as a resource to be used by the actor to further his/her own interest. Albeit not using frame analysis per se, the strategic aspect of communication has been the focus of Frank Schimmelfennig’s studies on rhetorical action, a concept that denotes the strategic use of rhetoric in order to persuade others of the merits of one’s own argument. Similarly in propaganda theory the role of ideas is to persuade an audience in accordance with, for example, the interests of the government. Here the enabling aspect of ideas is emphasised, that is what the strategic use of ideas will allow the individual to do. Inherent in this focus on the enabling and strategic aspects of the role of ideas is an assumption of rationality and a high level of awareness of the actor. That is, the actor is regarded to be aware of his/her self-interest and seen as able to identify and select ideas that would benefit him/her.

Sociologists Benford and Snow define a frame as “an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past experiences.” The framework of Benford and Snow includes both the more passive (discourse as structure) and active (agency) aspects of frame analysis. Their categories of diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing tasks could be carried out without any

---

inclusion of the actor as such. However, in discussing frame articulation or frame elaboration, agency, even strategic, is presumed.25

Indeed, the strategic aspect of framing has been a focus within frame analysis in recent years and is a prominent feature in the framework of Benford and Snow, among others.26 For frame analysis theorists such as Benford and Snow, the actor is not just a carrier of meaning but a producer of discourse, actively engaged in the construction of meaning,27 which means that frame analysis incorporates agency.

Echoing Bakhtin, Benford and Snow also add an interactive element to their description of frame construction, noting that the sociological essence of frames “resides not within us, but between us”.28 They thus acknowledge that using frames is a way for an individual to construct meaning from impressions and that this process is an interactive one. In addition to stressing the relational aspect of frame construction, Benford and Snow also ascribe a dual function to frames and define them as operating on two levels: “frame[s] function to organise experience and guide action…whether individual or collective”.29 Here the dual function of frames includes guiding action and thus shares an element with the definition by Barnett that a frame works to “fix meanings, organize experience, alert others that their interests and possibly their identities are at stake, and propose solutions to ongoing problems.”30 The relationship between frames and action, or in Barnett’s terminology ‘proposed solutions’, is a significant one. It connects with the constructivist foundation of frame analysis and highlights the assumption that frames ‘do’ something, which is precisely what is of interest for this study.

Previous approaches to frame effects

Frame analysis bases its analytical framework on the assumption that ideas have an effect on the social world through their effect on our perception of reality and thus behaviour and action. However, when reviewing frame analysis literature, studies pertaining to the effects of frames are underrepresented or underdeveloped. More specifically, studies either focus on the formation of different frames, leaving their effect to remain a meta-theoretical assumption, or the notion of effects is restricted in a manner that allows for only a limited focus on effects on an audience. I argue that the limited focus concerning effects is due to a narrow analytical focus of frame analysis. As seen from the above discussion, in much of the framing literature the actor is viewed as having significant agency vis-à-vis the structure (discourse), and the process of framing is regarded as strategic. Consequently, the success of frames tends to become the focus in terms of effects. The resulting limitation follows from a chain of analytical restrictions beginning with a focus on the success of a frame, leading to a focus on the resonance of a frame, which means that the unit of analysis in terms of effects is limited to the audience. This narrow focus in terms of effects means that several dimensions of theoretically interesting effects with regard to frames are missed, such as the effects of a frame on the framing actor and the effect on an actor who is the target of a frame but not the audience. I will elaborate on this discussion and my approach to studying frame effects in the next chapter. Here I present the argument in brief.

Focus on success

I have stated above that incorporation of the strategic aspect in the framing process strengthens the framework of frame analysis through its inclusion of the actor. Yet, in a certain way, the focus on the strategic use of frames also limits the study of the effect of frames. Strategic framing assumes a goal in line with the constructed self-interest of an actor and even though this assumption can be valid in itself, it tends to reduce potential research questions about effect to questions about success. The actor perspective used in this thesis does not presuppose the strategic use of frames. Instead, the strategic use of frames is left as an open empirical question to be established in each particular case.

---

The dominance of resonance and the audience

With a focus on the success of frames, the issue of resonance and thus the audience becomes central. In a traditional frame analysis framework, a proposed frame has to resonate in order to have an effect, thus making resonance a prerequisite for effects. Both of these aspects, the resonance and the effect, lie with the audience. For example, in Benford and Snow’s perspective, when a frame that is advocated by a social movement organisation resonates with an audience, those individuals will be mobilised. Or if a frame regarding child-care policy has resonated with the electorate they will cast their votes for that policy to be implemented. The underlying logic in frame analysis is that if there is resonance there is an effect, or if there is an effect resonance is assumed.

Also, as resonance is considered a prerequisite for effect, in those cases where resonance is deemed non-existent an effect is ruled out. Hence, in cases where a frame is considered unsuccessful in terms of resonance with the intended audience the conclusion is that there is no effect. This theoretically constructed co-dependent relationship between resonance and effect may often mask empirical effects of a frame even in the absence of resonance.

I argue that the disposition to focus on resonance and what leads to resonance has geared the research on frames towards a perspective of effectiveness rather than effects. As a consequence, the ability to investigate the effect of frames is significantly reduced. Essentially, the dominant focus on resonance is a problem of validity: resonance measures the effectiveness of frames with an intended target audience and not their more general effects. To better understand the effect of frames requires a more dynamic perspective on the relationship between different kinds of frames and the type of effects they bring about. In order to thoroughly examine the effect of frames, they need to be separated from the conventional concept of resonance and investigated on their own terms.

Contributions of the study

This study addresses the effect of frames in terms of actors’ perceived manoeuvrability. With the traditional approaches to frame analysis being geared towards a focus on the success of frames in terms of resonance with an audience I argue that several aspects of frame effects are missed. Consequently, the research question posed here could not be answered satisfactorily with those frameworks as a point of departure.

More specifically, when the focus is on the success of frames, the analysis becomes restricted in two ways. First, even though the outcome of the framing attempt (whether the frame succeeds or fails) is naturally of importance
and has consequences for the framing actor, the unit of analysis in terms of effect becomes the audience. The effect is dependent on whether the frame has succeeded or failed (resonated or not). Second, with resonance, a more substantial effect is produced, e.g. voting for a particular party or joining a certain group. The effect, like the resonance, is with the audience.

In traditional approaches resonance is considered essential for a frame to have an effect, leading to the reasoning that without resonance the frame has failed and there is no effect. Thus, as mentioned above, the concepts of resonance and effect are conceived of as a co-determined relationship where resonance is the dominant aspect researched. Consequently, in terms of frame effects, the audience is the dominant unit of analysis. Because of this focus, effects on other actors in the framing process cannot be seen. My new approach places the effects on the actors involved in the framing process at the centre of analysis. The approach is geared towards looking at effects on the framing actors, as well as cases where an actor or several actors are the object of framing but do not constitute the audience. By moving away from the effect on the audience and focusing on the actors in the framing process, the analysis also incorporates unintended effects. Since my approach focuses on perceived manoeuvrability for action rather than on resonance, the success or failure of a frame ceases to be an end point in the analysis of effects.

From these theoretical considerations I derive a model that captures four different types of effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability on actors involved in the framing process. These four frame effects are: self-serving, persuasion, entrapment and self-entrapment. The distinction between the different effects is based on whether oneself or someone else is the framing actor and what kind of resonance is perceived to be present. For example, the logic of self-entrapment is a situation where a self-constructed frame is experienced to limit the ability of the actor to pursue his/her preferred action. Hence, this logic captures unintended consequences of the effect of frames.

This approach to effects makes it possible to acknowledge that one frame can produce different effects on different actors. The reason why it can capture effects such as entrapment and self-entrapment is that the focus is on actors involved in, and related to, the framing process rather than on the audience.

With this new approach the thesis contributes to the frame analysis literature by expanding the kinds of effects that a frame might have and thus allows greater understanding of the impact of the discursive on action. Through the model, this thesis also provides a means to classify these effects into four distinctive forms of logic.

The thesis also makes a theoretical contribution to frame categorisation and its relationship with the effect of frames. This contribution is a result of both theoretical and empirical analysis. The two frames that are analysed in this thesis proved to be fundamentally different in their makeup and according to their features they were identified as a negative and a positive frame.
The characteristics of the negative and positive frames proved to generate considerably different mechanisms with regard to the effect of entrapment. The findings concerning the relationship between the kind of frame (positive or negative) and the mechanisms of effects can prove valuable in continued research on the relative strengths and weaknesses of frames and their effect in terms of actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action.

Another contribution of this thesis is the actor-centred nature of the study. Instead of inferring the effect of frames from a combination of analysis of frame construction and a known policy outcome, this study bases its conclusions on the perceptions of the actors themselves. This direct approach to the relationship between frames and actions is what gives the new approach and model meaning. The four forms of logic of effects incorporated in the model are theoretical possibilities but it is the testimony and statements of the actors themselves that disclose their significance in an individual case. By applying the new approach to frame effects and focusing on the effect of frames in terms of the perceived manoeuvrability for action this thesis provides an explanation of the outcome as seen in Nepal. Even though I do not proclaim this explanation to be comprehensive or mutually exclusive from other explanations, the frame analysis perspective can explain several aspects of the peace process. For example, the analysis provides an explanation for why the king was excluded from the constitution and why pro-monarchical parties decided to change their own party statures and no longer wished to be identified as supporting a constitutional monarchy. From this frame analysis perspective it also becomes apparent that the specific shape of the peace in Nepal was already under construction before actual peace negotiations took place. The outcome of the elections can also be tied to the crucial redefinition of the concept of democracy by the Maoists and the parliamentary parties’ inability to present a credible political alternative.

In summary, the new approach makes it possible to capture the empirical conditions of the actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action by seeing the logic of, for example, entrapment and self-entrapment. This in turn makes it possible to explain several of the defining moments in the creation of post-conflict Nepal.

Frames in a conflict and peace context

With frame analysis much of the research focus is on the conflict between frames. Here I argue that an armed intra-state conflict provides a fruitful context for studying the impact of frames on perceived manoeuvrability for

---

33 This can be found analytically in concepts such as counter-framing, frame disputes and frame contests.
action. If frames are seen as influencing action or behaviour and there has been a change in behaviour and action it would be theoretically sound to assume that the frames have changed, thus accounting for the altered behaviour. In a conflict, defined as incompatibility between two or more parties, polarisation of actors’ opinion and ideas is likely. A conflict that is concluded in a peace agreement would then provide an empirical context of initially diverging frames and then a merging or co-ordination of frames. Thus, a conflict context provides a specified time period within which frames are likely to have changed.

On the other hand, a conflict situation constitutes extraordinary political circumstances where the material context and interests of the actors are usually the focus of analysis since the extraordinary political conditions are expected to sharpen the prisoner’s dilemma in terms of rational cost-benefit analysis on the part of the actors involved.\(^\text{34}\)

Thus, in summary, a conflict context would present a situation for finding clear divergent frames and is perhaps also a context where ideational factors are of less importance in guiding actors’ choices. There is good reason to assume that frames and framing attempts will be found. If they are proven to influence the actions of actors, even under circumstances of extraordinary politics, this would strengthen the role of frames as relevant factors to take into consideration when explaining the action of actors and the choices actors make.

Nepal as a case of frames in conflict and peace

Nepal provides a good case for the study of the effect of frames in several respects. Firstly, on a general level it has had an extended period of conflict followed by a successful conflict resolution process leading to a signed peace agreement. As argued above, this is assumed to correspond to a process whereby the polarisation of frames has been reversed or initial frames have been transformed or altered in order for actors to change their interaction and move from conflict to cooperation.

Secondly, Nepal presents a theoretically ‘sticky’\(^\text{35}\) animosity frame in the form of the terrorism label, to which there ought to be clear reactions and effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action. Also, in order to take into account the impact of the September 11 attacks on the status and usage of the label terrorism, another feature of the Nepal case is that the conflict was occurring from 1996-2006, covering the attacks on the United States of America in 2001.


\(^{35}\) The word sticky is used here to denote a frame that ought to be particularly difficult to get rid of once it is in place, for example, a corruption frame.
Thirdly, the status of the conflict and the conditions within Nepal were such that concerns for the investigator’s personal safety were minimised and access to data was not significantly hampered.

In addition to these more general factors, other aspects make the Nepal conflict and peace process a suitable empirical case for studying framing processes. Even though the conflict in Nepal constitutes a single case, it provides several framing processes pertaining to the conflict and peace process constituting cases within the case and consequently offers richer empirical material to analyse.\footnote{Robert K. Yin, \textit{Case Study Research: Design and Methods} (second edition) (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1994); Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, \textit{Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences} (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2004).} Furthermore, the internal war in Nepal was recent and relatively short, lasting for ten years between 1996 and 2006. Since much of the material is based on interviews the fact that the conflict and conflict resolution process happened recently increases the likelihood of respondents recollecting events, decisions and the motivations behind them with more clarity and detail. The conflict also has a clear starting point, the attacks by the Maoists on the 13\textsuperscript{th} of February 1996, and a clear end date in the form of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of the 21\textsuperscript{st} of November 2006.

Another benefit of the Nepal conflict in terms of analysing framing processes and the actions of actors is that it presents few parties in the conflict and clear, albeit altering, alliances. The lack of significant fractions and splinter groups during the main part of the conflict makes the number of internal competing and interacting framing processes manageable. Moreover, despite the changes in government and heads of state, the continued presence of the same individuals on the political scene facilitated the collection of data. Also, the fact that the case concerns an internal conflict reduces the impact of different contextual factors such as cultural practices, institutional and political systems and geo-political situations. Furthermore, the internal character of the Nepal case is further consolidated by the fact that Nepal was not subject to international involvement or mediation during the conflict. Although the United Nations was granted access to the country by the Nepalese government, the relevant UN resolution was taken on the 23\textsuperscript{rd} of January 2007, two months after the signing of the peace agreement. Moreover, the UN operation, United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), was limited in its mandate to a civilian operation. Political pressure from other states, especially from India, has affected the internal debate in Nepal. However, largely due to geo-political factors in the region involving India and China, Nepal was not exposed to any direct and overt third-party intervention that could have influenced the dynamic of the conflict and the relative power of the internal actors.\footnote{As a regional power in South Asia, India has both presence and influence in Nepal’s domestic politics. Nepal-Indian relations are complex and the various treaties between the coun-}
Thus, in summary, Nepal represents a good case for studying the framing process in a conflict context, with internal violent conflict that over a relatively short period of time resulted in a peace agreement and cooperation between former enemies. The case presents comparatively limited fractioning among the key parties and there was no mediation or other third-party intervention. This makes the number of framing processes and their effects on key actors manageable.

Actors, frames and effects

Studying frames in a sense reveals the context of choice. By defining interests as well as social norms, frames provide the perceptive boundaries within which actors make choices. Just as the effect of frames has been given less attention in the research field, so the force of frames, or the ideas and representations they comprise, was underestimated by the actors in Nepal. In many cases political decisions were taken with shrewd, strategic calculation but without consideration of the ‘stickiness’ of frames. Once a definition or idea had taken hold it proved difficult or impossible to make the changes in policy that actors expressed a willingness to do. The strategy “we will go along with this for a while and then stick to our original plan” often proved to be inconceivable once the frame was in place. To a greater or lesser extent all actors in the Nepal conflict and peace process experienced this sense of being ‘caught’ by externally imposed or internally constructed frames, where options for action they had counted on were no longer perceived as available to them. This resulted in decisions being made that perhaps were not intended or even desired, and this at a time of crucial restructuring of the very fundamentals of the state structure. By accepting or going along with a certain frame, the actors failed to appreciate the force it had to enable but also to restrict and limit them in their actions. Thus, if we wish to get insight into why actors act in a certain manner we need to investigate the factors that affect action. Frames, as units for structuring meaning, constitute one such factor. The research focus of this thesis incorporates this relationship be-

tries have been the focus of criticism within Nepal over the decades, especially the 1950 Treaty, which was heavily attacked by the Maoists. Since 1975 when India annexed Sikkim, the fear of ‘Sikkimisation’ has been a concrete manifestation of Nepal’s concern with its sovereignty. In my interviews several respondents mentioned India’s influence on the government of Nepal as well as the India-Maoist relations. Nevertheless, the Indian factor is not directly investigated in this study with its focus on the role of ideas and framing in the internal process of conflict and peace. For the sake of argument, let us assume that India had pressured the Nepal government into adopting the terrorism frame and labelling the Maoists as terrorist. In a domestic context, the Nepal government would still have been the framing agent, and in terms of the effect of that frame the influence on the government’s perceived manoeuvrability would still have been the object of study, not India’s.
tween actor and discourse and regards the framing process as including both frame construction and the effect of frames.

Whether created by others or oneself, regardless of degree of consciousness connected to their formation, frames exert an influence on choice and thus provide an explanation of why actors believe they have the options they do. Seeing frames as analytical tools to understand the social construction of meaning at any time and acknowledging that one particular meaning can be reconstructed to form a different frame makes a study of the process of change in terms of redefined interests particularly interesting. In the case of Nepal, the country went through a significant process of change, from a state of war to a state of peace, and embarked on a fundamental state restructuring process, culminating in the writing of a new constitution. By applying a frame analysis perspective, this thesis provides insight into the choices actors made in relation to their discursive context and provides a deeper understanding of the political outcome we see in Nepal today. More importantly perhaps, it provides an explanation for why other options that were theoretically available to the actors were not acted upon.

The thesis centres on two main frames: a *terrorism frame* and a *peace frame*. The whole conflict can be seen as a progression where dominance changes from the former frame to the latter. The study analyses both these frames, as well as the transition from one to the other. Keeping with the research focus on the whole framing process, the study accounts for the formation of the frames, answering questions such as: How were they created? Was there a strategic component to their formation? What was the reaction of the framed party? The study then specifically looks at how the frames impacted on the actors’ perceived manoeuvrability and how the influence was dependent on the kind of frame that was constructed.

**Structure of the dissertation**

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework of the thesis. The discussion centres on the theoretical underpinning and its relation to the analytical focus of frame analysis. The purpose is to examine how the effect of frames has been studied in frame analysis and to develop this further into a more encompassing framework. This discussion serves as the basis for the development of the analytical framework that is used in the study.

Chapter 3 takes up methodological issues relevant to the study. To increase the transparency of the research process, a large part of the chapter is devoted to a presentation of my approach to interviewing and accounts for choices made with regard to the interview process and the treatment of the collected data.

Chapter 4 gives a brief outline of the Nepal conflict and peace process and contains a presentation of the main actors and events.
The empirical analyses are covered in Chapters 5–8. Chapters 5 and 6 cover the frame construction and effects, respectively, of the terrorism frame. The analysis of frame construction in Chapter 5 looks at the Maoists’ and government’s competing frames for how the conflict should be defined using a problem-cause-solution approach. Having identified the different representations of the conflict in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 carries on the analysis of the framing process and deals with the effects of the terrorism frame. In Chapter 6 the effects on the framing actor and the framed actor are analysed using the four forms of logic of the actor effect model developed in Chapter 2. Chapter 6 also includes a discussion of the characteristics of the terrorism frame and what kind of frame it is, identifying it broadly as a negative frame. The implications of this categorisation on its effects, especially relating to entrapment, are discussed.

Chapters 7 and 8 deal with the peace frame. Chapter 7 deals with the construction of the frame and the Chapter 8 with its effects. Chapter 7 shows the changes in the framing of the conflict by the parliamentary parties, which moved away from the terrorism frame and adopted a problem representation akin to that of the Maoists. The framing process covered in this chapter also includes the self-framing of the SPA, which focused the discussion on peace rather than democracy. Even though the commonalities between the frames of the two parties allowed a joint purpose, there are several differences, which have consequences for the kind of effects the frame had on the different parties. These effects are discussed in Chapter 8, which describes the use of the actor effect model to assess the different possible forms of logic of effects on the SPA and the Maoists. Having categorised one frame as negative (the terrorism frame) and one as positive (peace frame), the chapter concludes with a discussion on the relevance of this categorisation for the mechanisms of entrapment and how this can be related to studies on the relative strengths and weaknesses of frames.

Chapter 9 is divided into three sections. The first section presents the empirical findings arrived at through the use of the developed approach. In the second section the theoretical implications of some of the empirical findings are discussed. The final section discusses the wider applicability of the model and possibilities for future research.
2. Theoretical perspective: An actor and effect centred frame analysis

The theoretical discussion in this chapter takes as its point of departure, the research question: *How did frames affect the perceived manoeuvrability of actors in the Nepal conflict and peace process?* In this question there are two key concepts: *frames* and *perceived manoeuvrability* and these concepts are related to two aspects of the framing process, frame construction and frame effects. As the process of frame construction influences the effects of the frame and vice versa, these aspects cannot be understood in isolation and the study therefore incorporates both aspects in the analysis.

This chapter begins with an overview of the field of frame analysis. It presents the dominant frameworks for analysis of frame construction and gives the reasons for choosing one of these for this study. The discussion of the framing process then moves on to the aspect of effects of frames via the internal critique that frame analysis is static in its approach to the framing process. The discussion concerning the effect of frames in existing frameworks results in a new approach to frame effects and this approach is formalised in a model covering four logic of effects. The purpose of the model is to capture a broader conceptualisation of effects that goes beyond the audience and highlights e.g. the capacity of frames to affect the actor responsible for the framing, the frame’s ability to entrap actors and the effects of frames in terms of unintended consequences.

The focus of frame analysis

As a method and an analytical framework, frame analysis is not connected to any particular discipline, instead it has been found to be useful within several research fields in social sciences. The use of frame analysis in disparate fields of research is not a new development and its wide use prompted the suggestion as early as two decades ago that framing should be regarded as a research paradigm. Although the range of disciplines that utilize frame analysis testifies to its broad applicability, it also brings variety to the focus

of frame analyses, as different research fields stress different analytical aspects. As a result, there are more or less significant analytical differences depending on whether frame analysis is used within for example political science or psychology. William Gamson comments on one of these differences in the foreword to an edited volume about media framing within the field of communication studies. A political sociologist himself, Gamson comments on the absence of a focus on power in analyses concerned with the production of frames in media.39

In addition to a varying analytical focus, the empirical interest of frame analysis also depends on the field in which it used. In their field of policy studies, Donald Schön and Martin Rein draw attention to different frames that actors hold as a reason for political conflict and stalemate in the decision making process.40 In the field of sociology Benford and Snow use frame analysis to explain the mobilization power of social movement organisations41, and in the field of communication studies, Robert Entman looks at how events and phenomena are presented in the media and their role in shaping public opinion.42 Even though this variation within frame analysis can to some extent be viewed as consequences of an incoherent approach, it should also be seen as the result of different foci in research, originating from the particular fields in which frame analysis is used.

The conceptualisation of what, and where, a frame is, as well as its function, also differs within the field of frame analysis and this variation can be compared to D.C Philips discussion on the different strands of constructivism. He suggests a continuum of constructivist research with the extreme poles being “individual psychology” and “public discipline” and for Philips the entire continuum represents a constructivist worldview; the only difference is in research focus.43 Although his concern is not to locate frames per se but rather the site where knowledge is constructed, frame analysis with its shared constructivist aspects displays a similar span in research focus, with the more cognitive oriented researchers on one end and those researchers

---

stressing the social construction of frames on the other. The former have a dominant research focus on reconstructing mental frames within individuals and the latter analyse the interactive processes between social agents in the construction of frames. Even though the variety of foci within frame analysis may not be characterised as fragmentation, as a result of the diversity, the approach lacks a singular perspective on the nature of frames and framing. As a consequence there is no unified theory of the framing process, what it is supposed to entail and what frame analysis should focus on.

The lack of a unified framework notwithstanding, my theoretical discussion needs a platform to start from and for this purpose I use the approach of Robert Benford and David Snow as a foundation. They are arguably leading scholars within frame analysis who have developed a comprehensive analytical framework and consistently been driving theoretical developments within this field.

In the field of sociology Benford and Snow began by incorporating frame analysis in their study of social movement participation. They used frame analysis to explore the relationship between a social movement organisation’s description of an issue or event and the mobilisation behind this cause. For the purpose of their research Benford and Snow have developed a framework which focuses on four framing strategies that social movements

---


employ in order to increase recruitment and mobilization for a cause: frame bridging, when two issues are connected, such as prostitution and HIV\textsuperscript{49} for example; frame amplification is used to describe the way in which the values and characteristics of an existing frame are highlighted; frame extension is when the frame is made broader in order to appeal to a wider audience; and frame transformation occurs when an existing frame is altered to the point where it becomes another frame.\textsuperscript{50}

Benford and Snow have been influential within the field and argued for a strengthened analytical connection to the social constructivist theoretical foundation of frame analysis, this has resulted in an internal critique against the field of frame analysis for being too static with regard to the process of framing.\textsuperscript{51} This particular critique and the conceptual apparatus of Benford and Snow will be dealt with in more detail later in this chapter, for now the discussion centres around their and other analytical frameworks approach to frame construction.

\textbf{Frame construction}

The basic purpose in analysing frame (re)construction is to identify the frame and this focus is reflected in the analytical frameworks available. Benford and Snow together with several other scholars, both within frame analysis and outside the field, utilize a variant of a three category interrelated framework to identify and describe a frame in a chosen material. Benford and Snow claim that social movement organisations have three core framing tasks: diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing.\textsuperscript{52}

What diagnostic framing does is to identify the problem and attribute blame or causality.\textsuperscript{53} Prognostic framing specifies what is to be done about the problem, and how to proceed, by identifying strategies, tactics and targets.\textsuperscript{54} The third task of motivational framing is to function as “prods to action”, by “providing a rationale for action that goes beyond the diagnosis and progno-

\textsuperscript{49}Josefina Erikson, \textit{Strider om mening: en dynamisk frameanalys av den svenska sexköpslagen} (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2011)
\textsuperscript{52}Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: an overview and assessment,” \textit{Annual Review of Sociology} vol.26 (2000): 615.
sis”. As an example of motivational framing, Benford and Snow turn to the peace movements that presented moral considerations as their rationale for action in order to achieve the goal of a nuclear-free world.

Similar to the framework of diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing presented by Benford and Snow is Carol Bacchi’s framework of “What is the problem represented to be?” Although Bacchi places herself within the field of discourse analysis, her framework is in many respects comparable to those used within frame analysis. Her approach also includes three categories referred to as problem, cause and solution.

Bacchi’s framework differs from that of Benford and Snow in that their diagnostic framing includes both identification of the problem and the attribution of blame/causality, whereas in Bacchi’s approach, the task of identification and blame/causality attribution are given two separate analytical categories: problem and cause. The prognostic framing with Benford and Snow corresponds to the solution category with Bacchi, whereas the motivational framing is absent from Bacchi’s framework. This last category is specific to Benford and Snow’s framework and can be argued to be a consequence of their empirical focus on social movement mobilisation and participation.

A third form of the three-category framework is provided by Robert Entman who ascribes the tasks or roles of a frame to be: problem identification, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation. An overview of how Entman’s framework relates to that of Benford and Snow and Bacchi is presented in Table 2.1. Other frameworks that use a three-category approach within the frame analysis field are for example, William Gamson and Hank Johnston.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Identify the problem</th>
<th>Attribute cause/blame</th>
<th>Proposed solutions and/or attitudes</th>
<th>Rationale for action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benford and Snow</td>
<td>Diagnostic framing</td>
<td>Diagnostic framing</td>
<td>Prognostic framing</td>
<td>Motivational framing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol Bacchi</td>
<td>Problem</td>
<td>Cause</td>
<td>Solution</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Entman</td>
<td>Problem identification</td>
<td>Causal interpretation</td>
<td>Moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 Examples of analytical frameworks for frame construction

Of those presented in the Table 2.1, Bacchi’s problem-cause-solution framework represents an umbrella framework that could be said to suit a diverse range of analytical and empirical foci. It is worth noting that even though the study of frame construction includes three overarching categories, these categories are interdependent and a comprehensive account of a frame cannot be made without acknowledging all three categories. As such they are not categories but rather integral components in the construction of a frame.

Thus, going back to the definition of a frame, the central aspect of these frameworks is that they capture the comprehensiveness and specificity of a collection of ideas that a frame represents. For example: a solution is to a large extent implicit in the way a certain cause is attributed to a problem, and the cause of a problem cannot be separated from the definition of the problem itself. What is also important to note here is that the way in which a frame is conceptualised in these three categories, illustrates that the frame is seen to do something: it provides a definition of a problem, it identifies a cause and it proposes a solution. As such the particular way a frame is constructed influences how a certain issue or event can be thought about and thus affects the possibilities for certain actions. However, not all components are necessarily present, for example, in any one text. Entman expresses this in the following manner: “a single sentence may perform more than one of these four framing functions, although many sentences in a text may perform none of them. And a frame in any particular text may not necessarily include all four functions.”

For this thesis I use Bacchi’s problem-cause-solution approach for analysing frame construction. The preference for Bacchi’s framework as opposed

---

to Benford and Snow is mainly that causal interpretation is given a separate component and not integrated with the definition of the problem. The three-component framework serves the purpose of identifying the frame in terms of what the problem is represented to be, causal relationships and recommended solutions. The three-category structure also presents a fruitful way of comparing differences and similarities among frames put forward by different actors. In following a process like the one in Nepal that moves from conflict to peace, the problem-cause-solution approach also provides a way of observing when frames change from being divergent to being compatible.

The object of framing—what is being framed?

Many frame analyses focus on different, competing framing attempts of an issue by actors, for example, in the political arena. Regardless of research field: political science, media studies or sociology, the object of framing tends to be an issue, e.g. unemployment, international conflicts, child-care, migration or welfare. Here framing actors can engage in framing and counter-framing in more or less parallel processes in order to establish their frame in the minds of an audience (for example an electorate). Yet, as the object of framing is an inanimate object, an issue, event or phenomenon, there is no agency present in the object of framing. Actors as the object of framing are also excluded in Benford and Snow’s definition of frames where they mention “objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions” as possible things that can be framed. With the exclusion of an actor as the object of framing, the dynamic element of the frame construction part of the framing process is constituted by those actors competing to frame an issue in different ways. Yet the issue itself cannot react to or challenge a framing attempt. In Figure 2.1 A, B and C could be political parties where X is the issue of taxation. In a sense the framing processes can occur in parallel where all frames are placed before the audience through public debate.

62 The object of framing (that which is framed) is not to be confused with the subject of framing (the framing actor).
Figure 2.1 Dynamic of the frame construction when the object of framing is an issue, event or phenomenon.

The dynamic illustrated above is representative of what Benford and Snow calls *counter framing* where two or more actors frame the same issue in different ways. Benford and Snow also draw attention to so-called *frame disputes*. Frame disputes, differ from counter-framing in that frame disputes denote a situation where framing actors within the same venue present competing framing attempts. Yet, regardless of whether the framing conflicts are of inter or intra-group origin, in cases where the object of framing is not an actor, the same dynamic as in Figure 2.1 applies. In the study of Nepal there is an additional dynamic component in the frame construction part of the framing process as in one case the object framed is another actor. With the object of framing being another actor, contrary to an issue, event or phenomenon, that which is framed has agency. Given that, the object of framing also has the potential to be a framing actor (see Fig. 2.2).

Figure 2.2. Dynamics of frame construction when the object of framing is another actor.

---

Having another actor as the object of framing does introduce an additional dynamic with regard to frame effects as conceptualised in this study. With effects of frames seen as perceived manoeuvrability for action opens up for possible frame effects on the object of framing as well as the framing actor.

Regardless of what or who is framed, the actor effect model developed in this thesis can capture both frame effects for both cases of framing. This also holds true in the situation of self-framing, in which the framing actor and the object of framing are one and the same.

However it could be argued, that having a case where an actor is the object of framing would be more fruitful when interested in frame effects the possibility for interviews allows more direct access to reactions, reasoning and decisions that come out of the presence of a particular frame.

The present study includes both cases where the object of framing is an actor (both framing of another actor and self-framing) and where the object of framing is an issue.

Despite the dynamic components of frame disputes, frame analysis has been criticized for being static. The following section gives an overview of this critique and presents how this study addresses this problem.

The static tendency of frame analysis—an internal critique

Despite the variation of focus within frame analysis, the field as a whole has suffered internal critique for disregarding the dynamic aspects of the framing process and conducting mainly descriptive studies. In this critique it is pointed out that a main utilization of frame analysis is to study frame (re)construction and identify specific frames. Within the field of media studies for example, it is noted that, “very little framing research goes beyond describing and, on occasion, comparing the frames that different media seem to prefer.”

Benford and Snow also point out that research that has centred on the relationship between framing and social movements has focused on the variable of how collective action frames vary “in terms of the problems or issues addressed and the corresponding direction of attribution.”

These statements underscore the need for a dynamic approach to frame analysis that can capture the complexities of the framing process. The actor effect model developed in this thesis addresses this need by providing a framework for understanding both the effects of frames on actors and the role of actors in shaping frames.

---


66 Stephen D. Reese, Oscar H. Gandy, Jr and August E. Grant, Framing Public Life: perspectives on Media and our Understanding of the Social World (New York: Routledge, 2010), 357.

framing dynamics.”

This descriptive and static tendency is argued elsewhere by Benford to be a consequence of viewing frames as ‘things’. Benford and Snow object to this tendency and argue that from a (social) constructivist perspective the element of interest analytically is not the frame per se, but the act of framing. They further elaborate on this standpoint in a reply to Oliver and Johnston’s criticism of Benford and Snow’s treatment of frame analysis. In their reply, Benford and Snow argue that frame analysis should have a focus on framing as a “set of dynamic, negotiated, and often contested processes” rather than to study the product of that process, i.e. the frame. Again they argue that the analytical focus should be on the verb: framing, rather than the noun: frame.

The static tendency of analysis is also a noted critic within a constructivist analytical framework within security studies that has clear parallels with frame analysis, namely securitization theory. Securitization theory could be said to deal with a specific type of framing process: that of constructing security. The traditional focus within securitization theory is on the speech-act, the actual event that ‘speaks’ security. Yet, Balzacq, among others, has argued that the focus on the speech-act is too static and that it ignores the impact of context and power on the process of securitization. These arguments echo the above-mentioned assessment of frame analysis. To focus on the outcome rather than the process in relation to securitization has even been presented as a case of theoretical and methodological inconsistency with regard to the framework’s constructivist foundation. Within the field of frame analysis this critique has led to calls for an increased research focus

---

on factors that influence for example strategies of framing;\textsuperscript{76} the processes of counter-framing; frame disputes; and contextual factors such as culture and political structures that affect the framing process. This in order to introduce a dynamic aspect and move beyond a research aim of describing frames.\textsuperscript{77} Recent work in frame analysis by Josefina Erikson incorporates a dynamic and actor centred aspect of frame construction into the analytical framework thus ensuring that this critique does not remain on the level of theoretical discussion.\textsuperscript{78}

I agree with this critique in that frame construction should be analysed with regard to the dynamics of the process, especially incorporating the actors. Thus this thesis moves beyond the descriptive stage of frame analysis by expanding the analysis of the framing process to also include what the constructed frames ‘do’ in terms of influencing the perceived manoeuvrability of actors. This prevents the study from having the particular frames identified in the analysis of frame construction as the final outcome. Even though the performative aspect of frames could be said to be included in the analysis of the frame in that one function of the frame is to identify a problem and a cause and consequently suggest a solution, this study connects this performative aspect to the impact of frames on the actions of actors. Despite the rationality assumption that is present within frame analysis theory and the arguments that have been made for the increased focus on the dynamic aspects of the framing process such as framing strategies, little research has focused on the actual effect in terms of perceived manoeuvrability of the actors involved in the framing process. The section below will outline the view of strategy within the field of frame analysis and point out what aspects of strategy are the focuses of this study.

The strategic use of frames

One of the more distinguishing features of frame analysis is the assumed presence of strategy and intent by an actor\textsuperscript{79}. This feature of frame analysis is also the one that brings the actor to the fore of the analysis as having a con-

\textsuperscript{76} Stephen D. Reese, Oscar H. Gandy, Jr and August E. Grant, Framing Public Life: perspectives on Media and our Understanding of the Social World (New York: Routledge, 2010), 357.


\textsuperscript{78} For an example of a dynamic frame analysis see: Josefina Erikson, Strider om mening: en dynamisk frameanalys av den svenska sexköplagen (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2011)

conscious and intentional part in the frame construction process. To put a certain ‘spin’ on a news story to invoke sympathy, to develop a new advertisement for a product to increase sales, to formulate a policy proposal to get it accepted, or to advocate a particular social cause in order to receive donations, are all examples of strategic framing. Having a strategic component to the framing process makes it additionally interesting to investigate the frame in terms of effect on the framing actors, especially with regard to unintended effects of strategic framing. The focus on the actor and thus on the conscious or strategic aspect of frame analysis becomes especially highlighted in conjunction with the above noted internal critique by Benford and Snow that increased research focus should be placed on the verb i.e. the act of framing rather than focusing on the noun, the frames themselves. This conscious aspect of framing is also a focus in Carol Bacchi’s work on policy analysis and Benford and Snow’s analysis of social movements. Benford and Snow argue quite clearly that there is a strategic component to the behaviour of social actors, and they stress the conscious use of frames by social movements as seen in collective action designed to mobilise and activate members:  

Social Movement Organisations and their activists not only act upon the world, or segments of it, by attempting to exact concessions from target groups or by obstructing daily routines, but they also frame the world in which they are acting.

Carol Bacchi also points to the purposeful and strategic use of discourse. Although Bacchi points to actors’ strategic use of discourse in the construction of meaning and the importance of acknowledging “the non-innocence of how ‘problems’ get framed” she does present a view akin to a dialectic approach between discourse and agency. According to Bacchi, theorists in the policy-as-discourse field tend to regard discourses as: “conceptual schema attached to specific historical, institutional and cultural context” thus restraining the freedom of the actor to freely manipulate discourse. Thus, when viewing discourses as social structures, there is a dual relationship between agency and discourse in that:

---

discourses then are not the direct product of intentional manipulation by a few key political actors, but neither are they trans-historical structures operating outside of human intervention.\textsuperscript{85}

As Bacchi points out, the focus of conventional discourse analysis tends to be on the restricting effects of discourse on the actor\textsuperscript{86}, whereas the element of agency and rationality present in frame analysis theory, allows for a focus on the enabling aspect of frames. The strategic uses of frames to influence opinions, recruit members for a cause or make a successful advertising campaign is by many seen as ways in which actors construct reality according to their interests and needs. From this perspective the presence of a strategic actor becomes central. In discussing the strategic use of ideas Mark Blyth argues that:

Ideas can also be seen as power resources used by self-interested actors or as weapons in political struggles that help agents achieve their ends.\textsuperscript{87}

To me, the strategic feature of the framing process also allows the opportunity to draw on, and benefit from, work outside frame analysis where there are clear parallels in terms of the strategic aspect of meaning construction (like Bacchi and Blyth). For example, Frank Schimmelfennig has developed the concept of \textit{rhetorical action}, defined as “the strategic use of norm-based arguments.”\textsuperscript{88} Schimmelfennig sees arguing as a strategic tool that rational actors use to pursue their preferences. He has studied the process of the Eastern Enlargement of the EU through this approach. He proposes rhetorical action based on the EU’s ideology of community as the explanation for the materially weaker east and central European states’ success in isolating and silencing enlargement opponents.\textsuperscript{89}

The strategic component has also served to distinguish framing from lying or cheating, and instead it is portrayed as a legitimate course of strategic action by actors to frame an issue in a way that favours their interests and to convince the other of his/her argument.\textsuperscript{90}


This view of framing as rhetoric, albeit strategic, tool coincides with the view from within the frame analysis literature of framing as being a conscious action. Having a social constructivist departure and showing clear parallels with the notion of rhetorical action in her theoretical framework, Deborah Stone argues that ideas are what mediate meaning and that this can be done deliberately to induce a sense of causality. She refers to this construction of causality as causal ideas or causal stories. Although she does not discuss framing per se, her notion of causal stories captures the performative aspect of the framing tasks described by Benford and Snow, Entman, and the problem representation in the terminology of Bacchi. In addition, Stone’s concept of causal stories also includes the more strategic aspects of the framing process:

Problem definition is a process of image making, where the images have to do fundamentally with attributing cause, blame and responsibility. Conditions, difficulties or issues thus do not have inherent properties that make them more or less likely to be seen as problems. Rather, political actors deliberately portray them in ways calculated to gain support for their side.

Thus, the use of framing strategically, when successful, can bring about a perceived causality. At the centre of Stone’s framework, and also this study, are ideas about causality: causality as a constructed relationship, designed to be persuasive and not concerned with the actual causal relationship or whether suggested causality is wrong or right. As stated by Stone:

In politics, causal theories are neither right nor wrong, nor are they mutually exclusive. They are ideas about causation, and policy politics involves strategically portraying issues so that they fit one causal idea or another.

What the idea of causality does, according to Stone, is to “move situations intellectually from the realm of fate to the realm of human agency” thus placing the actor at the centre of the analysis. The analysis of the cases of framing in this study incorporates this aspect by focusing on actors’ strategic use of frames as related to the pursuance of their own constructed interests. Thus, one purpose of the analysis is to disclose the intentions, motives and reasoning behind a framing process. The most appropriate way to do this is to find out from the actors themselves and this is one reason why interview-

---

ing has been chosen as the primary method of data collection.\textsuperscript{95} To what extent actors can use ideas in a strategic manner to further their interests can be an ontological question where the agent is not seen to have the capacity to ‘stand outside’ of discourse in a manner required to use it in accordance with constructed interests. I take the dialectic perspective where the actor is ever present within discourse and influenced by it, yet capable of using framing to further his/her own constructed interest. Thus, from my perspective on the relationship between discourse and agency, the extent to which the actor is capable of strategic framing is an empirical question, not an ontological one.

Strategy in the face of frames

As mentioned above the level of consciousness with regard to framing is an empirical question, yet the presence of strategy in frame construction is not a requirement for the frame to have an effect on action. Even in cases where the actor is not strategic in the frame construction, the way a problem is framed still has consequences for action. The effects of frames are not dependent on the presence of strategy in frame construction; the frame presents a definition of a problem, an interpretation of causality and a proposed solution regardless if its construction was intentional or not. The frame still influences the actor’s perception of reality and imposes both limitations and possibilities on what actions are perceived of as possible or conceived of at all. In other words, the way a problem is framed and what causes are given for the defined problem, whether this is intentional with regard to a specific interest or not, will influence the kind of response that is deemed appropriate or perceived possible. Thus, the concept of strategy is not limited to the aspect of the framing process that concerns frame construction but is also relevant to the effect of frames. That is, faced with a certain frame as well as the restrictions and possibilities it imposes, how does this connect to the actor’s choice of action?

The relationship between frames and action can be related to the discussion on logic of action. The logic of consequentialism is the rationale behind individual action from a rational choice perspective, where the actor is orientated towards maximizing his/her goals as related to given preferences. In contrast the logic of appropriateness suggests that individuals are guided in their actions through what is perceived to be right in relation to the association of certain identities with certain situations.\textsuperscript{96}

\textsuperscript{95} Jan Teorell and Torsten Svensson, \textit{Att fråga och att svara}, (Malmö: Liber, 2007), 251.
I view the relationship between these logic as mutually constitutive and connect this position to the discussion on frames and action. The actor is seen to be striving, in any given situation, for meaningful action in accordance with his/her constructed self-interest. Yet, the range of possible strategies is curtailed, not just by the notion of bounded rationality (restrictions of a cognitive, information or institutional nature), but also by the discursive context in which actors find themselves. Hence, what is considered strategic is based on the actors’ perception of existing (constructed) norms and values, for example what is perceived to be socially, politically or culturally acceptable and how they themselves wish to be perceived. The argument made here then is that frames constitute a discursive contextual determinant on action.

Thus, an actor in any given situation is expected to act in a rational way in accordance with his/her constructed interest, which in turn is influenced by the discursive context. However the mechanism by which this influence works is twofold. On the one hand, the actor may not be able to see certain courses of action due to how an issue has been defined or framed. Alternatively the actor may be aware that an action is theoretically possible yet not practically salient as it would go against norms and values imbued in the frame. Such a situation would then make the actor dismiss such a possible action as not strategic or in his/her constructed self-interest. This is not to say that framing explains action by itself, yet it represents the discursive aspect of the various factors that do.

The effect of frames—a model for analysis

As can be seen from the discussion above, much focus in frame analysis has been placed on the output defined as the frame itself. This focus has been criticised by Benford and Snow for being too static and neglecting the dynamic elements of the framing process. In this section I turn to the aspect of effects in the framing process and claim that the same critique of static analysis is relevant there and that Benford and Snow, who have contributed much to theory development with regard to frame construction, still present a limited framework with regard to the effect of frames. I claim that the existing frameworks in frame analysis are underdeveloped with regard to effects and that they are structurally self-hindering in their limited view on the concept of effect. The implications for the study of the effect of frames can be traced to how frame effects are conventionally viewed in the frame analysis field. As indicated in the introductory chapter the way that effect is treated in the literature has two consequences that affect the analytical range when looking at the effect of frames: a focus on success and a focus on resonance.
I argue that this limits the uses of frame analysis in a way that circumscribes the theoretical possibilities for studying effects and that re-conceptualising the meaning of effects would increase the fruitfulness of frame analysis in studying the effects of frames. First, I present my model on the effect of frames and then I go into how this was arrived at through a theoretical discussion of the focus on success and the key concept of resonance. This is done by a critical re-examination of the conventional conceptualisation of effects in the framing literature and what consequences this has for analysis. This discussion results in a new approach to the study of frame effects. I then formalise this new approach in the actor effect model consisting of four logic of effects of frames as shown below (Fig 2.3).

![Figure 2.3 Actor effect model](image)

In this model the four logic of actor effects are the central aspect. As can be seen from the model, the four logic of effects are determined by the two dimensions of resonance and framing actor. Resonance is here conceptualised as perceived internal resonance and perceived external resonance. Internal resonance is seen to be present when the frame is internalised by an actor. This actor could be an individual or a group functioning as an actor. External resonance describes the situation where the frame has resonated with an audience external to the actor but has not been internalised. A further description of this dimension follows below. The second dimension constitutes the framing actor, where it can be either oneself or another actor. These two dimensions define four logic of effects: *self-serving, persuasion, entrapment and self-entrapment.*
The first logic of *self-serving* occurs when an actor constructs a frame that works in accordance with his/her own constructed self-interest.

The second logic of *persuasion* is the result of a frame that is constructed by an actor other than oneself and has a perceived internal resonance with the recipient actor. In this situation the receiving actor alters his/her constructed self-interest as a result of the frame. The effect of persuasion could be the result either of strategic rhetorical action, as in Schimmelfennig’s framework, or of more Habermasian reasoned consensus.

The third logic of *entrapment* is the result of framing by another actor and where the frame is perceived to have resonated with a wider audience but not with the targeted actor. That is, there is no perceived internal resonance, thus it is not a case of persuasion and the actor still holds the same view on an issue or event as before the framing attempt. Yet due to the frame’s perceived external resonance the actor experiences a sense of entrapment in that he/she feels prevented from pursuing his/her constructed interests due to the presence of the frame.

The fourth logic, that of *self-entrapment*, functions according to the same principle as that of entrapment, that is, because of the presence of the frame, the actor feels prevented from acting in accordance with his/her constructed self-interest. Yet in this logic of effect it is the actor him/herself who is the framing actor and who, as a result of perceived external resonance, feels trapped by the frame in relation to how he/she would prefer to act.  

The model is a two-actor model where actor A is the framing agent, that is the frame constructor, and actor B is the actor exposed to the frame. According to the model this would mean that the possible logic for actor A would be self-serving and self-entrapment, whereas for actor B the possible logic would be persuasion and entrapment. This implies that regardless of whether the actor is the framing actor or not the resulting frame has a possible effect on perceived manoeuvrability for action.

Furthermore, even if the model can be thought of as involving two actors in terms of effects, this does not mean that actor B necessarily is the object of framing, it only means that actor B is not the actor behind the framing attempt. Instead of being limited to only capturing effects of frames in cases where actors frame each other, the model also applies to cases where the object of framing is an issue, in particular when issues are strongly related to

---

97 It should be pointed out that more than one effect can be present for each frame and also in cases where the actor is a group, such as a political party, more than one effect can be present for that actor. It is also possible for the actor to move between effect logic. That is, depending on changes in resonance or other circumstances such as a change of constructed interest, the actor may move from, for example, a logic of self-serving (upper right hand corner) to a logic of self-entrapment (upper left hand corner). Also, even though the model representation could be read as a diagram where the scale of the effect could be plotted this is not the intention. Although a study designed to measure the relativity of each of the effects could be conducted this is not the aim of this analysis.
political actors. The analytical chapters to follow will demonstrate empirical cases representing both these situations.

As can be seen from the model, the four logic of effects are divided with regard to external or internal resonance. This implies one possible type of effect on actor A and B respectively linked to internal resonance (self-serving in the case of actor A and persuasion in the case of actor B) and one potential type of effect linked to external resonance (self-entrapment in the case of actor A and entrapment in the case of actor B).

The right hand side of the model can be viewed as more benign in that the restrictions imposed by the frame in terms of what action is perceived as not available is not experienced as such by the actor. The actor perceives the frame to be in accordance with his/her own interest, either as portrayed in the self-constructed frame or through persuasion (internalisation) of someone else’s frame.

On the other hand, the left side of the model could be seen to express the more coercive side of frames. This is tied to perceived external resonance, where the frame is perceived to have resonated with an audience, in the wider sense of the word, but not internalised by the actors. Thus the actors have to coordinate their actions with regard to their interests but also the dictates of the frame itself. It should be pointed out that a frame by its nature is both enabling and restricting in what kind of actions can be taken. Even the logic of entrapment and self-entrapment have an enabling side. However, in entrapment and self-entrapment, the actor experiences a discrepancy between what he/she wants to do and what is perceived as possible as a result of the present frame and this is the aspect in focus for these two logic.

It is important to note that the four logic of actor effects are general theoretical categories. The four types of effects give an indication about the kind of action an actor might take. This is not to say that these four logic can predict what specific action an actor will take but knowing the factors resulting in a particular logic can help in understanding how and for what reason and actor will act.

For example, two actors can be observed to act in the same way but the reasons may differ depending on what logic of effect is applicable. If a frame created by someone else has generated internal resonance, the actor will act on the frame. As this is perceived to be in accordance with his/her interest, the actions taken by the actor would be indicative of the logic of persuasion. In the case of entrapment, the actor would also act in accordance with the frame yet unwillingly and would be expected to seek ways to break free of the frame that is experienced to influence his/her actions in a restricting manner. This more general indication of the kind of action an actor might take and the motivations behind is the reason for the use of the term ‘logic’ in the sense of an actor acting according to a specific logic but not performing a specific action.
The model above was developed out of a critical review of existing frameworks in frame analysis, most notably Benford and Snow. In Chapter 1 I argued that existing frameworks are limited in their view on effects and that the reason for this is the conceptualisation of effects in frame analysis, and more precisely the predominant position of the concept of resonance and the focus on success. The purpose of the model is to incorporate the theoretically possible actor effects of frames when these limiting foci are removed.

It is true that the model brings in the concept of resonance as a vital factor in determining what kind of logic is present. The model would for example suggest that self-entrainment cannot occur without perceived external resonance or that perceived internal resonance is required for persuasion. How the concept of resonance is used in the model and how it differs from conventional frame analysis will be discussed below.

The concept of resonance

Before I develop and discuss the four logic of actor effects in more detail it is essential to discuss the central concept of resonance in order to see how this is used in the model. In the section below I discuss the concept of resonance, its limiting effect in existing interpretations and how it is possible to move beyond the conventional application of resonance in order to gain a broader lens with which to study the effect of frames.

Resonance is the concept used in frame analysis to denote the degree of a frame’s internalisation by an audience.98 Early in their work on frame analysis, Benford and Snow discussed resonance in relation to what factors could account for variation in the success of a frame. In that discussion they claimed the frame’s capacity to resonate with an audience was dependent on its relevance to the ‘life world’ of potential participants and the nature of the belief systems with which the frame attempted to relate.99 Also in their reply to Oliver and Johnston, to illustrate the differences between ideology and frames, Benford and Snow identify ideology “as a cultural resource for framing activity”.100 In their later 2000 article the concept of resonance had been operationalised into an analytical framework.

---

According to Benford and Snow, the degree of resonance with a target audience is dependent on two interacting factors: credibility of the proffered frame; and the relative salience of the frame.\textsuperscript{101}

The credibility of the frame is in turn a function of three factors: frame consistency; empirical credibility; and credibility of the frame articulators. For a frame to be consistent there needs to be congruence between the claims made and actions taken by the framing party. Frames also need to show empirical credibility, i.e. the frame needs to be seen to correspond well with empirical events. This is not to say that the claims of the frame articulators have to be proven or factual, but that they can be perceived to be believable interpretations of reality. Lastly, the credibility of the frame is related to the credibility of the articulator(s). The stronger the perceived social or political standing of the individual or group who presents the frame, the more likely it is that the frame will be taken seriously by the target audience.\textsuperscript{102}

The second factor affecting resonance in Benford and Snow’s framework is salience. If credibility centres on the framing aspect of the process, salience focuses on the factors influencing resonance within the target audience. Salience also has three dimensions: centrality; experiential commensurability; and narrative fidelity. Centrality refers to the importance of the values, claims or beliefs, articulated in the frame, to the lives of the target audience. Akin to centrality is the dimension of experiential commensurability, which concerns the matching of the frame to the personal, lived experiences of the target audience.\textsuperscript{103} Lastly, narrative fidelity refers to how well the frame resonates with the cultural context in which it is presented.\textsuperscript{104} The above-mentioned categories can be seen as an attempt by Benford and Snow to identify the variables that lead to resonance. Some of these factors can be found in other theoretical frameworks in frame analysis and communicative action theory.\textsuperscript{105} Yet Benford and Snow provide the most comprehensive framework with regard to resonance as the link between the framing attempt and the target audience, in short resonance becomes the factor that determines the success or failure of a frame.

\textsuperscript{103} Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment,” \textit{Annual Review of Sociology} vol.26 (2000): 621.
\textsuperscript{104} Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment,” \textit{Annual Review of Sociology} vol.26 (2000): 622.
The successfullness of frames—as effectiveness and effects

As indicated in the introductory chapter, the central question in frame analysis tends to be how a frame becomes successful, and the literature presents different views on what successful means in this regard. Within securitization theory, the success of a framing attempt is seen as the target audience’s acceptance of the possible use of extraordinary measures by the framing agent.\textsuperscript{106} As already mentioned, for Benford and Snow, the success of a frame is connected to its potential for generating action (mobilization) with the target audience. Yet the linking mechanism between a framing attempt and success, regardless of how that success is defined, is resonance. Benford and Snow also clearly connect the concept of resonance with effectiveness:

\begin{quote}
the concept of resonance is relevant to the issue of the effectiveness or mobilizing potency of proffered framings, thereby attending to the question of why some framings seem to be effective or “resonate” while others do not.\textsuperscript{107}
\end{quote}

Thus, resonance is defined as that which determines the effectiveness of frames and as such the description of resonance in principle separates between the effectiveness and the effect of frames. Yet, a more in-depth look at the concept of resonance reveals a less distinct analytical separation where the categories of effect and effectiveness become empirically fused.

In the analytical frameworks of Benford and Snow and also within the securitization framework, the effect of a frame with an audience is specific: activism in the former and consent to extra-ordinary measures in the latter. Even though a certain action of the target audience figures in these approaches they are linked to the resonance of a frame. If a securitization frame resonates with an audience, this equals effect in terms of acceptance of extraordinary measures. Similarly, with a social movement frame: if it resonates with an individual, that individual will be mobilised. Thus, the use of resonance in the analysis makes it the factor that explains the effect of frames: if mobilization is present this is due to resonance. The effect of a frame is regarded as determined by resonance, that is, without resonance there is no effect.

The failure to separate between effectiveness (resonance) and effect (actions influenced by the frame) leads to an analytical shortcoming. By having a defined effect, the process of framing implies an analytical “end point” in the concept of resonance: a frame is constructed, it is communicated and it resonates and the intended effect (dependent variable) is produced. I argue that collapsing the concepts of effectiveness and effect, as is done with the


traditional use of the concept of resonance, leads to analytical poverty, as the scope of the possible effect of a frame is restrained.

Perceived resonance and effects beyond the audience

Due to the analytical fusion of effectiveness and effect in traditional frameworks, resonance appears to be an essential factor for a frame to have an effect. Yet if a separation is made between effectiveness and effect where the effectiveness of frames is connected to resonance whereas the effect is not limited to resonance, this begs the question: can a frame have an effect without resonance? The spontaneous answer would be no, without resonance, that is without someone to internalise the frame or make it ‘real’, it will not exist in the sense that it can have an effect on actors and action. However, this reasoning also stems from the focus on the success of frames, where the dominant question is if a frame is successful or not and the audience is the focus in terms of effects. The analytical chain thus consists of identifying the framing attempt, determining the presence or absence of resonance and from that concluding if the framing attempt succeeded or failed. This analytical chain is what restricts the possibility to see other frame effects.

The aforementioned analytical fusion of effectiveness and effects in the concept of resonance limits the effects of the frame to the presence or absence of resonance in the target audience. The audience thus becomes the exclusive unit in which effects of a frame can be found, which makes the audience the end point in the analysis of effects of a frame. However, considering the character of ideas, frames would have the theoretical potential to have an effect on those actors who are part of the discursive context in which the frame exists. That is, thinking outside the successfulness-resonance framework, effects of a frame would be possible outside the audience. Looking beyond the audience, we could ask the question: What are the effects of the frame on the framing actor? Or, if the object of framing is another actor, what are the effects of the frame on that actor?

The traditional focus on the success of frames constructs theoretical and analytical limitations on investigating broader effects of frames. The framing actor and the audience are kept as separate entities in analytical frameworks and the object of framing tend to concern issues, events or phenomena, not other actors. In cases where the object of framing is an actor questions about the actor effect of the frame comes quite intuitively, but they are also important in cases where the object is an issue. Yet the method for investigating those potential effects is hampered by the conceptualisation of effects in traditional frame analysis.

Despite its importance for the relative effectiveness of a frame, I would argue that resonance, as traditionally conceived, is not a necessary factor for a frame to generate an effect on the actions of actors. This becomes evident if the focus on effects is changed from the audience to the actors involved in
the framing process, because in this case the requirements of resonance also change.

However, this change of focus does not make the audience unimportant for analysis. One aspect of the role of the audience is argued by Schimmelfennig who models a triangular relationship between two actors engaged in arguing with the intended attempt to convince an audience. For Schimmelfennig, the purpose of convincing an audience is to use this third party to pressure the other actor to change position. Thus, in his approach, Schimmelfennig assigns the audience an active, albeit controlled role in influencing the framing process. As Muller points out, in Schimmelfennig’s approach strategic action is directing the two actors making the arguments, yet the audience is assumed to be susceptible to communicative, rather than strategic action.\(^{108}\) The view of Schimmelfennig opens up for a role of the audience past resonance in that they should be seen as being able to engage in counter-framing, to use a term from Benford and Snow, as well as acting as a third party exerting pressure on actors to take action in accordance with a certain frame.\(^{109}\) The role of the audience as perceived by Schimmelfennig does presuppose resonance in that the audience becomes convinced by a proffered frame and, although this might not lead to action among the audience, the resonance with the audience per se may be part of the communication of the frame thus pressuring other actors to certain actions.

I see this role of the audience in exerting pressure as an important part in the effect of frames. Again it is not the effect on the actions of the audience as such that is the focus of analysis but what effects the frame might have on other actors as a result of the pressure by the audience. Subsequently, in my actor effect model the audience is included in the left part. In the model the audience is the external element with which the frame can resonate and thus exert pressure on the actors involved in the framing process. In cases where this occurs, and there is no perceived internal resonance with the actors, this leads to the effects of entrapment and/or self-entrapment. Thus the audience is considered an important aspect of understanding the relationship between frames and actions. De-linking the audience from the actual frame effects in terms of action gives more analytical space to resonance in terms of its relation to frame effects.

In my framework, where effects are looked for in the actors involved in the framing process, actual resonance within a target audience is not required for a frame to have an effect on another actor. Instead I argue that perceived resonance of a frame can be sufficient to influence action.

---


From my interviews it became clear that the interpretation by decision makers, who were also the actors behind several frame constructions, of what frame had resonated with the target audience, was also guiding their choices and actions. They possessed no actual proof that a particular frame had resonated or to what extent, yet if they interpreted the political situation in such a way that they believed a specific frame had resonated, this was enough to influence their actions. From the point of view of the decision makers the actual resonance on the audience was not what lead to the frame having an effect on their action. Thus a perceived external resonance was sufficient for the frame to produce an effect. From this perspective, resonance as a concept is equally important in my framework as in other frameworks within frame analysis. However, the combination of working from perceived, rather than actual, resonance and focusing on effects on the actors involved in the framing process (actors A and B) rather than on the audience, makes my analytical approach to frame effects and their connection to resonance and action markedly different.

In discussing the role of the audience in relation to perceived external resonance the focus has been on the left hand side of the model. In terms of the internal, right hand side the reasoning about resonance is similar but more theoretical. The capability of actors to be truly aware of their interest is a source of disagreement and debate. Similarly, in this context when one individual actor relates that he/she was truly persuaded by a particular frame or believed a frame to be in his/her interest, this is directly related to the level of awareness accredited to the actor and, even if such awareness is believed to exist, the true level of for example persuasion cannot be established. That is, the actor may believe him/herself to have been persuaded but the reasons for this belief may be psychological where the actor convinces him/herself that persuasion rather than, for example, coercion has occurred. The inability to firmly establish internal resonance also leads me to use the term perceived also for the internal, right hand side of the model.

In the case of perceived resonance the interpretation of the actor is that resonance has occurred, which in turn prompts action. If we move away from actual resonance as a prerequisite for effect of a frame, there is also the possibility of the perceived risk of resonance influencing the actions of an actor. In that instance, resonance, whether actual or perceived, is not experienced, yet the actor is still prompted to act upon a suggested frame due to the risk that resonance might occur. In this case the actor acts pre-emptively on a frame that is perceived to have a risk of resonating (Fig 2.4).
Thus separating the concepts of effectiveness and effect opens up the possibility that resonance is not a requirement of effects. In addition, stressing the connection between resonance and actor effects makes it possible to investigate the effects of frames on other actors than an audience. The notion that ideas could be directed at a certain target audience and isolated from other actors in the same discursive context is incompatible with a constructivist perspective. A constructivist perspective also supports the idea that actors act not just on factual circumstances but also on perception. If the framing actors perceive or are afraid that a frame has resonated or might resonate, this is sufficient to have an effect on their perceived manoeuvrability for action. Again, the concept of resonance is tied to the effect of frames but in a different role than in traditional frameworks. The next section will look at what kind of effects this might lead to on actors involved in the framing process by elaborating the four logic of effects from the model introduced in the beginning of this chapter.

Four logic of actor effects

The effect of ideas on action is considered dual in character. It can both restrict and enable actions.\textsuperscript{110} Similarly frames are both restrictive and enabling in their effects. Frames make certain actions available to the actor and other actions unavailable. In the model what is of interest is the actors’ perceptions of their manoeuvrability with regard to actions. Thus, as mentioned above, the logic of self-serving is not only enabling and the logic of entrapment is not only restricting as certain actions may be allowed and other actions restricted in both logic. The perception of the actor is what determines what effect is empirically most applicable in a given situation. The section below will discuss the four different logic of actor effects.

Self-serving

In the model, the first logic of actor effects is that of self-serving. This effect captures a situation where the framing actor adheres to a frame, which is perceived to be compatible with his/her constructed self-interest. That is, there is no perceived contradiction between what the actor wishes to do and what he/she perceives it possible to do. As with all the logic in the model, self-serving does not require strategic framing to materialise. Recognising the possibility of the actor to be strategic in their use of frames, the possibility of intentionality is there. However, the presence of intentionality on the part of the framing actor does not modify the model as such.

Moreover, the logic of self-serving is that which is most obvious in combination with a strategic actor. In this instance the actor, based on his/her notion of self-interest, would construct a frame with the purpose of allowing a desired cause of action.

Persuasion

The logic of persuasion is present if a frame is constructed by someone else, and this frame is perceived to resonate (internally) with the actor exposed to it. Similarly to the logic of self-serving there is no perception that the frame restricts the actor in any way. Even though the frame does exclude certain causes of actions these actions are not necessarily deemed to be in the interest of the actor who has been persuaded by the frame. Due to perceived internal resonance the actor experiences no restriction in his/her perceived manoeuvrability for action but the frame is in line with the constructed self-interest.

To judge genuine persuasion in terms of a change of interest or preferences is empirically difficult. In the case of Nepal the presence of this logic was indicated with a group of individuals and confirmed by a few respondents. It was however quite clear that the respondent in this case perceived the frame in question to have resonated internally and defended this perspective.

Entrapment

The third logic of actor effects captured in the model is entrapment. Vivien Schmidt, albeit not within the field of frame analysis but using the approach of discursive institutionalism, discusses the implications of an outdated political discourse in regard to the relationship between France and the European Union. According to Schmidt the failure to alter the discourse led the French population to perceive a growing discrepancy between the discourse, which emphasised the leadership role of France in Europe and the regional economic institutions as a protection against globalisation, with a perceived reality that indicated otherwise. This failure to alter the discourse, in
Schmidt’s view, was the reason behind the French voting no to the Constitutional Treaty in 2005.\textsuperscript{111} In this case the French elites were trapped by an old and no longer empirically valid discourse, which they failed to change:

With regard to the EU’s impact on the policy, political leaders have remained trapped by a discourse that, beginning with de Gaulle, sought to deflect concerns about the EU’s effects on French sovereignty and identity through a discourse about France’s leadership in Europe and Europe’s benefits to national interests.\textsuperscript{112}

Even though Vivien Schmidt speaks of trapping in her article the term is not addressed as an analytical concept yet the connotation that actors are restricted in their actions by established discourses is clearly present. For Schmidt the trapping in discourse refers to the inability of political leaders, due to the prevailing discourse, to create another one, an argument that could be seen as a kind of discursive path dependency. Yet, albeit focusing on the failure of actors to change the prevailing discourse, Schmidt’s analysis is rather void of agency and resembles more of a conventional discourse analytical approach where the analytical focus lies on the structural impact on the actor.

More useful to my approach, and for the concept of entrapment as conceptualised in the model, is the work of Janice Bailly Mattern on the power of \textit{representational force} as a nonviolent expressions of power that work to restrict choice.\textsuperscript{113} Not defining herself as part of the frame analysis field, Mattern nevertheless focuses on the use of power in international relations expressed through linguistic structures.\textsuperscript{114} Specifically, she emphasises ways of influencing the behaviour and actions of actors through discursive constructions regarding identity. Mattern’s focus on identity can bring a qualifying aspect to frame construction by pointing out specifically by which mechanism (in this case identity construction) an actor is restricted or enabled in certain actions by different frames. Even though her empirical focus is on the maintenance of friendship and order in times of crisis through the continuous process of creating a shared identity, the power of the discursive and its influence on the behaviour of actors is central in her analysis. For Mattern, a narrative can produce the same kind of influence as physical force and trap actors into complying according to the representational force of a specific identity embedded in the narrative:

\begin{flushleft}
\end{flushleft}
Actors wield traditional power politics through military threats (guns) in order to trap their victims with a “non-choice” between death and compliance. Actors wield the power politics of identity for the same purpose but through different means. They use forceful narratives to trap their victims with a non-choice relinquishing their dissent and complying with the “we”, or erasing, sacrificing or otherwise “killing off” some aspects of their own identity. In effect the power politics of identity are enacted through a narrative ‘gun’.115

For Mattern the relationship between ideas, in terms of narratives about identity, and action is central. The use of representational force is also clearly intentional and aimed at entrapping the targeted actor in a situation of limited choice or ‘non-choice’. The creating of a narrative about identity can be seen as a particular mechanism of framing whereby a definition of an actor constitutes the frame. Mattern’s framework is an example of a framing mechanism that leads to entrapment through using arguments of identity. In terms of my model her framing mechanism can be thought to work on both levels of internal and external resonance, yet the instrumental aspect of representational force does not require internal resonance, as the perceptions of the identity traits do not have to resonate on the cognitive or internal level of the actor. It is sufficient if the construction of that actor’s identity contains traits with which the actor wishes to be identified, regardless of whether the actor identifies with those traits. This is how entrapment relates to perceived external resonance in the model. In that case, if the frame is perceived to resonate with a wider audience this forces the actor to act in relation to it. With regard to perceived external resonance, in so far as that actor wishes to be identified with traits associated with that frame, his/her action also has to comply with the actions prescribed by that frame. Thus if the constructed identity narrative emphasises characteristics such as honesty, reliability and loyalty, actions that would contradict these qualities are not available to the actor unless she/he wishes to sacrifice those identity traits. To the extent that the actor feels that there is a discrepancy between how he/she needs to act in order to comply with the frame and how he/she wishes to act, this would constitute a case of entrapment.

Mattern’s framework is most useful in focusing on the intentional use of ideas affecting action and is moreover specific about a mechanism through which this could work: the use of constructed identity narratives. Yet due to her specific focus on the wielder of representational force, Mattern is mainly concerned with the unilateral effect of entrapment. It should also be said that the fact that the narrative construction of representational force is concerned with the construction of someone else’s identity leads to a personal frame that has a limited reach in terms of which actors that have to relate to it. Yet considering the various ways in which actors can engage in framing, con-

cerning more than identity constructions, the frames that are established can become part of a more general discursive context to which several actors have to relate. As stated above, the focus on effects beyond the audience also includes a focus on the framing actor, and this leads to the possibility of self-entrapment.

Self-entrapment

The fourth logic depicted in the model is that of self-entrapment and captures the unintended consequences of framing. The concept of self-entrapment becomes relevant because I consider frame effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability and do not see resonance as the end point of analysis. Here the focus is on effects on the framing actor and the concept has been borrowed from outside the framing literature where Frank Schimmelfennig speaks of rhetorical self-entrapment.116

Schimmelfennig’s framework is similar to that of Janice Bailly Mattern in that he focuses on the strategic use of ideas by an actor. Yet his framework is more general in that he does not ascribe a specific way of framing as Mattern does in her focus on the use of narratives of identity. He stresses the strategic use of rhetoric to persuade another and places emphasis on the actor in the sense that he incorporates intentionality and, as opposed to Vivien Schmidt, focuses on the attempts by actors, rather than their inability, to use ideas in a strategic manner to further their own interests. This process, can lead to rhetorical self-entrapment, which Schimmelfennig describes as when an actor is forced to act according to his/her previous argument although this may actually be in contradiction to his/her interests. In my model self-entrapment occurs when an actor experiences restriction in terms of pursuing a desired course of action due to a frame of his/her own making. In this respect the logic captures the unintended consequences of framing.

Summary of the theoretical and analytical framework

Examining the framing literature revealed the dominant focus on the success of frames and thus the predominant concern with acceptance or rejection of a frame by an audience, that is with the presence or absence of resonance. The concepts of effectiveness and effects are collapsed and the audience becomes the unit in which both of these factors are examined. In a case where the concern is with the effect of frames on an actor it becomes apparent that

---

traditional frameworks for studying the effect of frames are not satisfactory. They leave out important questions such as: In what way does a certain frame affect the manoeuvrability of an actor? How do actors respond and with what motivation?

Focusing on effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action instead of success, resonance and audience makes it possible to develop an approach that can incorporate effects on actors relating to the frame. The formalised model can incorporate cases where the object of framing is another actor, an issue, an event or a phenomenon. The model takes the framing actor into account and by not regarding resonance as the end point in analysis it accounts for unintended effects, as well as the strategic use of frames. Incorporating the two dimensions of resonance and agency into the model makes it possible to define four distinct logic of actor effects of frames. Two of these, self-serving and persuasion, represent no conflict between interest and action, whereas entrapment and self-entrapment do.

The re-conceptualisation of resonance as perceived (risk of) internal/external resonance does not exclude resonance as an important factor in terms of effects, but actual resonance is not regarded as a requirement for a frame to have an effect on manoeuvrability for action.
3. Method and material—approach and process

If we are interested in the social world we ask the inhabitants of it, individuals.¹¹⁷

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of frames on actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action. In order to find out the effects of frames as experienced by actors it becomes necessary, as in the quotation above, to ask the individuals.¹¹⁸ In addition to placing the actor at the centre of the study, this research aim also places the actor at the centre of data collection. Interviews thus constitute the primary material to achieve a more in-depth understanding of how actors construct and relate to frames in terms of their perceptions of possible and impossible courses of action.

The setting for this study of the effect of frames on action is a context of an internal war and peace process. This provides an opportunity to examine the effect of frames on actions that shape and influence essential and significant political dynamics of a state. In order to capture the connection between frames and actions on this level the interviewees had to be people responsible for framing attempts as well as decision makers who could be influenced by the frames that existed during the period in question. Accordingly, the interviewees chosen for this study consist primarily of political leaders from the dominant political parties, including the UCPN (Maoist) and as such the type of interviews conducted can be categorised as elite interviews. As interviews were the main method of data collection, a significant part of this chapter is devoted to my approach to interviewing in general and elite interviewing in particular.

For the purpose of transparency I will account for the choices that informed my approach to interviewing and give a comprehensive account of the interview process, including examples of questions. The chapter also

¹¹⁸ For the argument that frames cannot be evaluated on the basis of outcome and practices alone see, Rodger A. Payne, “Persuasion, Frames and Norm Construction,” European Journal of International Relations vol.7 no.37 (2001): 46.
describes the treatment of the material obtained from both interviews and written texts.

Field studies

For the purpose of this dissertation, I conducted two main field studies in Nepal in 2008 and 2010. During those trips I was in Nepal for seven and five weeks respectively. I had also been on four research trips to Nepal between 2005 and 2007 as part of my previous employment as a research assistant with a project on conflict management at Uppsala University. Those visits prior to the field studies themselves provided me with extensive knowledge about the political system, historical events and cultural practices and also, and most importantly, allowed me to establish a contact network before my actual field studies. This, I believe, saved me a great deal of time in preparing for interviews and planning my research efforts in Nepal. It should be noted that the majority of my time during the field research was spent in Kathmandu. I am aware that Kathmandu and Nepal, due to the differences between the capital and the rest of the country, are sometimes described as two different countries. I have had the opportunity both in a professional and private capacity to visit districts both in the hill areas and the Terai (the low-lands on the boarder to India), but all save two of the interviews were conducted in Kathmandu. This choice was simply dictated by the fact that Kathmandu was where the people I needed to interview were located.

During my field trips I interviewed a total of 51 people. These can be placed in two categories: informants and respondents. Informants were people who I talked to with the purpose of obtaining information about the conflict, the political process, recommendations for issues to bring up in interviews, and as a sounding board for some of my reasoning. The informants were mainly nationally acclaimed academics, noted journalists and high-ranking military officers. Even though informants’ analysis of the political situation and processes were sophisticated, the vast majority of the quotes presented in this thesis are from the interview group of respondents. This since the informants’ view on key actors’ perception of a situation cannot substitute the view of the key actors themselves.

As the study centres on the actors involved in the framing processes and those with the capacity to make decisions in the conflict and peace process, the main focus in terms of respondents, were the top leaders of the main political parties. Apart from the UCPN (Maoist), there are two main political parties in Nepal: the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of

119 These categories are used when it is of importance to identify each category. When speaking generally about individuals interviewed, the term interviewees is used.
Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN-UML). My priority was to interview leaders from these parties in addition to leaders of the Maoist party. I interviewed a total of 23 party leaders of which eight of the respondents were from the UCPN (Maoist), nine from the NC and six from CPN-UML. In addition I interviewed two leaders from the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), two from the Rastriya Janshakti Party (RJP) and two respondents from two minor political parties. Among my other respondents were two people who acted as facilitators during the negotiations and six leaders of civil society organisations. I also interviewed thirteen people representing academics, journalists, constitutional experts and the army and these interviewees were categorised as informants. Although the interviews with informants served a somewhat different purpose than interviews with respondents, all the persons I interviewed were of high standing in their respective fields and the context of those interviews can be categorised as elite interviews.

Of the 23 party leaders I had the opportunity to interview, seven were former prime ministers from four political parties: Surya Bahadur Thapa (RPP) held the office five times; Sher Bahadur Deuba (NC) was a three time Prime Minister; Lokendra Bahadur Chand, (RPP) was Prime Minister four times; Marich Man Singh Shrestha held the office during a period of the Panchayat era; Madhav Kumar Nepal (CPN-UML) and Jhala Nath Khanal (CPN-UML) have each served as Prime Minister once and; Pushpa Kamal Dahal (aka Prachanda), UCPN (Maoist) became Prime Minister after the Maoist party won the Constituent Assembly elections in 2008. Another respondent from the Maoist party, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai became Prime Minister in August 2011. The respondents from the political parties are all influential persons within their respective parties. For example, Madhav Kumar Nepal from the CPN (UML) served as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs during his party’s minority government in 1994-95 and served as the leader of the opposition during the whole of the 1990s. The other representatives of the political parties were top leaders, ministers in government during the period of conflict and the peace process, former leaders of youth wings, central committee members and party spokespersons.

A central party leader that I did not have the opportunity to interview was Girija Prasad Koirala. Mr. Koirala was active in Nepali politics since the late 1940s and the long time leader of the Nepali Congress. Regrettably Mr. Koirala died in March 2010 before my second field trip.

Regarding access to respondents, I used two contact persons in order to get in touch with people and schedule interviews. Especially with regard to elite interviewing I found that it helped to have the aid of some respected citizens who could make the introduction for me. As a foreigner, a woman and of little repute, it was extremely helpful to have the willing assistance of influential people. My contact persons were both men. There are few women

---

120 See Interviewees for a detailed list of interviewees and their respective positions.
in significant roles in Nepali politics and even though this is slowly changing, women do not generally hold high positions in politics and correspondingly do not possess the broad contacts with other political leaders that I needed. My contact persons were both retired and even though this meant that they did not have a personal concern with careers they still represented distinct parts of the political spectrum.

One of my contact persons had been a leader within left wing domestic politics and he had good relations with the leaders of the Maoist party. He also acted as a facilitator during the negotiations that led to the peace agreement and is a well-known human rights activist in Nepal.

My other contact was a retired General from the Royal Nepalese Army and he possessed a wide, cross partisan contact network, with especially close connections to leaders within the more conservative parties.

Even though I made the decision about who to interview, I relied almost exclusively on my contact persons to establish connections with respondents and I am well aware that my access to certain people was, to a large extent, depended on the social and political standing of my contact persons. Upon meeting an upcoming and influential leader of the Nepali Congress, I commented on the generosity of, and accessibility to, political leaders that I had experienced and how grateful I was that he had taken the time to see me. His response was kind and honest when he replied: “Well, it is getting much more difficult to book appointments with leaders these days but when ‘uncle’ asks, of course I will oblige”.

When you rely on contact persons to this extent, it adds extra pressure to make a good impression in the interview situation, so as not to embarrass the contact person who recommended you but also to establish new contacts and create your own network. As will be discussed in the next section, building a rapport during the interview situation is of methodological importance for all aspects of the interview process: before, during and after. Indeed, the contact person who I met in 2010 was originally an informant with whom I developed a good rapport with during the interview situation.

Approaching interviews—choices and reflections

Similarly to preparing a speech, where the audience is the first consideration with regard to approach, level and content of you speech, I believe that the character of the respondents is the main factor in designing interviews. Depending on whom you are interviewing, the considerations you are faced with and choices you make may, and indeed should, differ. The following section will deal with the interview situation per se as well as central aspects and problems associated with the interview method. Topics such as subjectivity, power relations and kind of interview and how they pertain to the
circumstances of this particular study in terms of purpose, data requirement and interviewees are dealt with.

On interviewing elite actors

As noted above, the interviews conducted for this dissertation were all so-called elite interviews. Richards defines elites as: “a group of individuals who hold, or have held, a privileged position in society and as such as far as a political scientist is concerned are likely to have had more influence on political outcome than general members of the public.”

Due in large to the interview method being time and labour intensive, the number of respondents is usually considered too low to be statistically representative. However, when it comes to elite interviews, as in this study, a low number of respondents do not have to equal an unrepresentative sample. In elite interviews, sampling is based on selecting key individuals in certain positions who are of importance precisely for their particular insights with regard to the decision making process. Indeed, random selection was of no use in this study as I sought the particular experiences of key individuals involved in the decision making process. For the purpose of sample selection, in-depth knowledge about the selected case was necessary in order to successfully identifying relevant individuals.

In addition to pre-acquired knowledge about the case, a method used in this dissertation was the so-called snowball-technique. In most cases interviewees would, during the interview, mention several other persons of interest for the study. In other cases I asked the interviewees directly if they had any suggestions about who might be a relevant person to speak to in relation to a particular process. In this way the list of key individuals expanded. Suggestions brought up by interviewees were cross-checked with other data from the empirical material to estimate their importance and minimize the risk of bias.

Even though the lack of a random sample is not an issue in elite interviews as the sample selected is individual and case specific, there is a risk of sample bias and consequently unrepresentative results if access to key individuals is denied. In order to avoid sample bias and unrepresentative results in this regard two things were striven for in terms of sample selection for this study: equality in number of representatives from the different parties to the conflict; and comparable levels of seniority of the respondents. Having a similar number of respondents from the different parties to the conflict minimizes sample bias in that no party’s narrative is overrepresent-
ed. Moreover, as all respondents were high-ranking members of their respective parties and key actors in government they are representing that part of the population who had access to decision making processes during the period of conflict and conflict resolution.

One objection against the narrative turn, which can be extrapolated to the method of interviewing as a whole and thus also in this case, is its subjectivity. Instead of a drawback, however, the approach regards this as a benefit and states that “the narrative approach does not assume objectivity; rather it privileges positionality and subjectivity.”¹²³ As the interview method in itself gives precedence to subjectivity, the question becomes what justifies observing experience, or the subjective interpretation of events, rather than studying the events themselves? Part of the answer to this question is that we can gain access to internal mental processes: perceptions and interpretations, and that through interviewing we get access to the observations of others in situations where we cannot observe ourselves.¹²⁴ Elites then, as any individuals that act as interviewees, hold a subjective position and as Richards point out, the purpose of elite interviewing is to “grant the researcher access to the mind-set, reasoning and through processes of key individuals of political processes.”¹²⁵ The subjectivity of these particular persons, their perceptions and reasoning, does not present an obstacle to the validity of the study. That subjectivity is precisely what is sought.

It could also be argued that elites, and especially elites still active in political life, will tend to have a more overt ideological and political position than non-elites and this can be viewed as a problem of bias. However, those are their positions, which they propagated for and showed publicly. It is not the purpose of this dissertation to adopt a critical discourse analysis approach with the aim of uncovering the underlying message or subtext. The research interest lies in what was being communicated between the parties and how this was interpreted by them. The positions propagated, even though ideologically and politically laden, is what functioned as the building blocks of the constructed frames that are of interests for this study.

Having an ideological or political position is also clearly distinct from the methodological problem of respondents lying to or deceiving the interviewer. That the interviewee, for various reasons, may distort the narrative by lying is a common critique of the interview method as it would then yield

untrustworthy data. The majority of the interviewees were active politicians and this could have affected their narrative in that they may have wanted to secure their reputations and careers. As a solution, retired politicians are sometimes seen as a more reliable source of information, although, with regard to distorted narratives, Richards argues for the opposite interpretation, namely that ex-politicians would constitute a particularly troublesome group, as they are so used to partisan thought that they cannot distinguish the truth.\textsuperscript{126}

Regardless whether they were active or retired, the respondents in this study were not selected for their qualities in providing information as such. Instead the purpose of using interviews in this study was to access the respondents’ subjective interpretation and experience of events and processes rather than to mine for an ‘objective truth’ of events.\textsuperscript{127} This is not to say that distortions for the purpose of saving face or having changed opinion over time could not occur. To safeguard against this problem I used cross-comparison of narratives from other respondents that were party to the same processes and from written material from the time in question. Newspaper articles where the respondent had expressed their opinion were used to crosscheck and triangulate the data gathered from the interview situation along with comparison of narratives between respondents. I did not discover any of the respondents in outright lies when comparing their narratives to written material or the narratives of the other respondents. Indeed, what was conveyed during the interviews was often characterised by self-criticism rather than self-importance. Also, I was never refused an interview by a person I wanted to interview, or refused one person and offered another instead. This could also be seen as an indicator of the reliability of the respondents and that the respective parties did not have the control over, or the desire to control, the information provided.

With regard to manipulation of the data there is the related problem of involuntary distortion of the narrative by failure to remember events or processes. In this case, the fact that the period of study concerns recent events in the history of Nepal was beneficial. In addition, the events and processes were of great significance and central to the interviewees, and this facilitated their level of recollection. In order to trigger the memory of the respondents the questions were also contextualised with regard to specific government decisions or debates that involved the respondents directly. National or world events were mentioned in order to provide the respondents with temporal references if needed.


As stated above, the respondents in elite interviews are persons that hold or have held positions of importance with regard to decision-making processes. Their subjective experiences and perceptions, motives and reasoning are coveted. The privileged position of these individuals makes the question of power in the interview situation somewhat different from the usual assumption with regard to interviews. It is generally assumed that the interview situation represents an asymmetrical power relationship in favour of the interviewer. However, in contrast to this, Richards states that in an elite interview the power is with the interviewee, deciding what they wish to divulge to the interviewer. I agree with Richards to a certain extent, yet as I see it any interviewee is free to disclose as much or as little as he or she wishes, but that persons who believe that they wield power and authority may be more conscious of this aspect. However, that increased power rests with the interviewee in elite interviews does not mean that the interviewer is powerless. He/she still holds the power to at least partially control the structure and content of the interview by the kinds of questions put, how to phrase them and the decision of what to follow-up from the answers received. From the perspective of the interviewee attempting to dominate the situation I found it more useful to use a less structured format for the interview since the respondent may not be as tempted to disagree and try to rearrange the structure.

A more unstructured approach to interviewing can also work to limit the other aspect of subjectivity, namely that of the subjectivity of the researcher. All research and also questions drawn up for an interview are guided by theory. The questions in a structured interview are influenced by the presupposition theory and pre-conceptualisations of the researcher. That research design is coloured by the theoretical presupposition of the researcher, is both unavoidable and indeed desired. However, a more unstructured approach allows for narratives originating from free associations by the respondent and not only from questions formulated from the presupposition theory and pre-conceptualisations of the researcher. A more open approach to the interview structure can work to limit the theoretical constraints that the research places upon her/himself, whereas a too rigid interview approach can limit findings to that which can be theoretically anticipated at the start of the research. A more open interview format allows the respondent to make associations and linkages, introduce new, relevant topics that might not have been incorporated in the interview script.

Another part of the format for an interview concerns the approach by the interviewer in terms of behaviour. When conducting a semi-structured interview, there are several, purely research related things that need to be done, for example, take notes, listen attentively, think of follow-up questions and remember to crosscheck previously received information. It is also necessary to make a good impression and build a rapport by, for example, being polite, respectful, making appropriate verbal or non-verbal comments such as laugh or nod and using body language in accordance with cultural context. Building a rapport with the respondent is crucial and, in my opinion, failure to do so will affect the validity of the study. Some of these interaction factors come down to more or less inert personal character traits of the interviewer. Others are the result of a choice on how to act before entering the interview situation. One example of such a conscious choice is to decide whether to act informed or to “dumb-down”.

The logic behind the dumb-down approach is that the interviewer comes across as less of a threat and may thus generate more information from the respondents. Beth Leech argues against the dumbing-down approach, in particular with regard to elite interviews, as the interviewer might end up receiving no relevant information, only a basic lecture in politics. She suggests a middle way of being generally knowledgeable but less informed in the area of concern for the interview. I share Leech’s position in this matter and in the interview situation I operationalised this approach by providing information baked into the majority of the questions. This had a dual purpose of firstly, providing a context for the question; and secondly, to show that I knew the details of the case so as to avoid a basic lecture in political dynamics or simple factual information about the situation in Nepal that I could obtain elsewhere.

I did not downplay my knowledge of a situation, but instead I demonstrated it as concisely as I could in how I phrased or contextualised questions. When my respondents complimented me on my knowledge on Nepal and jokingly asked why I needed to talk to them I could honestly respond that although I knew about the conflict and for example the decision in question, I was interested in their personal interpretations, reasoning and reactions, of which I knew nothing and about which I was eager to learn. In my experience showcasing knowledge in a matter-of-factly way, also contributes to creating a more equal relationship between me and the interviewees. I never acted (or felt) like a student eager for information but rather as a peer in whom the interviewee could confide. I also noticed on the occasions when

I did not contextualised the first questions, only to do so later, how the interviewee’s attitude towards me changed and became more respectful.

Another reason for using the informed-interviewer-approach in elite interviews is that the consequences of acting as if you do not know the material could be disastrous. Elites may feel like you are wasting their time and give you either a basic lecture or try and finish the interview as soon as possible. By making a dumb-down impression you may also lose the possibility of the snowball effect and suffer with regard to future meetings or contact networks. 132

To further work on my informed-interviewer-approach, I used “anonymous namedropping” to establish credibility. As pointed out by Richards, after having done some interviews you can use information from these in a favourable way, but in a manner that does not jeopardize the anonymity of respondents. 133 He argues that it provides “an opportunity to establish your credibility, your knowledge and allows you to cross-reference the information obtained.” 134 I often used this technique while doing interviews and it always generated a more respectful approach by the respondents. It also produced an increased will to either substantiate a previous claim by providing more examples or to refute it by giving new information to describe an alternative way of events or arguing for another perception of the matter. Either way, a kind of dialogue was generated between the present and the previous respondent and this increased the quantity and quality of the information given. This cross referencing technique was also helpful to get the respondents to feel more comfortable in sharing information as they knew that others had given a certain level of detail before, or that I already knew of unofficial events or discussions.

To further build rapport with the respondent it is advisable to contact them shortly after the interview and thank them for their time and engagement. 135 I sent all my interviewees a thank you email the same day that we had met. This was also a good way of asking permission to contact them in the future if there were any questions arising upon going through the material.

133 As stated below, all my respondents agreed to having their name published in the dissertation but that does not mean that I would divulge what one respondent said in an interview situation to another respondent. At times, after having mentioned: “I was told by a senior member of NC that…..”, the respondent would ask me for the name of that person. Upon my polite declining the request with the explanation of respecting anonymity, this seemed to increase the respect and also the level of relaxation from the respondent.
Interviewees do not simply provide data, and, as established above, the data obtained is not objective. Rather, in addition to being subjective, data gathered from interviews is sometimes described as ‘contaminated’. Contaminated in this respect refers to the fact that the respondent, and subsequently the information, is influenced by the interviewer. What do the respondents feel that they can say? What do they think you want to hear? Who you are (or are perceived to be), the topic that you are researching and how you present it, as well as how you come across in the interview situation, all influence the interviewees in what they say. It did sometimes happen that respondents would voice their opinions on the role of the European Union or about some statements made by the Scandinavian ambassadors in Nepal, even though I never initiated the topic. Instead, such insertions in the narrative were in direct relation to my being Swedish and part of the EU and the interviewee sometimes believed that I was interested in this aspect or he/she wanted to convey an opinion or complaint during causal conversation before the interview began. This behaviour by the respondents towards the interviewer cannot be entirely prevented. It is quite natural for people in conversation to be aware of socially or politically sensitive views and they may try and censor their narratives according to what they feel is the correct response or according to the level of trust they have in you as interviewer. Being aware of this can make it easier to minimize the risk of reducing trust or receiving unwanted information.

My experience with regard to contaminating perceptions were less obvious then when compared to a Nepali friend conducting interviews with Nepali nationals in Kathmandu. As a rule, he was asked to tell the respondents where in Nepal he was from, who his parents were and if he was affiliated with any political party. He was even asked, on occasion, if the CIA had commissioned his dissertation. As I am not Nepali, I only occasionally got questions about my background and I made it clear that I did not have any affiliations to non-governmental organisations, since NGOs in Nepal are often viewed as corrupt and often closely connected to a particular political party. It also served me well that Sweden was either regarded as part of the EU and as such less hands-on in Nepal than for example India, the UK or the United States, or regarded as a neutral party. From this perspective, it proved beneficial there was no Swedish embassy in Kathmandu as I did not have to respond to, or defend, statements or policies of the Swedish government.

As my friend and I had interviewed some of the same people, comparing interviewing experiences made me reflect on the pros and cons of being an ‘outsider’. From my experience in Nepal it seemed that being nationality foreigner helped to reduce the suspicion of the respondents. I was not considered a threat in that I had no national political connections and thus I was deemed less likely to pass on information given by them to the media. It was also clear that I was able to access people unavailable or not very willing to meet Nepalese researchers.
Lastly, in terms of building a rapport, the kind of language used is an important part of the interview situation. Leech argues for a more relaxed wording, such as using the word ‘talk’, instead of ‘interview’. The purpose is, again, to establish a friendly, non-defensive atmosphere of a dialogue between two people. To build a good rapport, it is very important in the interview situation to use a non-value laden language, encourage the interviewee’s own opinions and experiences and to acknowledge them as they share this information. This helps to create a social, friendly milieu for the interview and makes respondents feel comfortable when sharing their narrative.

I encouraged my interviewees to give their own view on an issue or decision, emphasising that I had particularly chosen to speak to them for their insights and experiences. As my research interest was on their perceptions and reasoning, encouraging subjectivity in this regard was, as stated above, methodologically unproblematic. With regard to value-laden words, this was a process of learning. Apart from the obvious way of constructing questions void of the normally value-laden words such as ‘best’, ‘exploitative’ and ‘worse than’, there were also some context specific words that I learnt to avoid. Some topics that I wished to discuss contained words or terminology that could be perceived as politically delicate. One such area was ‘political compromise’ that was at the heart of the negotiation processes. In this context, I knew from previous interviews and more informal talks, that the word ‘compromise’ could be interpreted as political defeat. I was careful to frame questions so that if I had to use ‘compromise’ it was a natural thing. I also incorporated the word success in the question to counter the perception that compromise meant political defeat. Thus the question could be formulated in the following manner:

“Negotiations and political compromise are, as we know, a normal part of politics. Could you tell me how it was that compromises were reached for the negotiations in 2006 to be successful?”

This way of expressing the question avoided a defensive attitude, which would have wasted time in the interview and also negatively affected the established rapport. The next section will deal specifically with what types of questions were posed and how they were constructed so as to increase responsiveness of the interviewee and contribute to greater validity.

Types of questions and structure of interviews

‘Open-ended’ and ‘unstructured’ interviews are approaches to interviewing that are usually contrasted to approaches using so-called structured inter-

---

views. Both have their merits and drawbacks and the decision to use one or the other should depend on the nature of the research topic, the kind of data the researcher is seeking and who the interviewees are. More structured interviews benefit from the possibility of direct comparison between responses and compilation of data since the same questions are put in the same order to different interviewees. Yet, there are research topics that have been argued to be ill fitted to a structured format and from the perspective of this study a more open-ended approach was appropriate. The drawbacks of structured interviews in relation to certain topics has been pointed out by Holloway and Jefferson who, in their study on crime and feelings of insecurity, noticed that a question-and-answer approach with many ‘why’ questions, hampered the interviewees and they could not give the kind of comprehensive responses needed to conduct a meaningful analysis.137

The more open-ended, narrative approach counters this tendency and allows interviewees to more freely associate and narrate their experiences according to their own thoughts. The data obtained through this approach is less comparable, yet more comprehensive information can be obtained. Again, this is not an expressed personal preference, instead the interview method should be determined by what is under study. It is suggested by Gubrium and Holstein that, narrative analysis is good for studying social movements, political change and that “narrative analysis allows for the systematic study of personal experience and meaning.”138 If focus is placed on the level of personal perception and meaning creation, as in this dissertation, a more unstructured approach that allows for a more narrative response is beneficial.

The approach taken with regard to interviews in this study can be defined as semi-structured and lies between more traditional question-and-answer interview structure and a more narrative, storytelling approach. I did not operate according to a pre-written script detailing the questions, but had a list of themes that I wanted to cover during the interview. The questions had to differ in perspective depending on to which party the respondent belonged. I did not introduce the themes in any particular order but was sensitive to where a new topic could be opened in a way that fitted naturally with what the respondent was relating at the time.

During my interview sessions I experienced the trade-off between validity and reliability in terms of selecting an unstructured and a structured approach. When I did use a more rigid and prepared script (for example when I had over-prepared on account of being nervous before an interview, or when the flow of the interview halted) I found that the quality of the information

suffered. If the question came at the wrong time in the flow of the conversation or when it could not be introduced naturally along the association pattern of the respondent, I found that the interviewee was less likely to give in-depth narratives, or could even withhold information because the question was perceived as awkward. By being sensitive to the flow of the interview, and to introduce new or related topics naturally, I found the quality of the data to be richer.

For the interviews, I use what Leech refers to as specific grand tour questions, where the interviewee is asked to give an account of an issue specified by the interviewer. The question is more contextually defined and specifically tied to an issue compared to grand tour questions that are more broad in nature, for example: Could you tell me about the civil war in Nepal? I had done pilot interviews using questions of a more grand tour character, and these tended to generate too disparate a narrative and made it difficult to focus the interviewee to provide information on the themes of interest. Instead the specific grand tour questions provided context and also served to show that I was an informed but interested interviewer. The first question in introducing a theme could then be: “Could you tell me about what your party did in response to the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance issued by the government in 2001?” Or: “Could you tell me about the decision of your party to join the eight party alliance in 2005?” I found that such specific grand tour questions provided detailed narratives that were comprehensive yet to the point.

The benefits of specific grand tour questions have also been acknowledged by Holloway and Jefferson after having first tried a more traditional Question and Answer approach. In their first attempts the answers to their questions were short and vague with the interviewee asking for clarification of what the interviewer was seeking. They acknowledged that the opening question had been too direct and void of context, which would familiarize the interviewee with the topic under discussion.

More open questions and a semi-structured interview format are also recommended by Richards who argues that a more rigid type of structure obtained is likely to put the interviewee (especially if an elite person) on the defensive. This view is also upheld by Aberbach and Rockman who claim that “elites especially—but other highly educated people as well, do not like

being put in the straightjacket of close-ended questions. In my experience, the questions should not be close-ended or ‘narrow’ but allow the interviewee to have freedom to tell their narrative and make associations more freely, yet the questions should not be too open as this could result in the narrative going too far off topic. The inclination of many elite interviewees to take charge of the interview and perhaps steer it into a direction or focus too much on issues peripheral to your research is also quite effectively hampered by posing specific grand tour questions.

Specific grand tour question thus serve a dual purpose: they show that you are knowledgeable, so that the interviewee take you seriously and they also keep the interview focused on the themes you wish to cover.

I also used contra factual questions, which presented the respondent with a scenario that had not occurred and asked them to reflect over what would have happened in different circumstances. For example: “If there had been no coup by the king in 2005, would you have made an alliance with the Maoists?” This type of questions gave me useful information in itself and an added value when I compared the narratives of why, in this example, the parliamentary parties actually had decided to ally themselves with the Maoists. In theory the actors had several options for action, yet chose one over the others and thus I asked them why they had chosen not to do something. Here the answers gave me a more detailed account of their reasoning where they, in a way, weighed the options again in the interview situation and finally accounted for what factors they perceive precluded a certain option.

Follow-up questions

Open-ended questions in a semi-structured format demand more of the interviewer as the interview takes on a more conversational character. The interviewer needs to be attentive and listen carefully in order to follow-up on what the interviewee has related or associated to. Following up on the conversation can mean diverging from the “script” of the interview, which then, as mention above, reduces reliability. However this may prompt more fully developed answers in that the flow of the conversation is not hampered due to abrupt changes of chronology or topic. Further, the respondent is allowed to “organise their answers within their own framework”\(^\text{143}\), which increases validity.

One way to construct follow up questions that I used was to construct the question using the interviewee’s last sentence or word. Beginning a new question by using the respondent’s own words demonstrated to him/her that I


was being attentive to what he/she was telling me and it made for a natural continuation of the interview although a new topic was introduced. For example:

Respondent (R): “We tried to convince the prime minister to consider the option of republic but there were some problems.”

Emma Björnehed (EB): “You say there were some problems with this, yet in the end he did sign the document. This was similar to the situation in 2001 when the army was deployed. Can you tell me about the reasons for doing this?”

This technique can also encourage the respondent to continue an ongoing narrative.\textsuperscript{144} For example:

R: “We tried to convince the prime minister to consider the option of republic but there were some problems.”

EB: “Problems?”

R: “Yes, he believed that the monarchy stood for the unity of the nation…”

Other types of follow-up questions, used during the interviews, were example questions. An example question is used when the interviewee participant has identified an event of importance and the question then acts as a way to elicit more detailed information.\textsuperscript{145} For example, when the respondent had referred to the CPN (Maoist) as a terrorist organisation, I asked the following question: “Could you give me an example of in what way the CPN (Maoist) are terrorists?”

From my experience follow-up questions were those that generated the most interesting or in-depth narratives. If done correctly, they also contributed to the natural feel of the conversation and improved the rapport with the respondents. I put great effort into listening and posing follow-up questions in a timely manner and in a way that suited the style of the conversation at that point in the interview. Sometimes what suited the style could range from presenting the question almost jokingly, seriously or even cheekily. Sometimes a follow-up question did not have to be a verbal question at all, but a simple facial expression such as a raised eyebrow, frown or smile, would elicit a continuation or specification of the narrative.

\textsuperscript{144} Wendy Holloway and Tony Jerfferson, “Eliciting Narrative Through the In-Depth Interview,” \textit{Qualitative Interview} vol.3 no. 53 (1997): 64.

Language

As all my interviewees spoke English to a satisfactory degree, all interviews save two were conducted in English. Being their second language, their capabilities of expressing themselves would have been greater if the interviews would have been conducted in their native tongue, yet then the problems associated with an interpreter and the loss of meaning in translation would have emerged. As it was, some respondents sometimes struggled to find an appropriate word or way of expressing their thoughts, but they did not voice frustration over not being able to express themselves as they wished. If the analysis had been dependent on a more linguistic analysis, acknowledging the use of specific words, syntax or equivalence chains, conducting the interviews in a language other than the native tongue of the interviewees would have been methodologically problematic. Yet with an analytical framework operating on the level of identifying the problem, cause and solution from the interviews, the analysis did not suffer from the lack of language specificity. Nor did the linguistic limitation affect sample selection and in the two cases where an interpreter was needed this was arranged.

On the issue of language it also became clear that certain words or expressions were commonly misused. One example was the use of the word ‘before’ instead of ‘ago’ in the context of past time. The interviewees would frequently say: ‘two years before’ instead of ‘two years ago’. If I was uncertain as to their meaning I would simply pose a clarifying question along the lines of: “So you are saying that already in 2003…” as to avoid misinterpretation.

On or off the record?

I chose to use a digital tape recorder during the interviews. I always asked for permission and none of the respondents voiced any objection to this. I also did not get the sense that the presence of the tape recorder reduced the respondents’ willingness to speak on delicate or unofficial matters. In order to reduce the chance that it did affect their willingness to share information I clearly informed them before the interview of their right to anonymity should they so wish. Although all respondents thought this unnecessary, it is one way of reducing the risk of limiting responsiveness when recording an interview. Also, the people I interviewed were used to being interviewed and being taped, by journalists, and this, I believe, reduced the potential uncomfortable feeling a recording device can generate. Further, I believe that to the extent that caution is present on the part of the interviewee, this does not predominantly originate from the presence or absence of a tape recorder. It is more dependent on the skill of establishing a good rapport with the respondent and a relaxed environment for the interview.
The use of a tape recorder provided a significant benefit by reducing the distraction of note taking. I could be more attentive to what the interviewee was saying and this increased the quality of follow-up questions. I also felt that it was easier to give the interviewees my full attention as I was not occupied with continuous note taking. To me, using a recorder made it easier to build a rapport and make the interview feel like a ‘natural’ conversation. Having the interviews recorded digitally also greatly increased the quality of the transcripts. I had always stated that the anonymity of the respondent would be respected if they so wished. Given this, I asked if they would permit me to use quotes from our interview. All respondents were of the view that anonymity was not required and that citing was permitted.

Transcribing, treatment and presentation

All of the interviews were recorded and then transcribed by me. Reading through the transcripts I picked out 18 central themes and collected those parts relating to the specific themes into separate documents. Examples of these central themes are: the king’s actions, negotiation rounds, Maoist character and the terrorism issue. In organizing the different themes in the documents I was guided by elements of frame analysis theory and looked for areas of, for example, frame disputes and counter-framing attempts. I then re-read the thematic documents and began to see linkages between them and then integrated the documents, building a more focused collection of seven central themes: Possibility of Alliance, Democracy and Trust, In-group Disputes, Negotiation and Election, Terrorism Frame, Peace Frame and the Rational Story. As I examined the conflict and peace process through frame analysis, locating frames and framing processes was the primary task of the preliminary analysis. I began with the two dominant frames: the Terrorism Frame, which was theory driven and the Peace Frame, which originated from the collected empirical material. The analytical framework of problem, cause, solution, was applied to the material where the problem representation of both the government and the Maoist were taken into account. The result was four problem representations, two for each of the two frames. As such, comparisons between the different frames were possible and similarities and differences could be identified.

In terms of perceived manoeuvrability the actor effect model was applied to the material to identify the effects of self-serving, persuasion, entrapment and self-entrapment from how the respondents’ spoke about their decisions and actions. In regard to these logic the analysis of the material noted indicators of these logic as, for example, where the interviewees had expressed that they felt pressured; had wanted to take some other action but felt prevented due to what could be identified as prevailing frames and; had expressed a need for a certain framing to allow for a certain action.
In going through the transcripts it was clear that the interviews improved over time. That is the quality of the material improved as my experience of interviewing increased. Thus there is an admitted bias in relation to the quality of the interviews dependent on my interviewing experience. This bias, I believe, is somewhat reduced by my previous experience conducting interviews in Nepal prior to the dissertation project. Being aware of this risk of a difference in quality between early and late interviews I made conscious decisions to place some of the interviews I considered as important later in the process and they were conducted on my second field research trip. Examples of this were the interviews with Former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, Maoist Supremo Prachanda and Prime Minister and second in command of the CPN(Maoist), Dr. Baburam Bhattarai.

The interviews are presented in the thesis through selected quotes. As quotes these excerpts have not been edited with regard to grammar or syntax. Nor have they been altered to “written” language. When reading the quotes it should be remembered that these are representations of spoken language, which can account for rhetorical oddities such as repetitions.

**Written material**

Written material was used to cross reference data gathered from the interviews and to provide ‘fixed material’ relating to the case and the actors. In terms of newspaper sources, I mainly used The Kathmandu Post and the Rising Nepal, both English language newspapers with a wide circulation in Nepal. Politically, The Kathmandu Post is more liberal while the Rising Nepal is more conservative. I went through all the issues of the Kathmandu Post from 2001 to 2006 selecting relevant articles and then took the corresponding dates for the Rising Nepal. It should be noted that the newspapers are only eight pages long and the layout of the newspapers is fairly easy to manage with National news on one page, editorial on one, sports on one etc. For a relevant date I ordered the entire page from the Rising Nepal. Mostly this was the front page, editorial page and the national news page for each newspaper.

I also used government statements, where available. No material is available in English from the government sessions and the meetings held between party leaders in the negotiation process have no minutes to access. This also stressed the need for interviews as the motivations and decision process had not been recorded in text. From the Maoists’ side I used the Maoist bulletin

---

146 By important here I mean the relative importance of the person I was interviewing in terms of availability and position within the party or organization. It is of course impossible to judge the quality of the interview and thus its scientific importance beforehand. It may well be that an interview, beforehand categorized as less important, may turn out to have significant impact for the study.
that the party published online as a source of data as well as statements and other texts from the party, including the letter stating the 40 point demands released in 1996. I also used agreements from past negotiations such as ceasefire declarations and the various agreements coming out of the peace process.
4. Overview of Nepal: main actors and events

A comprehensive Peace Accord was signed between Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, Prime Minister of Nepal and Mr. Prachanda, the President of Communist Party Nepal (Maoist) on 21 November, 2006. Following the Accord, an era of peaceful co-existence has began ending the insurgency and conflict staged by Maoist since 13 February, 1996. Thus, this Accord is considered as a landmark event in the Nepalese political history.147

What is described in the above excerpt from the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement is a transition from open conflict to peaceful relations between the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN (Maoist)) and the government of Nepal, which ended the decade long civil war. This chapter gives an overview of the conflict and peace process and focuses on presenting the main actors and central events. The time span is from 1990 until 2008, covering the period of (re)introduction of democracy in 1990, through the conflict years and peace process, and ending with the election to the Constituent Assembly in April 2008.148

Parties to the conflict

The decade long civil war can be categorised as a struggle for state power and power to determine the structure of the state where the main antagonists were the CPN (Maoist) and the state. During the period of conflict the state in Nepal consisted of a parliamentary system of government with a constitutional monarch as the Head of State. The monarch, King Gyanendra, became directly involved in the domestic politics when he dismissed parliament on two occasions. The first time on the 4th of October 2002 King Gyanendra appointed ministers to replace the elected representatives. On the second

occasion, on February the 1st, 2005, he assumed full executive power. Thus, while speaking about the state it is important to distinguish between the parliamentary parties on the one hand and the monarch on the other. The section below gives an account of the history of the political parties, including the CPN (Maoist), their ideological orientation and prominent party members.

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)

The insurgency in Nepal, commonly referred to as the Maoist movement, had at its core the radical left-wing party the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN (Maoist)). The party was originally formed in 1985 under the name Communist Party of Nepal (Mashal) of which Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a. Prachanda became General Secretary in 1989. The CPN (Maoist), as all communist parties in Nepal, has, as parent organisation the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN), which was formed in 1949. Over the years the CPN experienced numerous splits and several fractions were formed. One of these was the moderate left-wing Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) (CPN-UML). The CPN (Maoist) itself was, similarly to the formation of the CPN-UML, the result of the radicalization and fragmentation among the numerous left-wing parties in Nepal following the implementation of democracy in 1990.

During the agitation for democracy in 1990, through the massive People’s Movement (Jana Andolan), the party did not partake in the mainstream coalition of parties but supported the implementation of multi-party democracy alongside the other parties including the conservative Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML. Instead, during the Peoples’ Movement, the Maoists together with some other communist factions was organised in the United National People’s Movement (UNPM). The UNPM later decided to partake in the general election in 1991 through their political organisation the United People’s Front of Nepal (UPFN). The party won nine seats in parliament, making them the third largest party after the Nepali Congress (NC) and the

Provisions in the 1990 constitution (Part 8 §53 clause 4) allows the king to dissolve parliament on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Deepak Thapa, Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal (Kathmandu: Modern Printing Press, 2003), x.


The UNPM formed a two wing organization: the Communist Party of Nepal –Unity Centre which was a revolutionary front and the United People’s Front of Nepal (UPFN) as the political front.
Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML).\textsuperscript{154} However, the radical left-wing parties continued to experience fragmentation and the common political vision began to falter.\textsuperscript{155} Already in the wake of the 1990s movement, the CPN (Mashal) had an outspoken ideological foundation of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and a belief that the pursuit of a People’s War was the only strategy by which to establish a People’s Democracy.\textsuperscript{156} When the time came for mid-term elections, in 1994, the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) with party chairman Prachanda decided to leave mainstream politics and went underground.

In a document released in 1995, one year before hostilities broke out, the party clearly declared its goal of capturing state power with the motivation:

This plan of initiation of the peoples’ war would be based on the principle that everything is an illusion except state power. While remaining firm on the principle aim of the armed struggles as to capture political power for the people, the Party expresses its firm commitment to wage relentless struggle against all forms of deviationist thoughts and trends including economism, reformism and anarchism.\textsuperscript{157}

In 1996, the party issued a 40-point statement to then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress, outlining the social, political and economic changes that they wished to see in Nepal. Three days before the deadline the Maoists attacked police barracks in the districts of Rolpa, Rukum and Jajarkot and seized the Small Farmers Development Programme offices in Gorkha and Sindhuli districts.\textsuperscript{158} The civil war that followed lasted for over a decade and claimed the lives of over 13 000 people.\textsuperscript{159} The party’s ideology was Marxism-Leninism-Maoist and tactically they adhered to Mao’s doctrine concerning guerrilla warfare. This Marxism-Leninism-Maoist ideological foundation was combined with the specific context and experience of waging a guerrilla war in Nepal and dubbed the Prachanda Path at the party’s Second National Conference in February 2001.\textsuperscript{160} In terms

\textsuperscript{160} “Interview with Comrade Prachanda”, *A World to Win* no.27, 2001 in Deepak Thapa Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal, (Kathmandu: Modern Printing Press, 2003), 220.
of military strategy the Maoists adhere to Mao’s phases of people’s war, and as such they divided the war into three stages: strategic defence, strategic stalemate and strategic offence.\footnote{\textit{Sudheer Sharma, “The Maoist Movement an Evolutionary Perspective”}, in Deepak Thapa, \textit{Understanding the Maoist Movement of Nepal} (Kathmandu: Modern Printing Press, 2003), 373.}

Although the Maoist movement was successful in broadening its recruitment base to include \textit{dalits} (untouchables) \textit{janajatis} (indigenous people) and women (approximately 40 per cent of the political and military wing) by drawing on the widespread injustices manifest in an economically and socially segregated society, the core of the movement and the political actor remained the CPN (Maoist).\footnote{\textit{Mahendra Lawoti, \textit{Towards a Democratic Nepal} (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), 65.}} Except for a certain fragmentation in 2004, with two groups leaving the movement in disappointment at the Maoists’ lack of support for the struggle of ethnic groups\footnote{One of these were the Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha, led by Joy Krishna Goit who continued a violent and political struggle in the Terai for the political rights of the Madhes community.}, the movement has suffered no splintering and can be seen as a single actor with a clearly defined political and military leadership under Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) with Dr. Baburam Bhattarai as second in command and ideological leader.

The main parliamentary parties

Following Mao’s revolutionary theory, the antagonist of the Maoists has always been the state. In the period 1990-2002, Nepal was governed by frequently changing coalition governments and the country experienced seven cabinets in the five years between 1994 and 1999.\footnote{\textit{Mahendra Lawoti, \textit{Towards a Democratic Nepal} (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), 146.}} Although there were frequent shifts in government constellations this concerned mainly party configurations, not individual politicians (see Table 4.1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prime Minister</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Krishna Prasad Bhattarai</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
<td>April 1990-May 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sher Bahadur Deuba</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
<td>September 1995-March 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokendra Bahadur Chand</td>
<td>Rastriya Prajatandra Party (Chand)</td>
<td>March 1997-October 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surya Bahadur Thapa</td>
<td>Rastriya Prajatandra Party</td>
<td>October 1997-April 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girija Prasad Koirala</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
<td>April 1998-May 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sher Bahadur Deuba</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
<td>July 2001-October 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct rule by king Gyandenra</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4 October 2002-11 October 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lokendra Bahadur Chand*</td>
<td>Rastriya Prajatandra Party</td>
<td>October 2002-June 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surya Bahadur Thapa*</td>
<td>Rastriya Prajatandra Party</td>
<td>June 2003-June 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sher Bahadur Deuba*</td>
<td>Nepali Congress (Democratic)</td>
<td>June 2004-February 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct rule by king Gyandenra</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>February 2005-April 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girija Prasad Koirala</td>
<td>Nepali Congress</td>
<td>April 2006-May 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Prime Ministers of the Kingdom of Nepal (1990-2008)

*Minister posts were acquired by royal appointment.

During the changing political scenery of the 1990s, the individual actors remained more or less the same with only state power changing hands. Nepali Congress was the ruling party for the majority of the period and occu-
pied the Prime Minister post a total of nine times.\textsuperscript{165} One of the reasons for the instability of the government during the 1990s was the non-acceptance of democratic procedures and of being in opposition.\textsuperscript{166} This frequent challenge of the sitting government by the opposition has been argued to be indicative of power struggles dominating domestic politics in Nepal.\textsuperscript{167} In addition to the inter-party struggles, the widespread dissatisfaction with the conduct and performance of the political parties paved the way, in 2005, for the monarchy to reassume its traditional position as a ruling head of state.\textsuperscript{168}

Although there are 74\textsuperscript{169} registered parties in Nepal\textsuperscript{170}, apart from the CPN (Maoist) after their entry into the multi-party democratic system, there are two dominant parties: the Nepali Congress (NC) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninists (CPN-UML). Since the introduction of political parties in Nepal in the 1940s, the NC and the CPN-UML have been the main ones in terms of size and influence. This is why the majority of respondents from the parliamentary parties are from these two parties. No other parties, except the RPP and the CPN (Maoist), have been able to gather enough votes to form either a majority or minority government. Political parties were outlawed in Nepal in the 1940s and many of the politically active families and individuals had sought refuge in neighbouring India. From 1846 and for the following 103 years, political power in Nepal was held by the Ranas, a powerful high caste family that had succeeded in diverting power away from the palace to the office the Prime Minister. The political situation changed with the ousting of the Rana regime in Nepal and this also resulted in more open foreign relations. Until then citizens were required to obtain special permits in order to leave the country and the number of foreign visitors was limited. Both the NC and the CPN were instrumental in launching the campaign that ended the reign of the Rana Prime Ministers.

The NC is a party with a conservative ideology, arguing for reduced state control and was, until 2006, in favour of a constitutional monarch. The CPN-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{165} This includes Sher Bahdur Deuba’s terms as party leader of the Nepali Congress Democratic, which later merged once more with its parent party the Nepali Congress.
\item \textsuperscript{166} Mahendra Lawoti, \textit{Towards a Democratic Nepal} (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), 146.
\item \textsuperscript{168} For a comprehensive overview of Nepal’s politics in the 1990s see for example, Martin Hoftun, William Reaper and John Whelpton, \textit{People, Politics and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal}, (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1999); Kumar Dhruba, ed., \textit{Domestic Conflict and Crisis of Governability in Nepal} (Kathmandu: Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, 2000) and; Lok Raj Baral, \textit{The Regional Paradox: Essays in Nepali and South Asian Affairs} (New Delhi: Adroit Publishers, 2001)
\item \textsuperscript{169} This number also includes the CPN (Maoist) although they are treated here as separate from the parliamentary parties.
\item \textsuperscript{170} The list of registered parties can be accessed on the homepage of the Election Commission of Nepal: http://www.election.gov.np/EN/voterinfo/list.php (accessed: 2012-01-25).
\end{itemize}
UML has a more progressive agenda based on equality and socio-economic reforms. Both parties were instrumental in initiating the First Peoples Movement (Jana Andolan) in 1990, which introduced democracy proper in Nepal, then the Second Jana Andolan in the spring of 2006, which resulted in the king stepping down. It was the NC and UML which, together with five other parties, formed the Seven Party Alliance in the spring of 2005 and began negotiations with the Maoists.

The Palace

The monarchy has been a prominent feature in Nepal politics throughout its history. The nation took its modern shape in 1768 under the leadership of Privathy Naharanya Shah, from whom, the monarchs in Nepal have all been direct descendants. The last king of Nepal, Gyanendra, was the eleventh monarch of the royal line. The kings of Nepal ruled the country until 1847 when the Rana family assumed power and ruled as Prime Ministers for 103 years, keeping the monarch as a symbolic head of state. With the overthrow of the Rana regime in 1950, Nepal experienced a brief period of multiparty democracy. This ended with the king’s dissolution of parliament in 1960, one year after the first election was held. The then king, Mahendra, assumed executive power and implemented a party-less political system called Panchayat. Thus, the monarchy has had a prominent role in governing the state since its foundation. Until the Second Peoples’ Movement (Second Jana Andolan) \(^{171}\) in April 2006, the monarch was generally regarded as a symbol of national unity. Among the more religious part of the population, the king was also seen as the reincarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. Up until 2008 when it was proclaimed a secular state, Nepal was the only country in the world where Hinduism was the state religion.

The Panchayat system was in force until 1990 when a popular People’s Movement (Jana Andolan) demanded of then king, Birendra, the implementation of multi-party democracy. After huge demonstrations in Kathmandu, Birendra conceded and Nepal acquired a new constitution, albeit with a constitutional monarch.

In 2001, five years after the start of the Maoist insurgency, the then Crown Prince, Dipendra, killed seven people of his own family including the king and queen before fatally wounding himself. The incident known as the Palace Massacre occurred on June 1\(^{st}\) and saw the brother to the murdered king, Gyanendra ascend the throne. Known generally as an ambitious man,

\(^{171}\) Some of my respondents, especially those belonging to left wing parties, have pointed out that the term Second Jana Andolan is misgiving, since the struggle against the feudal state should be seen as one continuous process. Although I note the ideological importance of such a view, for the purpose of chronological clarity and to avoid confusion for the reader, I will use the established terms of Jana Andolan and Second Jana Andolan to describe these events in Nepalese political history.
Gyandendra took a more active part in political life. Stating that the political parties were inefficient in dealing with the Maoist problem, King Gyanendra dissolved parliament on October 4th, 2002 and proceeded to assume executive power on February 1st, 2005. Upon seizing state power, Gyanendra outlawed the political parties, effectively turning the conflict into a tri-party struggle, between the Maoist, the political parties and the monarchy.

**Period of conflict**

The Nepal civil war lasted from 1996-2006. During this period there were three attempts at negotiation, one in 2001 between the democratically elected government of Sher Bahadur Deuba and the Maoist, one in 2003 between the Maoist and the king’s government and one in 2005 between the Seven Party Alliance and the Maoist. The negotiation in 2005 eventually led to the 12-point agreement and later to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2006. In between negotiation rounds the parties returned to hostilities where the state initially treated the Maoist insurgency as a law and order problem, until, in 2001, the army was mobilized.

**Democracy and the beginning of fragmentation**

Although the Nepal conflict did not become violent until February 1996, the years leading up to the armed insurgency had been marked by increased fragmentation among the political parties in Nepal. This fragmentation had been preceded by a period of unprecedented unity as the political parties had come together in the Peoples’ Movement (Jana Andolan) of 1990, and successfully pressured King Birendra to reinstate democracy to the Himalayan kingdom.

The reinstatement is more accurately described as an introduction of democracy, as except for two interruptions, Nepal has been ruled by the same family of monarchs since the unification of the country in 1768. The first exception to monarchical rule was the oligarchy of the Rana family who claimed de facto power as prime ministers for just over a century while keeping the king as the symbolical leader. The second exception followed the fall of the Rana regime, when a multi-party democratic system was tried between 1951 and 1960. The democratic system was never properly implemented at the time. Elections were not held until 1959 and King Mahendra

---

172 Lindsay Friedman, *Conflict in Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Shtrii Shakti, 2005), 18.
disputed parliament a year later and re-established control through a party-
less system (*Panchayat*).\textsuperscript{176}

In reality democracy was introduced in Nepal in 1990 and following the
*Jana Andolan*, people had high hopes and aspirations for the new political
system. Yet, the government and the people, both being unprepared and un-
educated in the ways of democratic procedure, failed to generate the ex-
pected (and promised) results and consequently disappointments soared.\textsuperscript{177}

Apart from public disappointment there was also increased criticism,
from the radical left, directed at parliament, accusing the government of
being undemocratic and ineffective. The government also suffered scandals
and accusations concerning corruption and nepotism. Interviewees from the
political parties have admitted that their, and the view of the population at
large, was that democracy would be like ‘instant coffee’ providing a solution
to all the social, political and economic problems Nepal was suffering and
the discrepancy between expectations and results grew.

It was against this political backdrop and in a country characterized by
significant economic inequalities and social segregation that the Maoists
launched their civil war. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world
and the rural and especially the Western parts are the least developed in the
country. This is where the Maoist established their strongest bases and im-
plemented alternative legal and executive state structures such as Peoples’
Courts. The very visible existence of second-class citizens as represented by
the lower castes and untouchables (*dalits*)\textsuperscript{178} became, in addition to the wide-
spread economic inequality, a significant political platform from which the
Maoists advocated equal rights and equal worth.

### The Boycott of the 1994 Elections and the 40-point demand

Following political manoeuvring from the other parties the CPN (Maoist)
were not deemed a proper party and as a result the leadership decided to
boycott the 1994 elections. The CPN (Maoist) saw its possibilities of gaining
power through the official channels to be diminishing and the option of a
Peoples’ War grew more attractive. After the boycott of the 1994 elections,
the Maoist party went underground. In 1995 they issued a 40-point demand
to then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba (NC) outlining their demands
for the socio-economic and political restructuring of the Nepali state. The
Prime Minister received the document yet decided to defer dealing with it
until after a state visit to India. On February 13\textsuperscript{th} 1996, before Deuba got

\textsuperscript{178} The caste system, although diminished in importance, is still observed, especially in rural Nepal see Bista Dor Bahadur, *Fatalism and Development: Nepal’s struggle for modernization* (Patna: Orient Longman, 2001), 54.
back and four days before the allotted deadline, the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists attacked police stations, launching the People’s War. It appears as though the CPN (Maoist) had already decided to embark on a violent struggle in the Third Plenum of the Unity Centre, which was held in March 1995. This has made scholars draw the conclusion, that despite issuing a deadline with the demands, the Maoist had no intention of refraining from commencing the People’s War, regardless of the response by the government.\textsuperscript{179}

**Negotiation and military involvement (2001)**

The first attempts at a negotiated solution took place in August 2001. Following the declaration of a three-month bi-lateral ceasefire on 23\textsuperscript{rd} of July, the Maoists and the then Sher Bahadur Deuba (NC) government began talks on August 30\textsuperscript{th}. Three rounds of talks were held from August to November. However, the negotiations broke down due in large part to the failure to agree on the demand of the Maoists of elections to a Constitutional Assembly.\textsuperscript{180} The government were prepared to discuss amendments to the constitution but not a complete redrafting. The Maoist demand for a republic was also rejected. Following the failed negotiations, the Maoists proceeded to attack army barracks in several districts on the 23\textsuperscript{rd} of November. This was the first time that the army had been the target of Maoist attack. The government responded by implementing a state of emergency and labelled the CPN (Maoist) a terrorist organisation in November 2001, in accordance with the newly adopted Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Ordinance.\textsuperscript{181}

Following the breakdown of the first round of negotiations in 2001, the Royal Nepalese Army was mobilized and the conflict saw a significant increase in the numbers of casualties. In November 2001, the Maoists were proclaimed terrorist, the Terrorism and Disturbance Ordinance was issued and the army was deployed to deal with the situation. As expected the introduction of the army to the conflict lead to an escalation of the violence between the RNA and the PLA (see Table.4.2). In, 2002, the year following the involvement of the army, the reported battle related deaths were more than three times higher (3947) than in the previous six years taken together (1182 battle related deaths between 1996-2001). Although this year saw the highest number of casualties, the figures of battle related deaths remained over a thousand for every year up to the signing of the comprehensive peace agreement in 2006.

\textsuperscript{179} Nischchal Nath Pandey, *Nepal’s Maoist Movement and Implications for China and India* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 2005), 41.

\textsuperscript{180} Interview with Maoist leader in Kathmandu 17th of April 2007 and interview with former Home Minister in Kathmandu 18th of April 2007

Table 4.2 Battle related deaths per year in Nepal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>3947</td>
<td>1341</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>1104</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dissolution of parliament (2002)

In this time of increased conflict intensity and increased international attention the parliamentary system of Nepal faced a crisis. The crisis centred on the imposed six months State of Emergency (SoE) that was implemented in conjunction with the failed negotiation attempt in November 2001. In May 2002, the much criticised, State of Emergency was about to be lifted, yet arguments from the palace and the RNA urged that the SoE be extended by three months. This proposal was put forward by then Prime Minister Deuba who called for a special session of parliament on the 24th of May. On the other hand, the Central Working Committee of his own party, the Nepali Congress asked for this proposal to be withdrawn on the grounds that the Terrorist and Disruptive (Prevention and Punishment) Act, also issued in November 2001, was sufficient in dealing with the Maoist threat. In reply, Deuba recommended the dissolution of parliament and the holding of mid-term elections in November the same year. King Gyanendra followed his recommendation, parliament was dismissed and Deuba continued as caretaker Prime Minister.

This move by Deuba created further confusion with regard to the stability of the democratic system in Nepal and Deuba was expelled from the Nepali Congress party as a result. During the autumn, the military confrontations continued and there was widespread doubt about the ability to hold free and fair elections in November. When, in October, caretaker Prime Minister Deuba, called for a deferral of elections for one year, king Gyanendra dissolved parliament on the grounds that it was not able to hold elections as per the constitution. The king appointed an interim government with RPP leader Lokendra Bahadur Chand as Prime Minister and elections were postponed indefinitely. This move by the king, on October 4th, 2002, is widely regarded as the first direct step by the king to isolate the parliamentary parties and assume control of the state apparatus.

182 Uppsala Conflict Data Program (Uppsala University: Department of Peace and Conflict Research) (Date of retrieval: 09/05/06) UCDP Database: www.ucdp.uu.se/database
The debate concerning the extension of the State of Emergency and the deferring of elections can be seen as a result of the infighting within Nepali Congress, which resulted in Deuba’s expulsion from the party and the formation of Nepali Congress Democratic with Deuba as party leader. Deuba himself says that the idea of deferring elections came from both major parties, the NC and the UML.\footnote{186}

Second negotiation phase (2003)

On the 29\textsuperscript{th} of January 2003, four months after the dissolution of parliament by king Gyanedra, a mutual ceasefire, initiated by the Maoist, was announced. At this time both warring sides, the RNA and the Maoist were militarily weak after two years of intense fighting yet both considered the other to hold a strong military position. The government was receiving support, both politically and militarily, from the United States, India and the United Kingdom. For their part, the Maoist had a presence in all districts, including some urban centres.\footnote{187}

Before negotiations could begin the Maoist issued a list of four pre-requisites which related directly to the government’s designation of their movement as terrorist: 1) withdrawal of the government’s decision to declare the CPN (Maoist) a terrorist organisation; 2) withdrawal of Interpol Red Corner notices against Maoist leaders; 3) withdrawal of the decision to put price tags on the heads of Maoist leaders and: 4) withdrawal of all cases made against Maoists in custody or detention.\footnote{188}

The government conceded to these demands on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} of February. The demand by the Maoist to have these indicators of terrorism and criminality removed does show that the party did not take those decisions by the government lightly. They wanted to be seen as a legitimate political force, having argued, from the start, for a political view on the problem causing the conflict. Having removed the terrorism label, Interpol notices and price tags for individual Maoist leaders, the talks began. The core demands of the Maoist had not changed since the previous rounds of negotiation, they still asked for a roundtable conference, an interim government and elections to a Constituent Assembly.

In contrast to the first negotiations in 2001, both parties seemed committed and serious. Yet, it is clear from the events in the three rounds of talks that the Maoist were the leading actor in terms of political clarity. They had presented their demands for initiating talks and these were accepted. With

\footnote{186 Interview with former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, Kathmandu, October 13th, 2010.}
\footnote{188 Bishnu Pathak, \textit{Politics of People’s War and Human Rights in Nepal} (Kathmandu: BIMPA Publications, 2005), 350.}
the terrorism designation removed the government and the Maoist competed on equal political terms.

At the first round the Maoist presented their agenda, which included their three core demands as well as several points from the 40-point demand from 1996. At this point the government side asked for more time to ‘do their homework’ and come up with a proposal of their own. Before the start of the third round of talks, Gyanendra ousted Prime Minister Chand and appointed Surya Bahadur Thapa as Prime Minister on the 4th of June 2003.189 This new appointment was contested by the agitating parliamentary parties and also the Maoist expressed a sense of futility in continuing talks. The third round of talks was held on the 17th of August, 2003 in Nepalgunj and Dhang. Here the government presented their first official political agenda, which included major socio-economic changes and substantial constitutional amendments. However, they would not agree to a Constituent Assembly Election with the mandate to rewrite Nepal’s constitution and it remained silent on the role of the king in any future constitutional arrangement.190 The Maoist had been clear that the new constitution would be republican and ten days later the Maoists unilaterally withdrew from the peace talks and resumes violence.

During the 2003 negotiations, the parliamentary parties did not participate in talks. As the move to dismiss parliament in 2002 was considered by them as unconstitutional and undemocratic they regarded the talks to be illegitimate. With the breakdown of the negotiations, the CPN (Maoist) were also listed on the American Terror Exclusion List (TEL).191

The king takes over (2005)

From the end of the 2003 peace talks a period of political uncertainty and indecisiveness followed. The Maoist were intensifying their pressure on the government by, among other things, arranging road-blocks on roads leading to Kathmandu. The government issued a deadline for peace talks to resume but the Maoists ignored it. The Maoists on the other hand were insisting on international mediation, a condition that the government did not want to accept. The political leadership was also volatile, Surya Bahadur Thapa succeeded former Prime Minister Chand as Prime Minister by royal appointment. Yet he resigned after eleven months and after a time of prolonged demonstrations by the parliamentary parties. He was replaced by Sher Bahadur Deuba on 2nd of June 2004. This was Deuba’s third term as Prime Minister, his previous time as Prime Minister having ended with his dismissal by

191 State Department, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations” chapter 8 in Country Reports on Terrorism, released by the Office of the Coordinator for Counter-terrorism, April 28, 2006
king Gyanendra. This time it ended when the king assumed executive power on February 1st 2005 through what is referred to as the royal take over.

The royal take over in February 2005 marked a turning point in the dynamics of the Nepal conflict. King Gyanendra declared in his address to the nation, shortly after the takeover, that what his actions were essential in order to protect democracy in Nepal and to deal effectively with the Maoist threat. Upon seizing power Gyanendra had the majority of the leaders of the parliamentary parties either incarcerated or placed under house arrest. Hundreds of people who protested the king’s move were also taken into custody.

Negotiation and peace process (2005-2006)

After their successive releases in the late spring of 2005, the leaders of the parliamentary parties, notably G.P Koirala (NC) and Madhav Kumar Nepal (CPN-UML) began to initiate a movement against king Gyanendra to restore democracy and reinstate parliament. Together with five other political parties they formed the Seven Party Alliance (SPA). During the spring and summer of 2005 the SPA had unofficial communication with the Maoist. It appears as if the royal takeover provided the common incentive for the two political forces to fight against the autocratic rule of the palace. In July, Prachanda declared that his party is ready to hold talks with the SPA. Negotiations between the two parties continued throughout the summer and autumn amidst increasing demonstrations and protests by civil society. On November 21, four years after representatives of the same parliamentary parties that labelled the CPN (Maoist) terrorist, the Maoists and the SPA reached an agreement. The so-called 12-point agreement manifested the two forces continued fight to end the autocratic rule of the king and where the Maoists agreed to work within a multi-party democratic structure.

After the signing of the 12-point agreement in November 2005 the demonstrations against the king increased. Representatives of civil society spoke out and hundreds of people were placed in custody for violating curfew or speaking out against the king. The demonstrations soon turned into a movement, the Second Jana Andolan, drawing on the first people’s movement in 1990, which had forced king Birendra to implement democracy. The aim now was to re-implement it. Thousands took to the streets in April and were backed by both the SPA and the Maoist party. Finally in late April the king had to step down after first having attempted to offer the SPA the opportunity to suggest candidates for Prime Minister. This offer was duly rejected and after three more days of agitation, on April 24th, 2006, the king stepped down.

In the aftermath of the Second Jana Andolan an interim government was established and during the summer and autumn discussions were held between the SPA and the Maoist that culminated in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on November 21st, 2006.
Elections to Constituent Assembly (2008)

A year after the peace agreement was signed, and an eight-party interim government was formed. This government was made up of the CPN (Maoist) and the seven party alliance which was created upon the king seizing power and includes the main political parties in Nepal: the Nepali Congress (NC), the CPN-UML, Nepali Congress (Democratic) (NCD), Nepal Workers and Peasants Party, Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Anada devi), United Left Front (Nepal) (ULF-N) and the Peoples’ Front (Janamorcha Nepal). Following the elections for the constituent assembly in 2008, which the CPN (Maoist) won, the first legislative act of the assembly was to declare Nepal a republic. Even though the CA was formed in 2008 the work of writing a new constitution for Nepal has been a long and drawn out process marked by delays and collapsed governments. At the moment of writing the constitution has not yet been finalised.

Previous research on the conflict in Nepal has investigated causes of conflict, level of violence and recruitment strategies. Some edited volumes also describe different aspects of the insurgency itself: its emergence and development, the strategies and political ideology of the Maoists, the ethnic aspect of the insurgency and the gender dimension of the Maoists and the conflict.  

With regard to causes of conflict the most common factors that have been pointed out are the high levels of poverty combined with widespread and structural social and economic inequality, for example with regard to land tenure, in combination with the political inefficiency and/or unwillingness to remedy these problems.  

In a more specific study of the conflict by Bohara, Mitchell and Nepal the unique topographic characteristics of Nepal is taken as point of departure to analyse the relationship between government and insurgent violence. Using subnational data, they study the influence of terrain on the level of violence,

---


For a detailed account on the characteristics of landownership see Mahesh C. Regmi, Landownership in Nepal (New Dehli: Adroit Publishers): 1999
where hilly terrain is found to present favourable conditions for insurgent activities. Their study also indicates that with regard to the state, low levels of political participation and citizen organisation increases the opportunities for higher levels of violence.  

Related to the Maoist recruitment Joshi and Mason study electoral participation during the time of the insurgency. They conclude that the lower voter turn-out in the 1999 elections was the result of landlords’ weakened control over peasants due to the insurgency in combination with increased peasant support for the Maoists. Eck, in her doctoral thesis takes a novel approach to recruitment, studying the recruitment strategies of rebel groups, using the Maoist insurgency as an illustrative case.

With regard to the peace process in Nepal, and more specifically why the alliance was formed between the parliamentary parties and the Maoists in 2005, the common answer seems to be that this was made possible by king Gyanendra’s ‘direct rule’, which began on February 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2005.  

The role of ideas in the conflict has not been in focus of previous research and accounts on the causes for the commencing of hostilities or the ending of violence in Nepal. Using frame analysis makes it possible for me to provide a fuller understanding of both the process and outcome in Nepal. Rather than investigating macro level causes of the conflict and peace process, this study focuses on the micro level of actor’s perceived manoeuvrability for action in relation to frames. E.g. even though the army was introduced in the conflict after the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11\textsuperscript{th}, 2001, my approach makes it possible to show how the terrorism label was used and the consequences of this, not for the escalation of violence but for the possibility of future action by the actors involved in the conflict. Also by analysing the peace process and the relationship between the SPA and the Maoist from an actor perspective, this study provides answers to how the parties of that alliance were influenced through the competitive framing of their common goal of peace. Further, analysing the process from a framing perspective also shows that the common description of the peace process as a result solely of the Maoists being brought back to the democratic fold and mainstream politics is simplified, at best.

\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
5. Construction of the terrorism frame

On the 26\textsuperscript{th} of November 2001 the Sher Bahadur Deuba government of Nepal, with the approval of parliament, declared a State of Emergency, designated the Maoists as terrorists and ordered the mobilisation of the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA).\textsuperscript{198} King Gyanendra, on the recommendation of Prime Minister Deuba of the Nepali Congress, issued the declaration of a State of Emergency and the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance.\textsuperscript{199} He also approved the deployment of the RNA.\textsuperscript{200} The declaration in November 2001 was the second time in the history of Nepal that a State of Emergency had been declared and the first time since the start of violent conflict in 1996 that the Maoist insurgency had been officially labelled as terrorist and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) declared a terrorist organisation.\textsuperscript{201} The deployment of the army marked a new phase in the Nepal conflict and the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance institutionalised a new frame in the discursive and legal context of Nepal’s politics.

This chapter begins with an outline of the different frames regarding the emerging conflict and the Maoist movement from their exit from mainstream politics in 1994 to the application of the terrorism label in 2001. Next the problem representation of the government’s terrorism frame as well as the problem representation of the counter-frame by the CPN (Maoist) are analysed in terms of construction and content. In comparing the way in which

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{198}“Emergency to tame Maoist,” \textit{The Kathmandu Post}, November 27, 2001, 1.
\item \textsuperscript{199} The Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance was promulgated by the King of Nepal on the advice of the Cabinet. The emergency provisions in Nepal’s 1990 constitution granted the king of Nepal constitutional power to declare a State of Emergency under the following conditions: “If a grave emergency arises in regard to the sovereignty or integrity of the Kingdom of Nepal or the security of any part thereof, whether by war, external aggression, armed rebellion, or extreme economic disarray, His Majesty may, by Proclamation, declare or order a State of Emergency in respect of the whole of the Kingdom or of any specified part thereof. Every proclamation or order issued under clause (1) above shall be laid before a meeting of the House of Representatives of approval within three months from the date of issuance.” in \textit{The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 2047 (1990)} (Kathmandu: His Majesty’s Government, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, Law Books Management Board, 2004, fifth edition) English translation, Part 18, Clause 115.
\item \textsuperscript{200} “Emergency to tame Maoist,” \textit{The Kathmandu Post}, November 27, 2001, 1.
\item \textsuperscript{201} First time a State of Emergency was issued was by King Mahendra on December 1st, 1960 after having dismissed the government of B.P Koirala (NC), “Emergency to tame Maoist,” \textit{The Kathmandu Post}, November 27, 2001, 1.
\end{itemize}
each party went about constructing the frame and counter-frame respectively, the two cases illustrate the different causal stories used with regard to prevailing conceptions of the conflict at large.

In analysing the frames, Carol Bacchi’s problem-cause-solution approach is used in combination with Deborah Stone’s framework on causal stories in order to deconstruct key aspects of the problem representation that make up the frame. In addition to understanding the relationship between the problem definition, causal interpretation and proposed solution, the framework of Bacchi and Stone allows the analysis to emphasise the role of causal interpretation in a specific frame. As argued in Chapter 2, the causal interpretation embedded in the frame is significant as this, to a large extent, affects whether the solution proposed is more actor or structurally oriented and whether the solution involves one or more actors. On an overarching level the way a frame is constructed in terms of content and what kind of frame this in turn generates is assumed to have an effect on actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action. The nature of these effects as produced by the terrorism frame will be examined in the next chapter.

Framing the Maoist: the parliamentary parties 1994-2001

The political instability involving the Maoists began with the decision by the CPN (Maoist) to boycott the 1994 mid-term elections. At that time the party from which the CPN (Maoist) was formed, the United People’s Front of Nepal (UPFN), was the third largest party in Nepal, having won nine seats in the 1991 elections. The UPFN later split into two fractions, where the fraction led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal aka Prachanda and Dr. Baburam Bhattarai became the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The decision to boycott the election was taken after the CPN (Maoist) had been denied party status by the election commission and declared not qualified to take part in the elections. Yet as the political starting point of what would develop into a decade-long civil war, the decision of the Maoist to boycott the elections was remembered by respondents from the parliamentary parties as being of little importance at the time. According to respondents from the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), Nepali Congress (NC) and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), the boycott itself was not dis-

---

202 In 2010 the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) changed their name to the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). As this thesis covers the period of conflict up to and including the peace agreement and that the Maoist respondents during this time were members of the CPN (Maoist) the old name of the party will be used from here on.

cussed and no action was taken on the part of the parliamentary parties to allow the Maoist party to remain within the parliamentary system. A

After their withdrawal from mainstream politics in 1995, the CPN (Maoist) went underground and initiated a campaign of intimidation and attacks on individuals using khukuris, rocks and improvised weapons such as hammers and tools to injure and kill their victims. The Maoists’ targets at this time included local landlords, government supporters, bureaucrats and aristocratic feudal lords in the districts of Rolpa, Rurkum, Pyuthan and Gorkha. As a response to what was happening in these districts the Koirala government launched a police operation codenamed Operation Romeo in the district of Rolpa in 1995. According to an interview given by the Home Minister at the time, Khum Bahadur Khadka, the purpose of the operation was to curb anti-monarchy activities that had been occurring in the area. According to the Inspector General of Police, the operation was intended to win the hearts and minds of the people and also remove the CPN (Maoist) support base.

Yet, the Maoists continued their movement and in 1996, one year after they went underground, the party delivered a memorandum to the Sher Bahadur Deuba government. The document listed 40 demands covering a wide

204 Interview with Ishwar Pokharel (CPN-UML), General Secretary and Central Committee member, Kathmandu 28th of November, 2008; interview with Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, Vice Chairman of the RPP until 2004 and presently co-president of the RJP, Kathmandu, 26th of November, 2008; interview with Lokendra Bahadur Chand (RPP), four time Prime Minister between 1983-1986; 6th of April-1990-19th of April 1990; 12th of March 1997-7th of October 1997; and October 2002-June 2003, Kathmandu, 12th of December, 2008; interview with Ramesh Nath Pandey, former Foreign Minister, appointed by king, Kathmandu 14th of October, 2010; interview with Dr. Narayan Bahadur Kadhka (NC), Central Working Committee Member, Kathmandu, 21st of October, 2010; interview with Prakash Sharan Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee, former Minister of Finance, Kathmandu 4th of November, 2008, interview with Professor Sridhar K. Khatri Executive Director of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS), Kathmandu 7th of October, 2010.

205 A typical kind of Nepali knife with a curved heavy blade, which is still issued as a standard weapon in the Nepali army.


207 Interview with Krishna Bahadur Maharjan (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections, Kathmandu 19th April 2007 see also Nischchal Nath Pandey, Nepal’s Maoist Movement and Implications for China and India, (New Dehli: Manohar Publishers and Distributors, 2005), 66.

variety of issues such as nationalism, public welfare and living conditions of the people. All 40 points were issues that the party perceived as faults or shortcomings in specific political, economical and social policy that the government needed to rectify. Similarly to the lack of interest given to the boycott of the 1994 elections, respondents from the parliamentary parties say that the memorandum drew little or no attention and was not considered to be indicative of a serious problem. The Vice President of the RPP, Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani recalled the reactions at the time:

Nobody really cared. In fact we did not really understood what, the depth of their resentment…[…]…I remember it was taken as a normal thing, people will come up with different demands, taken as a normal threat that a government receives in a parliamentary system. I think we underestimated. I do not even remember that the 40-point was discussed in the parliament.

Former Foreign Minister, Ramesh Nath Pandey, told me during his interview that, after he had been travelling the country and observed Maoist activity, he had tried to raise the point that the Maoists were a threat in parliament, but that he was unsuccessful in this endeavour. The disinterest of the government towards the Maoist movement can be seen from the lack of reaction with regard to the 40-point memorandum in particular, which included a threat of initiation of the People’s War if the deadline for response by the government was not met. According to the respondents the exit from mainstream politics and the political demands of the Maoist party received little political attention.

---

210 Chuda Bahadur Shrestha, Nepal Coping With Maoist Insurgency (Kathmandu: Chetana Lokshum, 2004), 75.
212 Interview with Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, Vice Chairman of the RPP until 2004 and presently co-president of the RJP, Kathmandu 26th of November, 2008.
213 Interview with Ramesh Nath Pandey, former Foreign Minister, appointed by king, Kathmandu 14th of October, 2010.
To the extent that a frame could be spoken about, the problem concentrated on the overt actions, such as the disruption of law and order by the Maoists, and consequently police measures were seen as an appropriate response. Even though the respondents are not very clear on the cause of the disturbances, the nonchalant way of talking about the exit of the CPN (Maoist) from politics and that it was seen as normal to come up with different demands in a parliamentary system, seem to suggest that the view of the Maoist party was that of a party dissatisfied with their possibilities of enacting their policies in parliament within the UPFN and with being disqualified from partaking in the 1994 elections. This is how the respondents recalled reactions to events at the time, yet when further discussing the election boycott and the 40-point memorandum, their reflections reveal an alternative problem representation.

Alternative frame of the Maoist problem

Even though respondents acknowledged that little political notice was taken of the Maoist at the time, when asked about the 1994 boycott and the time leading up to the outbreak of violence many respondents include self-critical reflections in their recollections:

That was a historical mistake, we kind of pushed them outside. Forced them to come to the conclusion that they would have no opportunity inside parliament to capture power so they have to take the other route, which they did.215

Several respondents, including representatives of the parliamentary parties and observers outside of politics, attributed the political marginalisation of the CPN (Maoist) as a main reason for their choice of extremist and violent measures.216 Although respondents were, to some extent, self-critical towards their own party, the other parties were assigned a greater responsibility for “forcing” the Maoist out of mainstream politics. For example the UML is portrayed as using “bullying tactics” and the NC is seen as the force behind the split in the UPFN that created the CPN (Maoist). Together the narratives of the respondents paint a picture of self-centred, political leaders, involved in inter-and intra-party power struggles and corrupt practices, who focused

215 Interview with Prakash Chandra Lohani, Vice Chairman of the RPP until 2004 and presently co-president of the RJP, Kathmandu 26th of November, 2008.
more on their own advancement and position and treated the Maoist issue with arrogance. The failure to reflect upon the emerging conflict from a self-critical perspective in the mid to late nineties was pointed out by former Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand of the RPP:

Yet on the other hand when someone raises arms against you, you have to ask yourself why this force is coming at me. What are their demands, maybe there is something you have missed, structural problems, reforms maybe needed. I think you can take that as a chance to reform. The weakness of the political parties at the time were not self-critical enough. Normally people just see the crisis not the chance to self-examination. The government should have asked that why is people willing to risk their lives, the greatest sacrifice that you can make, to go against us, where have we failed, where have we gone wrong, failure of the system to reform itself quickly enough to address some of their demands...[...]'The inability of the political system to respond to or clear up some of the major reforms that were needed within the system, that is where we failed.217

Even though these reflections are given with the benefit of hindsight they illustrate a potential alternative problem representation to that present at the time of events. As opposed to the law and order way of framing the Maoist-caused disturbances, this alternative framing places the political situation at the centre of the problem. The way that the problem is described in this alternative representation shares similarities with the rhetoric of the Maoists at the time that the parliamentary system was inept in producing the desired social, economic and political change. This ineptitude led the Maoist to argue that change had to come from a rural based, revolutionary movement.218

This kind of self-reflecting and critical remarks highlights the dysfunctional aspects of the political system in the early 1990s. The inter and intra party power struggles and corrupt practices of the main parliamentary parties prior to the 1994 elections and the government’s dismissal of the Maoist demands in 1996 are given as causes for the violent path of the Maoist and the civil war that followed. In those narratives by respondents it is also understood that the problem should have been dealt with through a more inclusive view of democracy and a discussion oriented policy towards the Maoist. These kinds of policies contradict the law and order frame in implying that

the Maoist left parliament and began a violent struggle due to the actual behaviour of the parliamentary parties that “pushed them outside”.

This retrospective problem definition illustrates the implications of different frame constructions in terms of where blame is placed and hence where solutions are located. In the alternative, self-critical frame construction, blame is placed on the actions and attitudes of the parliamentary parties, which had generated an exclusive, non-sensitive system. Adherents of this problem definition, being responsible for the course of action subsequently taken by the Maoists, see the solution as lying, at least partly, in changing the behaviour and policy of the leaders of the parliamentary parties. On the other hand, the actual actions that were taken at the time, i.e. law enforcement initiatives and police operations, were completely unilateral. In the policy that was pursued at the time, neither the actions (or inactions) of the parliamentary parties nor the ineffectiveness of the democratic system are viewed as factors that could have influenced the Maoists to take violent action. The problem is seen as a decision taken by the Maoists themselves because of their lack of success on the political arena. This frame excluded a solution that involved the parliamentary parties.

Table 5.1 gives the key aspects of the problem, cause and solution as originating from the actual and alternative frame. Thus the actual, law enforcement frame and the, retrospectively presented, alternative frame share the same view of the problem as that of illegal activities and violence. The cause of the problem and its solution differ widely in terms of where blame is placed and consequently which actors and measures should be part of the solution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government frames</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Actual frame 1994-2001</td>
<td>-Violence</td>
<td>-Unjustified discontent</td>
<td>-Police operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Illegal activities</td>
<td>-Failure of political achievement</td>
<td>-Law enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Illegal activities</td>
<td>-Inter and intra-party power struggles</td>
<td>-Dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-Corrupt practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 Actual and alternative frame of the government (1994-2001)

Even though the government in 1996 officially issued a two-tier approach to address the Maoist problem that included: “re-asserting security measures, and concomitantly exploring possible political solutions” 219, it still acted in

accordance with a definition of the problem as that of disturbances, law breaking and violence. The continuation of police operations, like that of Kilo Sierra II in 1998, which followed the previous Operation Romeo, is a case in point. Kilo Sierra II was launched under the Premiership of G.P Koirala (NC) and involved a newly formed police force, the so-called armed police. However, Operation Romeo or the subsequent Kilo Sierra II did not curb the Maoist movement; rather it seemed to increase the recruitment of the CPN (Maoist). Indeed, the increased support for the Maoists and the alienation in the population that the operations brought were such that Amik Sherchan, Chairman of People’s Front Nepal, stated that: “if it hadn’t been for Girija Prasad Koirala and Khum Bahadur Khadka, there would perhaps have been no Maoist war.”

If G.P Koirala could be described as advocating for the law and order frame with regard to the Maoist, his party colleague in the Nepali Congress, Sher Bahadur Deuba favoured a political solution. After succeeding Koirala as Prime Minister in July 2001, Deuba immediately announced a ceasefire, which was reciprocated by the Maoists and preparations for negotiations ensued. This was the first time that a fruitful attempt at negotiations had been made as a solution to the Maoist problem. For Deuba, this was his second time as the Prime Minister of Nepal representing the Nepali Congress party. To the question of why he decided to negotiate with the Maoists when his fellow party leader Koirala, who had held the office three times since 1990, had advocated a hard stance against the Maoist, he answered:

> Because my aim was, because they are Nepalese you know, we must engage them in negotiation. Being a democrat, a democrat should have dialogue, it was my position and still I think this policy is the best way.

Deuba gives two reasons why negotiations should be attempted: the first reason is connected to his self-image, where as a democrat, he perceives negotiation as the appropriate form of conflict resolution. The second refers to the identity of the Maoist, that he saw them as Nepalese and as such they were not an external force but citizens of Nepal, This was an argument that

---

had been used by others, including the king, for not taking military action.\textsuperscript{224} In his interview, Deuba steers clear of a causal interpretation of the problem, in terms of blame, and instead argues for a policy of negotiation based on the nature of the warring parties (democrats and citizens respectively).

Furthermore, in the Deuba Commission instigated in 2000, the same structural causes that are mentioned in the alternative frame presented above, were evident. The Commission states that the cause of the Maoist insurgency was: “the outcome of defects in managing and handling statecraft and political instability caused by frequent changes of government, and the existing social discrimination, unemployment and economic development.”\textsuperscript{225} However, Deuba’s position was not shared by all political leaders and he was depicted in the media as the only leader openly advocating for a negotiated solution.\textsuperscript{226} Deuba himself recalls the reactions from other politicians to his talk initiative even as negotiations started in August 2001:

> When I entered into negotiations with the Maoist despite the objections from the UML and my party, Girija Prasad Koirala objected to the negotiation that I was too lenient with the Maoist party.\textsuperscript{227}

The obvious different approaches between parties and even within the ruling party, Nepali Congress, can be seen in the different framing of the Maoist issue between 1994 and 2001. The intra and inter party scheming and power-struggles that the respondents themselves testify to are considered to be the cause of the failure of the parliamentary parties to adopt unified approach towards the Maoist.\textsuperscript{228} With the failing of the 2001 negotiations in November and the application of the terrorism label to the CPN (Maoist) in the same month, a new problem representation came about, which resulted in a formally dominant frame.

\textsuperscript{224} Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD) Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.


The Maoist as terrorists—a new problem representation

The Maoist insurgency had been involved in violent resistance against the state since 1996, yet no unified approach to the Maoist issue had been found with governments shifting from a law and order approach to negotiations depending on who was in power. No successful attempt to frame the movement as terrorist had been made before 2001 even though the same government had been in power previously during this time period.229 Regarding the attribution of blame, in the previous governments’ frames there was a mix of a systemic blame and actor based blame. The Maoist insurgency was sometimes regarded as the fault of something, in that case the failed inclusiveness of the democratic system, and sometimes as the fault of someone, such as the dissenting opinions and radical polices of the CPN (Maoist). Even in the case where law enforcement and police operations were the proposed solution, the Maoists were portrayed as a problem. Yet with the breakdown of negotiations in November 2001, the dominant frame that came to the fore attributed the cause of the problem solely to one actor. With the terrorism frame, the Maoists were not just seen as a problem, they were the problem.

In November 2001, the Deuba government had just completed the third round in the first negotiations with the Maoist. These negotiations had begun in August that same year. The negotiations broke down and the Maoist attacked the army barracks in the Dhang district on November 23, 2001.230 This was the first time in the five year-long conflict that the Maoists had attacked the army. Before this their military operations had been limited to targeting police and the newly formed armed police. Following this incident and the subsequent attacks by Maoist on army and police forces in Pyuthan, Syangja and Surkhet districts, the Deuba government advised king Gyanendra to issue the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance231, declaring the Maoist as terrorist. This is the first of two instances during the conflict where the government of Nepal labelled the Maoists as terrorists. The second time the label was (re)applied was on August 29, 2003, again after the Maoist unilaterally withdrew from negotiations.232 Following the declaration of the Terrorism and Disruptive Acts Ordinance, the government issued red corner notices and set rewards on the heads of Maoist leaders. The terrorism label derived from a frame where problem,

229 G.P Koirala had referred to the Maoist as ‘terrorist’ before their official designation see “All-party meet endorses Deuba’s peace bid”, Kathmandu Post, August 11, 2001, 1.
231 Hereafter referred to as the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance.
cause and solution were exclusively actor-based and from a causal narrative that placed the Maoists at the centre.

A Maoist centred problem

One important aspect of the terrorism frame in Nepal is that it is more a *frame adoption* than a *frame construction*. What is meant by this is that the government of Nepal made use of an already existing frame with regard to terrorism. The first application of the terrorism frame in Nepal came only a little more than two months after the 11th of September al-Qaeda attacks in the United States of America. In their accounts of the reasoning behind the application of the frame, the respondents relate to an already defined terrorism frame and, instead of focusing on the content and meaning of terrorism, the framing effort consisted of tying the Maoist characteristics to an existing frame which is complete with problem definition, causal interpretation and solution.

This internationally prevailing terrorism frame, with its connotations of what a terrorist is, and implications with regard to national security, was under construction and, to some extent, already in place in the global discourse by the time it was introduced in Nepal. The global discourse regarding terrorism had already seen a shift from terrorism as a law and order problem, under the jurisdiction of the police, to terrorism being a form of warfare, making it the possible domain of military response.233 When the respondents speak of terrorism or the terrorism label they have in mind the content of the post-September 11th global discourse. That the government of Nepal imported the frame to the Nepali setting and that little discussion took place with regard to its use in the national context was also pointed out in the interview with Professor Sridhar Khatri, Executive Director of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS).234

As seen above, the government of Nepal had been slow to consider the Maoist insurgency as a (proper) security issue and there was no common frame in terms of how the violence by the Maoists should be viewed. With the introduction of the Terrorism and Destructive Activities Ordinance the problem, as portrayed by the government, came to centre on the Maoists themselves. The problem, as such, was still the existing and increasing vio-

---

233 The discussion about the definition of terrorism and their related responses increased significantly after the Al-Qaeda attacks on the U.S. on the 11th of September, 2001 and the pre-2001 definitions emphasis on criminal violence were questioned or replaced by a view of terrorism as war. For a discussion on the definition of terrorism see for example: Jeremy Waldron, “Terrorism and the Uses of Terror”, *The Journal of Ethics*, vol.8, 2004. For a discussion on the relationships between terrorism and conflict studies see Oliver P. Richmond, “Realizing Hegemony? Symbolic Terrorism and the Roots of Conflict”, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* vol.26, 2003

234 Interview with Professor Sidhar Kathri, Executive Director of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS), Kathmandu, October 7, 2010.
lence yet the cause was now attributed to the violent and uncooperative character of the Maoists. The Maoist decision to abandon the negotiations was taken as evidence of this. Prakash Sharan Mahat from Nepali Congress, the Member Secretary of the Deuba commission that had recommended negotiations, explained:

but that dialogue was a failure...[...]...and just immediately after walking away they attacked the first time the military barrack in Dhang. So we knew that we should not trust them and this, the gulf widened.235

Similar statements, claiming that the Maoists were not ready for talks and that they were the ones that declared civil war, were made by Ishwar Pokhrel, who was the Secretary of the General Secretariat of the CPN-UML in 2002.236

The view on the failed negotiations and subsequent events is one where the Maoists are described as pushing for war when the government was ready to negotiate peace. The actions of the Maoist, particularly with regard to the attack on Dhang, were given as reasons why they could not be trusted.237 When asked about the reasoning behind the use of the terrorism label the respondents stress that as the legitimate state actor they had the right to apply it and that other states would have done the same in that position.238 The logic presented was that the government was forced to revert to the terrorism label as a reaction to the Maoists’ actions and behaviour:

But the then government were compelled to do so, because they break negotiations, they attacked the military barracks and the atrocity was so wide and serious.239

As exemplified by the quote above, the picture presented is that the government’s use of the terrorism frame was reactive: the view is that the government was responding in a normal way to a force, which threatened the structure of the state and to which a democratic approach of negotiation did not

235 Interview with Prakash Sharan Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee member and Member Secretary in the Deuba Comission, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.
236 Interview with Ishwar Pokhrel, CPN-UML, in 2002 Secretary in the General Secretariat, elected General Secretary for the party in 2009, Kathmandu, November 28, 2008.
237 Interview with Prakash Sharan Mahat, Central Working Committee member and Member Secretary in the Deuba Comission, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008. That this was the view projected by the government was also confirmed by leaders of civil society. See interview with Shyam Shrestha, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
238 Interview with Ishwar Pokharel, CPN-UML in 2002 Secretary in the General Secretariat, elected General Secretary for the party in 2009, Kathmandu, November 28, 2008; interview with Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, Vice Chairman of the RPP until 2004 and presently co-president of the RJP, Kathmandu November 26, 2008.
239 Interview with Pradeep Gyawali CPN (UML), Central Committee Member also member of the government negotiation team during the 2006 peace negotiations. Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.
work. The active party, and also by extension, the party to blame for the introduction of the army and the application of the terrorism frame is the Maoists. The problem is described by the government as that the Maoist brought this upon themselves by not committing to a peaceful solution when offered the opportunity. Because of their actions, the government was forced to assume a firmer stance. The Maoist had unilaterally broken a four-month ceasefire, including a period of negotiations, and then conducted the wide scale attack on military targets that followed the resumption of hostilities.240

The problem was the Maoist, or rather the insincere and deceitful character of the Maoist. Here the cause of the problem or blame is void of any systemic explanation. The failure of the negotiations was not portrayed as the inability to agree on the issues but the sole focus, and blame, was placed on the Maoist. As Bimalendra Nidhi, Party General Secretary of the NCD in 2002 put it:

After Dhang, there was no way out for the Deuba government.241

The behaviour of the Maoists in relation to the negotiations and afterwards, is portrayed in a way that placed the government in a position where they could do nothing else than to label them terrorists and deploy the army to solve the problem. This casual narrative can also be seen in the reasons given by Prime Minister Deuba for declaring a State of Emergency and assigning the terrorism label: “The government was compelled to declare a State of Emergency because the Maoist withdrew from the peace-talks table and broke the four-month-long ceasefire.”242 The behaviour of the Maoists in relation to negotiations and their subsequent attacks is described as forcing the hand of the government towards a harsher response and the declaration of a state of emergency. In their implementation, the government used the arguments that the Maoists were terrorists as motivation for the measures taken.

Tying the Maoist to the terrorism frame
When speaking about the reasons for using the terrorism label specifically, respondents from the main parliamentary parties all cite actions of the Maoist as evidence that they were terrorists and so justifying the use of the label

241 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD), Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
by the government. As examples of this, respondents mention Maoist atrocities against civilians and cadres from the parliamentary parties. Dr. Narayan Bahadur Kadhka, Central Committee member of the Nepali Congress related:

One of the targets of the Maoist was these “informants”, this is how the Maoist killed many civilians...[...]. The Maoist also used this scare tactics: the way they killed people, they way they beat them up, they way they disfigured, publically, [emphasis] to show their muscle. They could go to any extent, so the people were scared.

Some respondents referred to the methods used by the Maoist to support the correctness in labelling them terrorist. The Maoists had to be terrorists if they resorted to terror inducing methods. When the question arises about why the terrorist label was only introduced after six years of insurgent activity, the attack on the military is given as an example of the terrorist nature of the Maoists. Former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress, who led the government that had first initiated the negotiations and then implemented the terrorism label, also connects the attack on the army with terrorist tactics of the Maoists:

I do not know the reason, but everybody supported, we have to brand them terrorist, they attacked the army, like a terror tactics, have to brand them terrorist.

Tying the intended frame to external empirical events, as in the case of Maoist actions and behaviour, exemplifies one of the criteria for resonance mentioned by Benford and Snow: that the suggested frame has to be seen to fit with empirical reality. As argued in Chapter 2, the actual causal relationship is of little analytical relevance, instead it is, in Stone’s terminology, the causal story, that is of interest. Regardless of whether the acts of the Maoist were de facto characteristics of terrorism according to a specific definition, it

---

243 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD) Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008; interview with Pradeep Gyawali (CPN-UML) Central Committee Member also member of the government negotiation team during the 2006 peace negotiations, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.

244 Interview with Dr. Narayan Bahadur Kadhka (NC), Central Working Committee member, Kathmandu, October 21, 2010.


246 Interview with Ishwar Pokharel (CPN-UML) in 2002 Secretary in the General Secretariat, elected General Secretary for the party in 2009, Kathmandu, November 28, 2008.

was the interpretation of those actions that mattered and upon which the framing attempt was built.

For example the one empirical event, repeated time and again by respondents in their motivation for the government’s declaration of the Maoists as terrorist, was the attack on the military barracks in Dhang. However, according to a compilation of several definitions of terrorism, attacks on civilians would be a more apt signifier of terrorist activity. Following that line of defining terrorism, the previous targets of the Maoist would more correspond to terrorist methods than the attack on the military. Regardless of how terrorism is, or should be, defined, the events in Dhang corresponded well with the narrative of one-sided escalation of the conflict by the Maoists, which was seen to require and justify a decisive response by the government.

In addition to introducing a frame with a completely actor-centred cause, the terrorism frame differed from the two previous frames in that it narrowed the object of framing. Previously, whether focus was on the law and order or negotiation frame, the issue framed had been the conflict itself. The problem definitions that had the solutions of police operations or negotiation both had a wider perspective. This wider perspective gave a definition of the conflict and an interpretation of what caused it. With the introduction of the terrorism frame the object of framing ceased to the conflict at large and became the Maoists, another actor. As pointed out in Chapter 2, most frame analysis is concerned with cases that regard issue framing. Issue framing can also be more or less actor orientated especially with regard to what causal interpretation is made. In its framing of the conflict in Nepal the government did not attribute cause to a situation, an unfortunate event or accident, but instead to the actions and characteristics of the Maoists as being distrustful and not willing to solve the conflict peacefully.

With the added dimension of the terrorism frame, the Maoists, not the conflict, become the object of framing. The respondents all use examples and anecdotes to illustrate that the Maoists were terrorists, legitimizing the use of the terrorism frame in the conflict context.

In Chapter 2 it was argued that it makes no difference analytically whether the object of framing is an issue or an actor and that the actor effect model can accommodate both. However, one might consider if this distinction generates empirical differences. In the case of the terrorism frame in Nepal there appears to be no difference if the object of framing is an issue or an actor so long as the cause is an actor with regard to the solution connected to the problem representation. In the law and order frame, where the cause of the conflict was portrayed to be the dissatisfaction and disappointment of the Maoists with their own performance in politics, the solution was one sided in

---

248 Alex P. Schmidt and Alebert J. Jungmann ed., Political Terrorism, (London, UK: Transaction Publications, 1988). 6. In 109 definitions of terrorism, the category of “civilians, non-combatants, neutrals, outsiders as victims” are present in 17,5 percent of definitions.
the form of police operations. In the actor focused terrorism frame, the cause is also the Maoists and the solution is also unilateral, albeit involving the military instead of the police. Only in the case of the negotiation frame, where blame is placed either on the political system and divided, is the solution two-sided.

Constructing the frame with the Maoists as the sole cause of the conflict, either due to their creation of disturbances, political violence or their alleged use of terrorism, granted both the legitimacy and the justification for employing a unilateral solution directed against the Maoists. In terms of the frame itself there appears to be no significant difference between an issue frame with an actor-centred cause or a frame where an actor is the object of framing.

The logic of the terrorism label from the government’s point of view is one of an unwillingly harsh but inevitable, response towards a group that violated people’s rights, killed civilians and threatened the population, and that had no regard for a negotiated solution. The reason for using the terrorism label is presented by respondents as a logical, yet regrettable, implication of the decision by the insurgents to pursue a military line of confrontation using terror methods, instead of continuing negotiations. In the terrorist frame propagated by the government, blame is placed solely on the Maoists. They alone are responsible for the failed peace talks and are to blame for the escalation of violence. The methods they used are defined as terrorist methods and in this manner the Maoists are identified as terrorists. The use of rhetoric concerning the identity of an actor is what Mattern highlights in her framework regarding representational force and the actor-centred cause of the terrorism frame is effective in attempting to allocate blame to the Maoist. Having a clear actor focus in the causes given for the problem also influences the solutions that are deemed appropriate. The terrorist framing of the Maoist in the context of post-9/11 made available the military option to eradicate the terrorists to the government of Nepal and that was also proposed as a legitimate and logical solution (see Table 5.2).
In examining the narratives of the respondents there were three different frames present in Nepal during the period 1994-2001. They all share the definition of the problem as one of violence and illegal activities. The differences lie in what is seen as the cause of the problem and this also results in proposals and rejections of different solutions. In addition to stating the cause of the problem of violence as that of political instability, Deuba attributed the solution of negotiations to the fact that he was a democrat and that the Maoists were Nepalese people, motivating his policy on the basis of identity. In conjunction with supporting the argument for negotiation, the fact that the Maoists was seen as Nepalese was also used as a reason for not using the army. This aspect of the negotiation frame was something that was effectively removed by the terrorism frame as will be shown below.

### Allowing a military solution

The attack on Dhang and the military barracks presented an opportunity to argue for the deployment of the army. The terrorism label provided a way to capitalise on the changed situation in that it labelled the Maoists as something other than Nepalese citizens and that the threat of terrorism would provide a national security argument legitimizing the use of military force by the state. When the respondents were asked more generally about the terrorism label, the answers focused to a large extent on what it allowed the government to do and this provided an interesting insight into how the respondents viewed the function of the frame. As examples of what the state could do the respondents mentioned extended legal measures, increased state pow-
er and the use of military means to combat the insurgents. All of which was expressed as being a result of applying the terrorism label.

With it [the Terrorism and Destructive Activities Ordinance] the government got more power and it would declare some parts emergency and then other forces could be mobilised for that.249

The use of the terrorism frame also served a second purpose of differentiating between the Maoists and the civilian population, which had been an obstacle to pursuing a military solution in the past.250 The terrorism label was seen to provide the distinction necessary to regard the Maoists as enemies of the state and undermined the previous argument of Deuba and others that the Maoists were Nepalese and should be engaged in negotiation and peaceful conflict resolution. With the terrorism label the CPN (Maoist) and those related to their movement, should cease to be identified as fellow countrymen and instead be seen as terrorists. The application of the terrorism frame was perceived as a way to give the government extended power and measures to deal with the Maoist problem, and, due to the configuration of the terrorism frame in the post-9/11 world, this included military measures.

The Maoist reactions and counter frame

The terrorism frame did not stand unchallenged by the Maoists. With regard to the terrorism frame the Maoists did two things: first they provided their own explanation as to why the government had labelled them terrorist, and second they presented their own counter-frame containing their problem representation of the conflict. In terms of responding to the actor-centred terrorism frame the Maoist respondents explained the government’s use of the terrorism label in the following manner:

Well, in fact we took that decision of the government also in natural way. Because when the government cannot fight with the revolutionaries it uses also a kind of propaganda...[...]... But the government labelled us as a terrorist organisation because you know they got defeated in the political front. So, what can we say, to label us as terrorist organisation was their defeat in the political front.251

249 Interview with Dr. Naryan Bahdur Kadkha, (NC), Central Working Committee member, Kathmandu, October 21, 2010.
250 Interview with Prakash Sherma Mahat, (NC), Central Working Committee member and Member Secretary in the Deuba Commission, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008; interview with Narayan Bahadur Khadka, (NC), Central Working Committee member, Kathmandu, October, 21, 2010.
251 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu April 20, 2007.
The Maoists presented an interpretation of the use of the terrorism frame as being one of a natural progression of the conflict due to the failure of the government to win against the Maoists in terms of political agenda. In a similar vein to Central Committee member Suresh Ale Magar, the spokesperson of the party, Krishna Bahadur Mahara, also said that the use of the terrorism label was indicative of “the defeated mentality of the government”. These kinds of statements from the Maoist respondents show an attempt to change the image of the label as representing a strong measure taken by the government into a last desperate option as a consequence of failure to win by any other means. The belittling of the label was also expressed during the interviews where several of the respondents from the Maoists would laugh when reminiscing over the government’s decision to label them terrorist. The humour they saw had to do with the weakness they believed it demonstrated, but also with the absurdity and hypocrisy entailed in the fact that the parliamentary parties were the ones to use the label. To the Maoist the use of the label by the government showed internal contradictions in their approach to political contest and struggle.

The Maoist focused their efforts on exposing this perceived internal contradiction by drawing on parallels with the parliamentary parties’ own history. They used the example of the struggle of the parliamentary parties against the Rana regime in the 1940s as well as the democratic movement against the Panchayat system in 1990. The Party Chairman, Prachanda, explained the arguments used by the party to show the absurdity in the government labelling the Maoists terrorist:

Yes exactly, we argued, all the middle parties here in Nepal at one point have been engaged in armed struggle, Nepali Congress, UML and other small groups are also who raised the arms and fought for the masses, they had some political issues, later on they became Ghandi, every political party has that kind of background and if you label us as a terrorist, you are the first, number one terrorist, NC and UML number two then only you can label Maoist as a terrorist.

In this way the Maoists linked themselves and their movement to those previous democratic movements initiated by the Nepali Congress and CPN-UML among others. This way of arguing, presented by Prachanda, was also related to me by other respondents from the CPN (Maoist).

---

252 Interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October, 11, 2008.
253 Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, October 20, 2010.
254 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in
This rhetorical move by the Maoist placed the parties in an awkward situation. Either they would have to admit that they had also been terrorists in the past. This would have been unlikely as being at the forefront of bringing democracy to Nepal is a matter of great pride to both the NC and the CPN-UML and central to their party identity. Alternatively, they would have to recant their statement about the Maoists being terrorist, since they themselves were not. A third way would of course be to argue that the different movements are not comparable: that the parliamentary parties were fighting for democracy and had a political purpose and that the Maoists were not. This kind of argumentation was difficult to make believable, given the Maoists’ strong and consistent rhetoric about their political purpose and agenda. As far as I am aware the parliamentary parties did not attempt to argue against this parallel directly, although they did in many other instances point out that the Maoist had chosen the path of violence and that constituted a fundamental difference between them. This was especially highlighted by respondents from the left wing, and politically similar to the CPN (Maoist), the CPN-UML.255

It is assumed in the frame analysis framework that some discursive contest will take place in connection to a framing process in which different ideas about how a problem should be represented exist, both through frame disputes, as could be seen within the parliamentary parties, and through counter-frames between groups. With particular regard to the terrorism frame, there is a theoretical expectation that a reaction will be present due to the frame’s strongly pejorative character.256 Indeed, when asked what he thought of the government’s decision to label his party and movement terrorists, CPN (Maoist) Chairman, Prachanda decisively declared:

And we never agreed upon that kinds of blame and all these terrorism because all issues raised by our party were political.257
Here Prachanda specifically brings up the issue of blame and the connection between blame and terrorism was also voiced by Maoist leader Dev Gurung, one of three members of the Maoist negotiation team during the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006:

Government had been decided the terrorist, blamed our party then we react, our movement is the political movement, so terrorism blame is the negative blame, totally false blame, so that blame, we had rejected that blame.\textsuperscript{258}

Quite unsurprisingly, both Prachanda and Dev Gurung stress that the blame was rejected and this seemed to be an important point to make, yet the blame itself is not the only, or arguably not the main reason for the strong reaction from the Maoist party. In the excerpts above respondents add in their comments to the terrorism label that their movement was a political movement. This is used to present an argument as to why the terrorism label and its connected blame could be dismissed. This logic was voiced by the majority of the Maoist respondents.\textsuperscript{259} According to their reasoning the fact that they committed violent acts did not justify the label of terrorism. It was the motivation behind their actions that was said to be of significance:

Of course there will be more violence, more bloodshed, casualties may be higher but as long as it is a political party as long as an organisation has a clear political philosophy it is not, and it cannot be, a terrorist organisation.\textsuperscript{260}

The Maoists rejected the blame placed on them by the government, but more importantly they rejected the identity placed upon them via the terrorism

\textsuperscript{258} Interview with Dev Gurung, CPN (Maoist), General secretariat member, member of the Maoist talk team in the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, former Minister of Law and Justice, 22nd of August, 2008 after the CA elections, Kathmandu, November 18, 2008.

\textsuperscript{259} Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010; interview with Dev Gurung, CPN (Maoist), General secretariat member, member of the Maoist talk team in the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, former Minister of Law and Justice, 22nd of August, 2008 after the CA elections, Kathmandu, November 18, 2008; interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, October 11, 2010; interview with Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu October 23, 2010; interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara, (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008; interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.

\textsuperscript{260} Interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu April 20, 2007.

120
label. By framing the Maoists as terrorist the government had created a comprehensive actor frame, and the Maoists reacted strongly against it.

From the interviews it can be seen that the reactions against the terrorism frame by the Maoists respondents are rather unified. Respondents present the same logic and reasoning and even use similar wording. In all the narratives of the Maoist respondents the issues and reasons for fighting are presented as political, which to their mind precludes them from being terrorists. Whereas the government frame used the methods and acts of the Maoists to define them as terrorists, the CPN (Maoist) focus on their own political motives and just cause in order to define away the terrorism label from their movement and make it non-applicable. The centrality of their political agenda also formed the base of their own problem representation, which was presented as a counter-frame to the terrorism frame. Central Committee member, Suresh Ale Magar elaborates:

We said that we are a political force, we have political agendas, some specific ideologies that we follow. Of course we have waged war, we have taken up the arms and there have been some violence done from our side too but still we are not terrorist because those are the ones who do not have a political agenda, like Osama Bin Laden, he does not have any political agenda, but we have specific political agenda so we are and all know that, not only our party but all over the world, all forces that have political agenda are not terrorist even if they might have killed hundreds of people, even if they have been waging very bloody war, that maybe war there may be violence but still that does not mean that they are terrorist organisations, that is what we tell people. This is how we defended ourselves, if you want us not to commit any crimes, not to take up any arms, create a situation where we would not take up the arms, such is the force that compelled us to take up the arms, something like that.261

Again the linchpin of their argument is the political motivation for violence, not the violence in itself, which Magar here uses to illustrate the difference between the Maoist movement and the 21st century stereotypical terrorist, Osama Bin Laden. The respondents do not just state their general political motivation but are keen to specify the issues. This is done here by former member of the Maoist talk team in the peace process, Dev Gurung:

So this terrorism is a mistake decision because this is the political issue, this is the political integration issue, this is the national liberation issue, so we want the abolition of the monarchism and feudalism, we want to establish the democratic system, establish the republican system we want establish the federal system also, human rights should be established and Nepal is the multi-ethnical, multi-linguist, multi-cultural, multi-religious so Nepalese state

---

261 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, October 11, 2010.
should be federal and autonomic state these issues we had raised since 15 years ago, so our issues are the main political issues not terrorist issues.

By contrasting their political goals and issues with terrorism, the Maoists simultaneously motivate why they are not terrorists and showcase their political agenda.

When speaking about their political motivation and their core issues this is always tied to the conflict, and the Maoists logic of why they are not terrorists is connected to their problem representation of the conflict at large. The causes given for the conflict are both structural and actor focused. The system generates inequality and is ineffective in providing social goods while individual politicians are corrupt and egoistic. In their causes for the conflict, the Maoists can be argued to be somewhat more systemic in allocating blame than the government in their terrorism frame. The Maoists are, for the most part, blaming the system of government, in particular the parliamentary system, for not addressing the needs of the people. This view of the parliamentary system as a fruitless path to political change, together with their classic Marxist rhetoric of the unequal workings of the capitalist system and exploitation of the working class constitute their main causal interpretation of the situation.

The representatives of the parliamentary parties are also portrayed as self-interested and corrupt, a common and reoccurring description used in the statements issued by the Maoist party. In comparison to the structure of the terrorism frame, the counter frame presented by the Maoists concerns, to a greater extent, broader political issues and systemic reasons for the conflict. While the terrorism frame reduces the scope of the conflict to concern only one issue and one actor, the Maoists counter frame maintains a broad perspective in terms of their perception of the problem and its cause.

The terrorism frame is a reactive frame and this was also illustrated in the way it was motivated by the respondents from the parliamentary parties. In contrast the Maoist counter frame could be argued to be pro-active. In their problem representation the Maoists use identity argumentation and portray themselves as winners on the political front. They further reinforce their commitment to political change by bringing up their political agenda and establishing the negative correlation between politics and terrorism. Whereas the government uses actor framing as the cause in their problem representation to give the negative character of the Maoists as a reason for the terror-

---

262 Interview with Dev Gurung, CPN (Maoist), General secretariat member, member of the Maoist talk team in the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, former Minister of Law and Justice, 22nd of August, 2008 after the CA elections, Kathmandu, November 18, 2008.

263 Interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara, CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008.
ism frame, the Maoists are generally more focused on presenting a causal logic which gives a positive view of themselves as an active agent, willing to pursue their political goals by risking their lives in the fight for social change. By doing so they cast their opponents in the opposite role: as passive, status quoist and reactionary.

In addition, even though the focus of the problem representation was to give a different explanation to why the government used the terrorism label, the Maoists are embedding this in a broader narrative of the conflict as a whole, and themselves as an actor, connected to admirable political goals and qualities. In contrast the government’s introduction of the terrorism frame was more single-minded and narrow in its aspirations. Although focusing on tying the Maoists to the terrorism frame through their actions and methods, the parliamentary parties did not capitalise on this opportunity to frame themselves in a favourable manner. Generally, the terrorism frame has the potential of doing this for the party labelling their adversary as terrorist, framing themselves as the party with superior moral.

The parliamentary parties also had made a great investment in their identity as democrats. Often, when speaking about the different parties, the respondents from the parliamentary parties would refer to themselves and the seven party alliance as “the democratic forces of Nepal”, yet they did not actively argue for this identity to the same extent as the Maoists argued for their proactive political identity. One reason why the parties did not press this further could be that they considered it to be evident past the point of mentioning. However, it might not have been so evident to all and, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 8, the identity of “the democratic forces of Nepal” came under question and competition in 2005.

Framing is considered to be a contested process. The actor involved in the framing will seldom have a monopoly on the constructed frame as several other interested actors will take part in the politics of signification. This contest of meaning arguably becomes even more prominent when the frame is used to define another actor rather than an issue and especially in the case when that framing is viewed as negative. The Maoist argued against the description of their movement as terrorist and attempted a different frame that sought to describe their struggle as a political one and so, according to their

---

264 This commitment to a political cause at the cost of self-sacrifice, was also noticed by respondent from the parliamentary parties, see previous quote in this chapter from Lokendra Bahadur Chand (RPP), four time Prime Minister between 1983-1986; 6th of April-1990-19th of April 1990; 12th of March 1997-7th of October 1997; and October 2002-June 2003, Kathmandu, December 12, 2008.

265 The use of the phrase democratic forces was very common, both in the media as well as by the respondents themselves. Another identity category was: “the constitutional forces”, which constituted the parliamentary parties and the palace.

perception, justifiable. As can be seen from the statements of the Maoist leaders there was a clear line from within the party that the government had to resort to this type of ‘propaganda’ because it had lost the political battle over socio-economic and political issues. The Maoists argued that the labelling was the consequence of a political defeat rather than a victory for the government, and in this sense the government framing was belittled. This was not only an internal rhetoric within the CPN (Maoist), they also took action to inform the public of their perspective:

But we expose the government decision to the peoples, we said to the peoples they are doing wrong and we are doing right...[...]...From the initial time, this is our compulsion to go to the war, not our wish, because that time the government give us so many tortures, pressure and give us so many illegal activities in our village, our people, so ultimately it gives the compulsion to commence the war, but our internal wish if the government want the peace with a new political legitimate then we are ready any time, for the compromise.267

They were eager to present their logic to the people and also to show that they were the reasonable party not responsible for the political situation but ready for a peaceful solution. The Maoist problem description, that this conflict was a political problem and that the use of the terrorism label was a sign that the government has been politically defeated, implies that the problem should be solved through political means i.e. negotiations. The Maoist respondents tended to point out that they were always in favour of dialogue and ready for talks, but that the government was insincere and wanted escalation and more bloodshed.

From the Maoists’ causal narrative the government’s actions were not a legitimate move to eliminate a threat to the state but rather the actions of an actor who to wanted to solve the conflict through military means because they had lost the political aspect of the struggle. In this way the Maoist frame turned the tables on a traditional definition of terrorism as being the weapon of the weak: the government had to resort to the use of the terrorism label because they were politically weak. The Maoists however were not, and could not be, engaged in terrorism because they had a clear and strong political agenda.

267 Interview with Interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara, CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008.
Concluding discussion

This chapter has shown the different problem representations that resulted in three main opposing frames with regard to how the conflict in Nepal should be seen. In the beginning of the conflict the government was divided on how to approach and define the conflict, initially regarding it as normal dissent in a democratic system. In 1995, when the Maoists began their activities in the far western region, the Koirala government initiated police operations to subdue the movement, acting within a frame that saw the issue as a law and order problem. The initiation of negotiations in 2001 is also indicative of the different problem representations that existed among and within the parliamentary parties at the time, where no one representation took precedence over another. However, with the breaking down of the negotiations in November 2001, the government implemented the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance, labelled the Maoists as terrorists and deployed the army. The terrorism frame was the result of a problem representation of the conflict that placed the blame for the failure to reach a peaceful settlement and for the escalation of violence, solely on the Maoists. The cause of the problem was said to be that the Maoists were terrorists and the government stressed the terrorist character of the Maoists: their indiscriminate killing of civilians, torture, abductions and extortion. As terrorists the Maoists could not be negotiated with and this legitimized the use of the terrorism label and the deployment of the army as a solution.

The terrorism frame supported the government’s military solution and fitted into their causal narrative in three ways. Firstly, the terrorism label neutralised one previous argument, which had prevented the army from becoming engaged, namely that of the viewing of the Maoists as fellow Nepalese. With the application of the terrorism label, they ceased to be ordinary citizens and were portrayed as enemies not only of the state, but of the people.

Secondly, in line with the evolving global discourse on terrorism, the presence of the threat of terrorism allowed a military response following the discursive logic of the US after the 11th of September attacks, which moved counter-terrorism from the arena of law enforcement to that of war.

Thirdly, as the problem, as well as the cause of the problem, was actor focused, a one-sided military response was a logical conclusion in order to solve the problem by eliminating the cause, i.e. the Maoists.

In response, the Maoists reacted strongly against the label and proposed their own problem representation in the form of a counter frame. In their version the conflict was due to structural inequalities and also the product of individual politicians’ corrupt and egoistic mindset. The cause of the problem was seen in the aspects of society that they wished to reform: the monarchy, feudalism and socio-political and economical inequalities. This kind of problem formulation is different from that of the government in that it mainly
attributes the cause of the problem to systemic factors and to a lesser extent to actor based factors.

Further, by defining the problem of the conflict as a whole in their frame, the Maoists insisted that they were ready for peace to come through sincere negotiations. Although similar to the government argument, that the Maoists forced their hand in taking harsher measures, the Maoists justify their need for the People’s War in terms of the failure of the political system and the parliamentary parties to provide social, economical and political change.

Even though they refused to give any credit to the terrorism frame propagated by the government, the Maoists did not ignore it and felt a need to defend themselves against the blame being placed on them by the government. In doing so they used a problem representation that portrayed them as a reasonable, legitimate and political force, willing to make sacrifices for the common political good. At the same time the problem representation included a framing of the government as possessing a defeatist mentality due to their decision to use the terrorism label (see Table 5.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frames of the conflict in 2001</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Government terrorism frame</td>
<td>-Violence -Illegal activities</td>
<td>-Maoists as terrorists (attacking civilians and army) -Maoist as aggressive and untrustworthy</td>
<td>-Legitimate army deployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Maoist counter-frame</td>
<td>-Failure to initiate political change and development</td>
<td>-Mismanagement and ineffectiveness of the political system</td>
<td>-Negotiation -People’s War*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 Frames of the conflict in 2001

*The People’s War is presented as a forced but justified solution through the inability of the government to respond to political demands.

The next chapter will look at how the terrorism frame influenced the actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action. Even though the terrorism frame was contested and the label even removed before the second negotiation attempt in 2003, it remained an important frame in the political discourse in Nepal until the signing of the Twelve-point agreement in 2005.
6. Effects of the terrorism frame

The argument that the effect of a frame should not be reduced to a dualistic question about its success or failure was presented in Chapter 2. It was also argued that viewing the effect of frames as determined by resonance only makes the relation to effect at times almost theoretical. The model used in this analysis still includes resonance in relation to effects but the analysis in this chapter explores the effects of the terrorism frame not primarily via the assumed link to resonance but through the narratives of the actors themselves. In relation to their actions, how do they describe their situation? Do they give a role to the discursive aspects in their reasoning behind a choice? How is this tied to a particular frame? In short, how did the actors perceive their manoeuvrability in relation to the frame?

The effect on the parliamentary parties and the Maoists will be analysed to see which of the different logic of effects were experienced. In terms of the parliamentary parties, as the framing actor, the two potential effects according to the model used are self-serving and self-entrapment. Here the analysis will focus on the presence of an instrumental use of the frame to further the actor’s own constructed interests and if the actor experienced restriction in terms of what he/she wanted to do due to the presence of the frame. In relation to the potential effect on the Maoists the model allows for the possibility of persuasion and entrapment.

As seen in the previous chapter the Maoists strongly rejected the terrorism label and created a counter-frame based on their problem representation of the conflict. This reaction by the Maoists reduces the likelihood of any persuasive effect of the terrorism frame. With regard to entrapment the character of the terrorism frame as such presents a problem for the conventional definition and criteria of entrapment, and this results in the need for a different view on the concept in order for it to be applicable in analysing the terrorism frame.

The effect of the frame on the parliamentary parties

As stated in the previous chapter when respondents were asked about the terrorism label they focused their answers on what the label would allow the government to do. The statement by Central Working Committee member of the NC, Dr. Narayan Bahadur Khadka is a case in point:
Because by that the government could have extra power they could raid homes…and also the government wanted the people to know that they [the Maoists] are terrorist, they have to be squashed, to gather support you know. And also by that the government could mobilise more resources and it was some kind of all out war against the terrorist.\textsuperscript{268}

Dr. Khadka mentions two functional aspects of the terrorism label: the extra power and resources it made available and the de-legitimization it brought to the Maoist movement. These two aspects were both central to the respondents’ reasoning about the terrorism label.\textsuperscript{269}

Another aspect of what the terrorism frame could “do” was presented by the Party General Secretary of the NCD, Bimalendra Nidhi:

> Because army said and civil society also: if you do not declare them terrorist the police force they will not be able to catch them, first you declare them terrorist then army and international police force can do something. Without declaring someone a terrorist how can you use army?\textsuperscript{270}

Here the use of the army is clearly connected to the terrorism label, which is consistent with the connection between problem description and solution in the terrorism frame. There is thus a significant emphasis placed on the concrete aspects of the terrorism label, yet there is also an instrumental dimension embedded in how the respondents relate to the terrorism frame as such. Thus there are two aspects in the narratives when the respondents speak about the reasons for applying the terrorism label. On the one hand there is the argument of the appropriateness of the label as the Maoists displayed terrorist characteristics. This kind of reasoning was presented in the previous chapter. On the other hand there is an instrumental view of the label, that it would allow a particular type of government action and from this focus on the functional aspect of the terrorism label the interests of the government becomes visible. One comment from Former Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand who was Prime Minister in 2003 and initiated the second round of negotiations with the Maoists also puts this functional aspect before the motivation that the Maoists were terrorists:

\textsuperscript{268} Interview with Dr. Naryan Bahdur Kadkha, NC, Central Working Committee Member, Kathmandu, October 21, 2010.
\textsuperscript{269} Interview with Sher Bahadur Deuba, NC, Prime Minister of Nepal 1995-1997, 2001-2002, and 2004-2005, headed the fraction NCD that broke off from the NC in 2002, Kathmandu, October 13, 2010; interview with Prakash Sharma Mahat, NC, Central Working Committee, former Minister of Finance, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008; interview with Bimalendra Nidhi, Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
\textsuperscript{270} Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi, Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
I do not think that they had any terrorist traits at the time. At that time also the government, I think the logic was that it is better to have one law than no law.\textsuperscript{271}

What Mr. Chand is referring to here is the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance, 2058 (2001), which gave the government extended powers, for example to detain suspected terrorists for an extended period of time (maximum 90 days compared to the ordinary detention period of 24 days), searching houses and persons and making arrests without warrant.\textsuperscript{272}

It is clear from the interviews that the respondents perceived their manoeuvrability for action in terms of legal measures would increase by the implementation of the terrorism label. The terrorism frame as a whole was presented by respondents as a means to an end: if you want to be able to use the army to defeat the Maoists, you first have to declare them a terrorist organisation. In other words the interpretation of the narratives is that the terrorism frame in Nepal was a case of goal oriented framing, where a certain solution was desired and the problem was then represented in such a way that it would allow that solution. The use of the terrorism frame and the implementation of the terrorism label in Nepal thus constitutes an example of what Mark Blyth means by strategic framing: the terrorism frame was adopted in line with the voiced interest of the government and was seen to allow their preferred policy of military deployment. Where a frame is used by an actor to serve its constructed self-interest would according to the actor effect model be an example of self-serving. In the model the self-serving logic is connected to two dimensions of the framing process: that the actor experiencing the effect is the framing actor and that the frame has perceived internal resonance. Even though the frame itself could be argued, as in the previous chapter, to have originated externally, it is evident that the government was the actor that adopted the terrorism frame in Nepal. The remaining dimension- perceived internal resonance- is the focus of the discussion in the following section.

Perceived internal resonance

As mentioned, the self-serving effect is linked to perceived internal resonance. In the case of an individual actor, internal resonance would simply mean an awareness of one’s own constructed self-interest and an avocation

\textsuperscript{271} Interview with Lokendra Bahadur Chand, RPP, four time Prime Minister between 1983-1986; 6th of April-1990-19th of April 1990; 12th of March 1997-7th of October 1997; and October 2002-June 2003, held the office of Prime Minister when the second attempt at a negotiated solution with the Maoist was made, Kathmandu, December 12, 2008.

\textsuperscript{272} Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance, 2058 (2001) paragraphs 9 (a), 5 (a) and (c).
of this in the proposed frame. In this case however, the framing party was the Nepali government and thus internal resonance would mean coming to an agreement among the parliamentary parties on the course of action to take. In terms of internal resonance it is clear from the narratives that consensus was required in order for the terrorism frame to be implemented. As seen in the previous chapter, the terrorism frame did arguably resonate within the government as well with the main parliamentary parties in opposition to such an extent that alternative problem representations or framings of the Maoist issue had no force. Even though there were voices raised arguing for an alternative course of action through negotiation, this option was foreclosed by the emerging presence of the terrorism frame and the conditions it rendered.

Hence, when the terrorism frame was first applied in 2001, the main parliamentary parties seem to have been in agreement. The largest opposition party, the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML), were at first cautious in deciding whether or not to support the government but finally did so, albeit pointing out that the need for a State of Emergency and the break down of the negotiations lay with the “wrong and undemocratic policies of the Nepali Congress”.273 President of the Nepali Congress (NC), Girija Prasad Koirala, also declared his party to be behind the government’s decision and thus both the major national political parties had shown their support.274 Then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress stated:

Yes, there was consensus, every party in favour of deploying army and every party supported and it was passed by parliament.275

However, in hindsight some of the political parties attested that they were never in support of the frame or the introduction of the army, yet no such objections were made at the time. As stated by the spokesperson of the Party General Secretary of the NCD, Bimalendra Nidhi:

Yet the political parties afterwards say that they never gave their expressed support for this yet they never objected either. They did not speak out against it [the terrorism label].276

273 “UML supports emergency”, Kathmandu Post, November 30, 2001, 1, for related articles see also “UML hints cautious support”, Kathmandu Post, November 29, 2001, 1.
276 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi, Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
However, support for the government’s position wavered fairly soon after the declaration was made, especially from the main opposition party the CPN-UML. General Secretary of the party, Madhav Kumar Nepal stated on the 6th of December that “the present state of emergency in the country could be averted through political negotiations” and that “the mobilisation of the army could spell danger to the democratic process” Only six days later, on 12 December, 13 opposition parties handed over a memorandum to the government asking for the state of emergency to be lifted. After showing initial support, NC leader Koirala also attacked Prime Minister Deuba’s strategy of dealing with the Maoist and failing to conclude the peace talks.

Although openly critical of the government, neither the position of the opposition parties nor the criticism levelled from within the NC from the Koirala fraction, had to do with the terrorism label per se. The voiced concerns regarded the suspension of civil and political rights and the future of the democratic process as a result of the state of emergency and military deployment. Further, the criticism levelled against the Deuba government from G.P Koirala, is indicative of the internal power struggle, which ultimately led to a split of the party into Nepali Congress (NC) and Nepali Congress (Democratic) (NCD) on 18 June, 2002.

Even though the main parliamentary parties did not oppose the move by the government when it was made in November 2001, among the smaller parties there were those who did not agree with the line taken by the major parties, and in this case the objections related directly to the terrorism label. The leader of the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party, Narayan Man Bijukchhe explained his view on the logic of the government in using the terrorism label, as well as his own party’s position on the matter:

We did not refer to them as terrorists. Called them rebel anarchist, not terrorist. Terrorist means they assassinate without any political cause, but anarchism is the brands of communist thought before Marx, they do not need the state for anarchism. They do any kind of crime to get communism. Maoist assassinated many people that is why we call them anarchist. Government want to crush them, that is why they labelled them terrorist. We would have negotiated with them ideologically and principally about land rights, nationalisation of the means of production, redistribution of property.

278 “Oppn demand end to emergency,” Kathmandu Post December 12, 2001, 1. Among those parties that signed the memorandum where: CPN (UML), Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), Nepal Workers and Peasants Party, United Peoples Front and National Peoples Front.
280 The NCD and NC united again September 25, 2007 before the 2008 Constituent Assembly Elections.
281 Interview with Narayan Man Bijukchhe, Founder and President of the Nepal Worker and Peasants Party, Bhaktapur, November 7, 2008.
The criticism against the use of the terrorism label put forward by Bijukchhe’s party is in line with the Maoists’ own interpretation of their movement as a political movement. Similar support for the Maoists’ interpretation can be found among other minor left wing parties such as the mother party of the CPN (Maoist), the United People’s Front Nepal. Shashee Shrestha a former member of the United People’s Front Nepal and presently a member of the UCPN (Maoist) says that those arguing against the terrorism label were few at the time:

Very few people, on an individual basis raised the voice that Maoist are not the terrorist, they are the political force and should be dealt with politically and working in this way, few others were very silent because thought they were termed as civil society they were linked to one or another political party.  

Thus there was little in-group disagreement on to how to approach the Maoist problem after the failed negotiations in November 2001, and even though concerns were voiced regarding the State of Emergency, the terrorism label as such was not challenged to any significant degree. This can also be seen when Deuba called a special session of the parliament to extend the State of Emergency for another three months, when the argument presented from the Central Working Committee of the NC was that it was not necessary to extend it but that the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance was sufficient to deal with the Maoist. So with regard to the parliamentary parties it can be established that there was internal resonance for the use of the label and by extension the use of the military. The legitimate use of the army was a clearly stated intent behind the use of the terrorism frame and coupled with perceived internal resonance within the government this indicates a self-serving effect of the terrorism frame on the part of the government.

The effects of the frame

The responses of the interviewees with regard to army deployment and increased legal measures are characterised by a matter-of-factly way of reasoning: if we want to be able to do y then we have to do x, where x is the terrorism frame. Respondents point out that without it the army could not be used, the Maoists could not be differentiated from the civilian population, they could not be arrested and charged with the crime of terrorism and the government would be limited in their investigative powers. In this sense the wish to achieve the goal, for example a particular action, created the need for

---

282 Interview with Shashee Shrestha (now member of the UCPN (Maoist), previously UPFN), Kathmandu, September 30, 2010. (with an interpreter)
a particular frame. This is not to say that the frame caused the army deployment but rather that the frame was seen as instrumental to render the desired result.

This way of using frames by an actor to achieve a particular result is an example of a strategic use of frames. However, this instrumental use of frames does not undermine their importance. On the contrary it can be seen to strengthen it. Even though there is a natural air to the explanations given such as “Without declaring someone a terrorist how can you use army?”, it was still perceived as necessary by the decision makers to employ a suitable frame before an action could be deemed legitimate and subsequently taken.

The necessity of the terrorism frame is further seen when the situation in November 2001 is compared to a similar situation earlier that year. A few months prior to declaring a nationwide State of Emergency and the Maoists as a terrorist organisation, then Prime Minister Koirala had attempted to deploy the army against the insurgents without result, failing to achieve the consensus required from the parliamentary parties. Koirala had himself argued against negotiations, referred to the Maoists as ‘terrorists’ and advocated a military solution in the summer of 2001. Yet the king argued against using the military against his own people and the Deuba commission and Deuba himself argued for a negotiated solution. At this point there was no internal consensus and the framing attempt of Mr. Koirala was not accepted. Without an established terrorism frame it was difficult for Koirala to argue for military action and the failure to reach a consensus to mobilise the army in July 2001 cost him the Prime Minister post and toppled his government.

With the attack on Dhang and the military barracks an opportunity to again argue for the deployment of the army presented itself, yet even the attack itself did not seem adequate for the military to be deployed. Due in large part to the view of the Maoists as being fellow Nepalese, a framework

285 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi, Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
where this was seen as the appropriate solution was still needed. In the minds of the respondents the terrorism label was seen to provide a way to capitalise on the changed situation in that it labelled the Maoists as something other than Nepali citizens and that the threat of terrorism would provide a national security argument legitimizing the use of military means by the state.

From a perspective focusing on the success of a frame, implicitly then from the point of view of the framing actor, the conclusion is that there was a self-serving effect: by framing the Maoist as terrorists and achieving internal resonance to this frame, the government accomplished their policy goal of having the possibility to legitimately deploying the army (Fig.6.1).

![Figure 6.1 Self-serving effect of the terrorism frame](image)

Yet as argued in the analytical framework chapter, establishing resonance or the success or failure of a particular frame is not the end point in the analysis. Nor is it fruitful to restrict the analysis of effects from the perspective of the framing actor and his/her interests as is inadvertently done when the analytical focus is on the success or failure of a frame. Once established in a frame, ideas continue to exist as part of the discursive context and as such continue to have an effect on the actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action. In the case of the terrorism frame in Nepal, it was not only a framing attempt but with the support of the parliament, the government’s terrorism frame was institutionalised in the form of the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance. Before continuing with analysing the effects of the terrorism frame on the framed party i.e. the CPN (Maoist) we will see how the terrorism frame affected the parliamentary parties in the long run. The terrorism label was not removed from the CPN (Maoist) until the signing of the 12-point agreement in 2005 and this allows the possibility that the effect of the frame may change over time.
Caught in their own frame?—self-entrapment of the parliamentary parties

As could be seen above, the terrorism frame was perceived to allow the government to pursue their interest of deploying the army in order to deal with the Maoists and in this respect the terrorism frame enabled a certain policy by the government. However, the respondents also gave evidence of other effects in terms of their perceived manoeuvrability for action with regard to the terrorism frame. Former Prime Minister Chand of the RPP, who initiated the second round of negotiations in 2003, gives his perception on the terrorism frame in relation to negotiations:

Yes, they [the Maoists] insisted [that the terrorism label be taken away] and it was necessary too. Without removing the tag of terrorist you as a member of government cannot talk with them, cannot meet with them for us also once the negotiations started we had to remove them. And they also asked and it was, their demand was right also because we said on the one hand that they you are terrorist, and on the one hand we are talking with them, it does not make any sense.288

Mr. Chand is giving voice to a perceived inherent contradiction of ‘talking to terrorists’. This perceived contradiction is an example of the consequences of the terrorism frame, where the frame criminalises and illegitimatises the targeted actor. The criminalisation and illegitimization are part of the performative aspect of the terrorism frame and thus the option of negotiation becomes excluded as engaging in negotiation is seen to grant legitimacy to the dialogue partner. Also, this view on the terrorism frame was present in the post 9/11 global discourse on terrorism where a negotiation approach was argued to be counter-productive to the threat of terrorism, and instead a military solution was advocated. Authors like Alan Dershowitz gives voice to this perspective:

we must commit ourselves never to try to understand or eliminate its [terrorism’s] alleged root causes, but rather to place it beyond the pale of dialogue and negotiation. Our message must be this: even if you have legitimate grievances, if you resort to terrorism as a means toward eliminating them we will simply not listen to you, we will not try to understand you, and we will certainly never change any of our polices toward you. Instead, we will hunt you down and destroy your capacity to engage in terror.289


289 Alan Dershowitz, Why Terrorism Works: understanding the threat, responding to the challenge ( New Haven, USA: Yale University Press, 2002), 24-25.
Thus Mr. Chand’s comment that labelling the Maoists as terrorists and then talking to them ‘makes no sense’ is understandable if the frame is seen to create illegitimacy with the target of the frame, and as such the terrorism frame is not associated with a policy of negotiation. Respondents also mentioned the obstacles they faced when wanting to engage in dialogue, here CPN-UML Central Committee member, Pradeep Gyawali, who was also a member of the government negotiation team during the 2005-2006 peace process, recalled:

If we met them and it was made public, they may charge us of the terrorist [referring to the clause in the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance that those associating with terrorists also could be charge with the crime of terrorism] and I recall that some military officials some representatives of the king were time and again demanded these persons who were in contact with the Maoist may be arrested, charged and penalised so it was difficult to make regular contact because the negotiation may be thought as a task of the anti-terrorism [to be supportive of terrorism].

As exemplified by Mr. Gyawali, once issued by the government, the application of the terrorism label and the subsequent Terrorism and Destructive Activities Ordinance was seen by the parliamentary parties to present obstacles to having official communication with the Maoist leaders. To the extent that it did present an obstacle it was perceived to be mainly a problem for the parliamentary parties. Shyam Shrestha a leader in civil society, commented:

It is only for the political party leaders that it will be difficult. Because in that condition the political leaders could not talk to the Maoists. Military kept track of who was talking and meeting who.

The logic here is of course that on the whole little changed for the Maoists after the terrorism label was implemented. The Maoist leaders and cadres had been operating clandestinely, avoiding the authorities, since five years back. Even though harsher measures were taken against them and it became more difficult for the Maoists to operate in the cities and in Kathmandu especially, they committed no further crime by approaching a member of parliament. On the contrary an initiative by the Maoists to resume negotiations would have been welcomed by the national and international community alike. Thus, the terrorism frame did not pose any restrictions on the Maoists in terms of being allowed to communicate.

Yet, from the side of the parliamentary parties, not only the possible legal repercussions prevented the initiation of dialogue. Another respondent that

---

290 Interview with Pradeep Gyawali, CPN (UML), Central Committee Member also member of the government negotiation team during the 2006 peace negotiations, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.

291 Interview with Shyam Shreshta, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
gave voice to a feeling of restriction due to the terrorism label was Former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, who was the orchestrator behind the failed 2001 negotiations and the subsequent application of the terrorism label:

I wanted to enter dialogue in clandestine way, because open dialogue did not help us therefore I thought they were not willing to do these things. I wanted to but because I deployed the army, I announced terrorism tag, therefore I could not again try to negotiation without their request. I could not decide.\footnote{Interview with Sher Bahadur Deuba, NC, Prime Minister of Nepal 1995-1997, 2001-2002, and 2004-2005, headed the fraction NCD that broke off from the NC in 2002, Kathmandu, October 13, 2010.}

The narrative of Former Prime Minister Deuba shows that he is aware of his connection to the terrorism label, he also seems to perceive himself to be void of agency in terms of doing what he wants. He wants to initiate dialogue, yet because of his role in the implementation of the terrorism label and the deployment of the army, he feels that he cannot initiate negotiations, not even clandestine talks, on his own initiative and he expresses that he feels restricted in what he can do and dependent on others to take the first step. Of course he could have recanted his previous statements and announced that the declaration of the Maoists as terrorist was a mistake and again argue for negotiations through returning to his previous problem definition of the Maoist issues as a political problem. Even though in theory this could have been a way to proceed, it did not seem to have been an option that he entertained as possible. Much focus in the statements of the respondents regarded the legal restrictions. Former Prime Minister Chand and other respondents pointed out the inconsistency, or absurdity of entering into dialogue with a party that they have named terrorist or the difficulty to commence or continue communications due to the institutionalisation of the terrorism label in the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance.

What the respondents are expressing to various degrees is a perception that what they wanted to do was not conceived of as possible. And they ascribe this restriction to the terrorism label itself. Here respondents are giving voice to a situation that can be described as self-entrapment: they were the actors that had adopted the terrorism frame and introduced and institutionalised the terrorism label and later they felt themselves restricted by it. Self-entrapment as used by Frank Schimmelfennig is the unintended consequence of rhetorical action, where rhetorical action is the strategic use of arguments to further the actors self interest.\footnote{Frank Schimmelfennig, “Competition and community: constitutional courts, rhetorical action, and the institutionalization of human rights in the European Court”, Journal of European Public Policy vol.13 no. 8 (2006).} The frame had previously been perceived as instrumental in providing a discursive context to allow a favoured policy
of army deployment, yet when a policy of negotiation became an attractive option the institutionalised frame restricted the manoeuvrability of the actors. In terms of enablement and adopting the frame this required perceived internal resonance and as demonstrated at the time there was internal consensus among the parliamentary parties to label the Maoists as terrorists. Yet, according to the logic of my effect model, a case of self-entrapment is the result of a frame propagated by the actor and that resonates externally. In the case of the terrorism frame the government was the propagating actor, but did the frame resonate externally?

External resonance of the terrorism frame

In the framework of Benford and Snow, resonance, entails a situation where the propagated frame, in our case the Maoists as terrorists, resonates in the minds of an audience. As a consequence the terrorism frame would become aligned with the mental frames of the audience making them accept the government’s problem representation of the conflict and as a result see the Maoists as terrorists. A gap in Benford and Snow’s framework, but also in other constructivist frameworks that utilise the term audience, such as securitization theory, is that the concept of the audience is underdeveloped. In securitization theory for example the only guideline given to the researcher is that it concerns a relevant audience. This makes it unclear who the audience is, that is whose acceptance is needed for the frame to resonate?

The terrorism frame provides a good example of the analytical consequences of this uncertainty. As discussed when addressing the self-serving logic of the terrorism frame, the implementation of the frame required resonance among the parliamentary parties. In that particular situation the parliament could be argued to be the relevant audience in that convincing them was enough to get the frame institutionalised. Once made into the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance the frame acted as both enabling certain action and restricting others in that it had the status of law. The presence of the Ordinance itself would explain the obstacles the respondents describe in terms of contacting the Maoist. They would thus be breaking the law that they had themselves sanctioned.

Yet another possible audience for the terrorism frame would be the wider population of Nepal. The people suffering from the conflict, those that the government argued they would protect by invoking harsher measures on the Maoists. In their problem representation of the Maoists as the cause of the conflict, the government was also clearly addressing the wider public, as a relevant audience. This was also the interpretation of Narayan Bahadur Kadhka of the Nepali Congress who said that one of the purposes of the terrorism frame was to gather support for the government policies among the
people. This means that with regard to the terrorism frame resonance can be divided into internal resonance as represented by the parliamentary parties and external resonance as represented by the wider population of Nepal. As argued above, internal resonance was sufficient to enact a law based on the terrorism frame. However, is the empirical support for self-entrapment related to any external resonance of the frame?

What is interesting is that in discussing the terrorism frame, the respondents stress the unavoidability to label the Maoists terrorists, in part due to the character of the Maoists, their activities and methods, and in part due to this being the only possible response of a state under attack. However, respondents did never refer to the fact that they received public support for their problem representation. Although respondents stress that the methods used by the Maoists made people scared, this was the extent of any connection to a wider audience in their narratives, all other arguments and reasoning had to do with their own interests and position. In the interviews, the Maoists on the other hand, would dispute not only the problem representation put forward by the government, but also stress that this was not accepted by the general public. In fact, Maoist respondents would tie the lack of external resonance of the terrorism frame directly to the acceptance by the public of their own frame, seeing the conflict as a political one, demanding a political solution:

No they did not, in fact you know general people who would definitely aspire for the peace in the country, they did not because labelling the Maoist as terrorist was not solution to the problem what they wanted was for dialogue to take place between the state and the Maoist. And to label them like that the war would continue, so those people in fact, peace loving people they never accept that kind of label, those people who were hard core supporters of the then state like the parliamentary parties and also the monarchy to some extent the people would have been taking advantage of this...[...]...who had been enjoying some benefits by state they also supported this kind of label. Otherwise, the very mass of the people, no.

The Maoist respondents also regarded the move by the government to label them as terrorist as a kind of political propaganda. That the terrorism label was seen as a political defeat within the CPN (Maoist) was discussed in the previous chapter, yet the use of the terrorism tag was also interpreted as a means to win over the public:

Ah, yes, in fact that may be another reason for the labelling us as terrorist, because you know to win the war not only the military war is enough also the political war so labelling as terrorist or something like that is a kind of politi-

294 Interview with Narayan Bahadur Kadhka, NC, Central Working Committee Member, Kathmandu, October 12, 2010.
295 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
cal propaganda, so the state, the reactionaries tried to win over the masses, so this kind of political propaganda.296

From a Maoist viewpoint the terrorism label did not take hold because of the way their movement was constructed. The Maoists had worked towards a broad inclusion of people to their cause by bringing up political issues they believed the people would sympathize with.

In Benford and Snow’s framework this strategy of creating resonance for a particular frame is through salience. In this case bringing up issues that are central in peoples’ lives and making the issues about something they can relate to. The Maoist respondents would argue that they had achieved such salience and that the people understood what they wanted to achieve and supported them.297 They also used the results of the 2008 constituent assembly elections to substantiate this claim:

They [the government] did not know that the social base we had created, how developed our movement was, traditional Marxist is only on class issues, you see apart from class we gave importance to the national issue, the regional issue, gender issue, class issue and all these various issues, so our movement was the very integrated movement. So in that sense we had widened our class base throughout the country from the mountains to the plains and from east to west. We had a good mass base, so these people failed to calculate so that is why they got surprised at the election results and they try to go back.298

Naturally, the Maoist respondents are biased in the sense that they have an interest to argue that they had the support of the people since their whole political agenda and justification for the war, the Peoples’ War, was that it was based on the will and wishes of the people. Hence, the Maoist respondents argue that because the people knew what the Maoist were fighting for, the fact the movement lasted for so long, and that the party won the 2008 elections, all speaks to that they had the support of the people. The Maoist thus present the terrorism frame as a failed frame in terms of external resonance and the respondents from the parliamentary parties are silent on the issue. What is of interest here is that the Maoist forcefully argue that the terrorism frame did not resonate, bringing up collateral ‘evidence’ for that interpretation in terms of public support for the movement yet the respondents from the parliamentary parties present no similar argumentation. In the previous chapter on the construction of the terrorism frame, in the case of the

296 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
297 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010
298 Interview with Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Finance Minister after CA elections, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.
respondents from the parliamentary parties there are rather self-critical reflections with regard to the harsher counter measures such as the police operations and the causes that led to the conflict.

Of course this is not enough to determine if there was or was not resonance for the terrorism frame among a wider part of the Nepal population and with less than a nation wide survey conclusions about the actual state of external resonance of the terrorism frame cannot be drawn. Although, there is little to indicate a wide acceptance of the terrorism frame among the wider population, the actors still speak of a restriction on their perceived manoeuvrability for action. In terms of restricting the perceived manoeuvrability of the parliamentary parties in terms of the option for official contact and negotiation, the fact that the terrorism frame was institutionalised is sufficient to explain this.

This could be drawn further by arguing that if a frame gains the status of law, as the terrorism frame in Nepal, the question of external resonance among a wider population in a way becomes a moot point. As demonstrated in the previous chapter the parliamentary parties had difficulty in reaching an agreement on how to deal with the Maoist, between those arguing for police measures and those arguing for negotiations. This inability to agree is attributed in large part to the widely accepted power-struggles that occurred between and within the parliamentary parties. Thus if it would have been the case that the terrorism frame would not have become institutionalised as it was in 2001 there is cause to assume that the different governments would have continued to alter between a negotiation and a police frame depending on who was in power. Thus in the case of the terrorism frame it seems as though internal resonance was sufficient to cause self-entrapment for the parliamentary parties. In the cases where a frame is institutionalised to the level of law this would then speak against the model in that external resonance is not necessary for self-entrapment.

However, there are some indications of a kind of external resonance if we look at the narrative of former Prime Minister Deuba. In his statement he stresses that his connection to the terrorism label and that this prevents him from acting in opposition to it. He does not explicitly connect his inability to suggest negotiations with the presence of the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance. Yet, it is not an inner struggle that he is describing, but instead he seems to be held back by how this would be thought of by others. In the case of wanting to return to the negotiating table he perceived the terrorism frame to be an obstacle to such a suggestion and this seem to have resulted from some limited kind of external resonance. Not limited in the sense of only a few people accepting it, but rather that the framing actor identifies with the frame and not the audience. More importantly than if the frame is accepted by a wider audience, Deuba himself perceives himself to be connected to it and having to relate to it in his actions.
Also, as argued in the theoretical chapter, there need not be any actual resonance, for a frame to have an effect, that is, to influence the perceived manoeuvrability of an actor. It would be sufficient that the actor perceives that there is resonance. Thus, even if the wider public did not identify with the problem representation put forward by the government, at least Deuba who had been instrumental in pursuing the frame felt tied to it.

After the king dissolved parliament for the first time in October 2002, the main parliamentary parties were sidelined and the government was run by the king’s appointed ministers. The king’s government took over the terrorism frame and even though the parliamentary parties were still restricted by the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance they could begin to work on a different problem representation. The terrorism frame most likely did not resonate strongly externally in the sense that it did not have widespread support in terms of an audience agreeing with it. Yet it could still be potent as a guideline for those who propagated it, thus acting contradictory to it would seem to be a case of coat turning and inconsistency. And as it was, the terrorism frame, due to its institutionalisation, restricted the actions of the parliamentary parties without the frame that the law was based on having convinced many. This kind of resonance might be argued to be the worst of two worlds. If the terrorism frame had resonated externally, that is the general public had accepted the problem representation of the government and if the government had changed strategy in how to deal with the Maoist they would still have been restricted yet have the support of the people for a hard line policy. However, with the kind of external resonance that we see here, there was little support from the people, yet the government were not only tied to the law but also felt tied to their own propagated but now unwanted frame.

In sum, the terrorism frame, once implemented, was a frame that the governments of Nepal, regardless if they were appointed ministers by the king or elected representatives of parliament, had to relate to, and it was perceived by them to restrict their flexibility and range of action. As a result, the government felt entrapped by a frame of which they themselves were the framing actor. It is clear from the narratives that representatives of the parliamentary parties had an interest to negotiate but had difficulties pursuing this option as they were bound to continue acting within the dictates of the terrorism frame. This change of preferred policy, from military confrontation to negotiation could not materialise fully or publically due to the incompatibility of holding talks in light of the terrorism frame. Thus in this situation, the framing party wished to do something that they perceived themselves unable to do as a direct consequence of the presence of the frame, which demonstrates a case of self-entrapment (see Fig. 6.2). Once secret meetings had taken place, paving the way for official negotiations, the Maoist issued a demand that the terrorism tag and related policies (red corner notices and rewards for the capture of Maoist leaders) be removed before negotiations.
could take place. The policy that followed upon the implementation of the terrorism frame was, as can be seen from the narratives of both parties, a necessary obstacle to remove in order to make negotiations possible.

![Figure 6.2 Self-entrapment effect of the terrorism frame](image)

**Figure 6.2 Self-entrapment effect of the terrorism frame**

**The effect on the Maoist—creating distance to the label**

One possible effect of the frame on the Maoists would be internalisation and self-identification with the frame, an aspect of frames studied in labelling theory.\(^{299}\) In my model this effect logic is called persuasion and the audience in terms of perceived internal resonance would be the Maoist party themselves. Yet as could be seen in the previous chapter, the Maoist respondents firmly and unanimously rejected any interpretation that they would be terrorists. When asked about the Maoist reactions to the decision by the US government to add the CPN (Maoist) to the Terrorism Watch List there were similar statements of rejection and comments that the label would have no effect.\(^{300}\)

There is nothing to indicate that the label was internalised i.e. the Maoists did not identify themselves as terrorists and that they were not persuaded by the government’s terrorism frame can be seen from their own efforts to create a counter frame. Nor is persuasion to be expected. Recognising that the early usage of the concept in modern times encompassed self-professed terrorists, such as the regime in revolutionary France and the anarchist move-

---


\(^{300}\) Interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
ment in 19th century Russia\textsuperscript{301}, the term ‘terrorist’ is currently none that organisations or individuals voluntarily adopt. Thus, the process of framing with regard to the terrorism frame can be considered almost exclusively externally constructed and imposed rather than internally applied. Instead of giving any indication that they had been persuaded by the terrorism frame the Maoist respondents expressed aloofness to the label according to some observers:

They publically told that the brand will not make any difference to us, we are in the base areas and here the government cannot come.\textsuperscript{302}

This aloofness can be seen as a way of trying to downplay the effect of the discursive move by the government and to reassure the confidence of the party cadres. It can also be seen from the quote above that the respondent is thinking of the effects of the terrorism label in a materialistic way in that the government could not reach the Maoists in their base areas and the terrorism label would make no difference to this fact. In a similar vein, when talking about effects of the terrorism frame practical issues were brought up by Maoist respondents:

But you know in fact it did not create problems for us, of course when we had to visit like other countries they would have denied us visa, of course, in your country also, I was stuck in the airport for some time and it was all because this label. But these were exceptions otherwise I must say that they continuity of the terrorism tag did not create that much problem.\textsuperscript{303}

Also, in contrast to the respondents from the parliamentary parties, the Maoists gave no sign that communication with the leaders was difficult on their part, but that the presence of the terrorism label forced communication to be covert. This was especially pointed out by Chairman of the CPN (Maoist), Prachanda:

Although they labelled us as a terrorist, always the ruling party wanted to have negotiation with Maoist party, underground way. Although publically they labelled terrorist but in secretly they always wanted to meet with me and other colleagues of my party and that time we have discussed in a very underground way even with Girija Prasad Koirala and Sher Bahdur Deuba and other leaders, prime ministers and other ministers that time when they had labelled publically as terrorist and even…so many things they had spoken at that time, but secretly always they discussed. And some of the ministers even helped us, you know, secretly and they knew that in rural area overall, the majority of the population were in favour of the Maoist movement, they

\textsuperscript{302}Interview with Shyaml Shreshtha, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
\textsuperscript{303}Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
knew. Because some of the pressure maybe from India or other sector maybe they had to speak about this terrorism label and these things in public. But in practice, always we had a connection, we discussed with them, because before the initiation of the war we were in the parliament we were their third largest party of the parliament before the initiation of the war. We knew every-thing, we know all the leaders and all these things, therefore we had regular connection with them even during the period of the war.304

Thus the narratives of the Maoists convey the perception that they were con-fident that the terrorism label as such would not alter existing power relations: the terrorism label was not able to change the reality on the ground, therefore the label had no effect. Yet when asked if they did anything against the label their answers become less passive:

[Laughs] In that time counter-protest, released a statement against the terror-ist name.305

Even though the label was portrayed as harmless, the Maoists did still chal-lenge the frame behind it, in terms of how it identified the Maoists and the blame associated with it. As seen in the previous chapter, it is also clear that the party brought up the problem representation and the terrorism label par-ticularly for official discussion, made it clear that they were not terrorists and their counter frame supported that interpretation. Some of the respondents also made comments that testified to the unpleasantness they felt about the terrorism label:

Oh, yes well because you know, why would we call ourselves the terrorist? Nobody likes to be called a thief, or criminal or corrupt man or something like that when you are a political force and to have that very tag...[trails off].306

That the Maoists were actively opposing the terrorism frame was also ob-served by the parliamentary parties. As here by then Vice Chairman of the RPP, Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani:

Sure, they did not like the label, has complete negative connotation especially 9/11, connotations to al-Qaeda, although this is completely different. But I think they understood, the government had to do it. Did they protest? Oh,

304 Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and Chair-man of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.
305 Interview with Dev Gurung, CPN (Maoist), General secretariat member, member of the Maoist talk team in the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, former Minister of Law and Justice, 22nd of August, 2008 after the CA elections, Kathmandu, April 23, 2007.
306 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
they protested verbally, in writing, in fact on that front they were quite active.\textsuperscript{307}

Similarly to statements by the Maoist respondents, Dr. Lohani also situates the terrorism label in the post 11\textsuperscript{th} of September world. Although he acknowledges that there is a difference between the al-Qaeda and the Maoist movement the negative connotations of the label are there nevertheless. In the Maoist statements in the previous chapter, al-Qaeda was also used as a concrete example of terrorism that the Maoists were different from and could not be compared to.

Thus, instead of ignoring the label, the Maoists actively sought to distance themselves from it and the kind of actions that could be associated with it, such as indiscriminate killing of civilians. As an example of this distancing, the second in command in the CPN (Maoist), Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, wrote an open letter to foreign tourists in March 2002, asserting that there was no need to fear violence from the Maoists: “They [tourists] are most welcome into the revolutionary base areas, which are firmly under the control of the revolutionary forces”.\textsuperscript{308} Focusing on civilian targets is one of the characteristics of several definitions of terrorism\textsuperscript{309} and the Maoists were careful not to be perceived as targeting non-combatants. This was demonstrated in the wake of a high profile incident on June 6\textsuperscript{th}, 2005 where the Maoists were responsible for the bombing of a bus in Chitwan, which resulted in 36 civilian casualties. Immediately following the event, the Maoists officially apologised and reaffirmed their policy of not attacking civilian targets, claiming the attack to be the result of an accident.\textsuperscript{310} In terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action, rather than conforming to actions implied by the terrorism frame the Maoists instead emphasised their restraint in choice of targets in order to avoid committing actions that would fit with the terrorism frame.

In this situation of a frame propagated by another actor, in this case the government, there was no sign of perceived internal resonance, which would have led to persuasion and the Maoist accepting that they were a terrorist organisation and further accepted the problem representation of the government, that the CPN (Maoist) were to blame for the start and continuation of the conflict. Instead, as seen in the previous chapter, the CPN (Maoist) took great pains in constructing a causal narrative explaining the logic of the government for using the terrorism label, which was based in the government’s

\textsuperscript{307} Interview with Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, Vice Chairman of the RPP until 2004 and presently co-president of the RJP, Kathmandu, November 26, 2008.
\textsuperscript{310} “Blast a serious mistake: Prachanda,” \textit{Kathmandu Post} June 8, 2005, 1.
own shortcomings and ‘defeat on the political front’. The next section will discuss the second possible logic of effect with regard the Maoist and the terrorism frame, namely entrapment.

Entrapment of the Maoists?

Again, resonance, in most frameworks is regarded as a precondition for the success of a frame. Also in the model presented here the two logic of self-entrapment and entrapment are connected to perceived external resonance. Similarly, to the self-entrapment situation on the part of the government, the rapid conclusion would be that since effects of a frame are dependent on resonance, if no resonance exists then there is no effect. Also, in contrast to the government and the parliamentary parties being bound by the terrorism frame due to its status as a law, the Maoists were already operating outside the law at this point in time and as they testify in their interviews the terrorism label itself did not present any significant practical problems for them. Also they were free to talk to members of parliament, whereas the parliamentary parties were not.

Yet, as demonstrated above, there was also a degree of perceived external resonance in that Mr. Deuba felt connected to the label since he had initiated it and that this was enough to make him act according to the frame by for example not openly advocating for negotiations. Did the Maoists show similar behaviour that would indicate that they were entrapped by the frame? To answer this it is necessary to look more closely at the concept of entrapment.

Entrapment is described in the literature as when an actor is caught in a frame that is his/her actions are dictated by the discursive context. This description fits with regard to the self-entrapment effect that the respondents from the parliamentary parties testify to in relation to the terrorism frame and its implementation in law. With regard to entrapment, Mattern talks about a perceived situation of non-choice as a result of the representational force of the frame. This sense of non-choice is echoed in the above statement by Former Prime Minister Deuba. Hence, the actor feels forced to act in accordance to the dictates of the frame even though that action would contradict the constructed self-interest or the wish of the actor. In the case of the Maoist what would entrapment entail?

Entrapment with regard to the terrorism frame would then be to having to act according to the frame, that is to act ‘like a terrorist’ by for example killing civilians indiscriminately or using bombs to blow up buildings of symbolic value. Regardless of the presence or absence of resonance, when reading the narratives of the Maoist respondents, they did not express any notion of being ‘forced’ to act within the frame and in a manner they did not wish. Instead, the Maoists were engaged in constructing a narrative disputing the frame, publically declaring their policy of not killing civilians and apologizing for incidents that did result in civilian casualties. As such their behaviour
I argue that it is possible to speak of entrapment in the case of the terrorism frame in Nepal due to two factors: the perceived risk of external resonance as opposed to actual resonance and the fact that the terrorism frame is an example of a ‘negative’ frame as opposed to a ‘positive frame’, and that this results in a different mechanism of entrapment, but entrapment all the same.

Negative and Positive frames: Rejection and Identification

I argue that a negative and positive frame operate according to different mechanisms and thus produce different outcomes in terms of actions, yet that both these outcomes can be understood as entrapment.

One of the differences is between rejection of and identification with the frame. The common view on the logic of entrapment is that the actions performed go against the constructed self-interest, that is what the actor wishes to do is different from what it is perceived possible to do. In the sense of a positive representation, as in the study of Mattern, the actor that is trapped is done so because the frame that is projected contains characteristics that the actor wishes to identify with, or at the very least, wishes to be identified with by others. Thus the actor is trapped, somewhat willingly it might be argued, within the frame and has to act according to its parameters. For example, in a classic case of the prisoner’s dilemma, the actor may be inclined to act according to what he/she perceives as self-interest, namely to defect, yet due to a constructed positive frame about his/her cooperating spirit and loyalty that the actor wishes to uphold, the choice will be made not to defect despite the wish to do so.

In the case of the negative representation epitomized by the terrorism frame however, the actor has no desire to be identified with the contents of the frame and thus no wish to act within the assigned frame. Thus in terms of expected behaviour it would matter significantly if the frame to which the actor is held is classified as positive or negative. Thus the conventional logic of entrapment of acting in accordance with the frame fails to make sense in the case of a negative frame. The actor being framed ‘negatively’ has no or little desire to act in accordance with the frame, and as a result does not experience a conflict between perceived self-interest and possible action. As we have seen in the case of Nepal, the Maoists spend time and resources on arguing against the proffered label, present their own logic legitimating their actions and to present themselves as refraining from indiscriminately killing.
civilians and apologizing publically if this happened. This would then be evidence that they were not entrapped, being free to act outside the proffered frame.

Yet, I argue that one interpretation of the Maoist’s rejection and distancing from the label is not evidence of a lack of entrapment but a form of entrapment originating from the particular characteristics of a negative frame. Thus, I propose that the terrorism frame still had an effect in terms of the logic of entrapment yet not in the sense that the actor was caught within the frame but caught by the frame. To clarify: in a situation of a negative frame the logic of entrapment would work in the opposite way of the logic of entrapment with regard to a positive frame: the actor will attempt to act outside the frame to prove it incorrect, rather than working within the frame in order to affirm it. Yet, what makes it still a case of entrapment is that in both cases the actor will choose actions in relation to the existing frame.

The counter-factual case to entrapment in terms of a negative frame like the terrorism frame is then not as simple as not acting as terrorist, but that they did not feel obliged to act in relation to the frame at all, treating it as non-existent. And it is clear from the narratives that the Maoists did not ignore the terrorism frame but challenged not only the terrorism label but the problem representation and frame on which is was founded. In this way the mechanisms of a negative frame would be similar to that of norms. One indicator that a norms is not accepted is not that it is broken, but that norm is ignored in the way that the actor the breaks the norm does not feel that justification for his/her behaviour is necessary.

Thus the Maoists did not ignore the terrorism label and if they believed their actions could be perceived to be in accordance with it, as in the example of the explosion on the bus in Chitwan, they felt a need to justify, excuse or explain their behaviour. Thus, a negative frame and a positive frame can both lead to entrapment, yet the workings of the logic of entrapment are the opposite and empirically then the effects in terms of actions are different. The negative frame will force the actor to both challenge the frame and act in a manner that will disprove it, whereas a positive frame will force the actor to act in accordance with what the frame entails and it will not be in the actor’s interest to dispute it.

Risk of external resonance

In the case of Nepal, as stated above, there is little to support that the wider population bought into the terrorism frame and began referring and viewing the Maoists as terrorist. Indeed, in terms of external resonance, the Maoist respondents stressed that the wider population did not accept the terrorism frame propagated by the government. Yet, in the interviews they also confirm that they were vocal about their interpretation of the government’s action in villages around Nepal. If there was no external resonance as the Mao-
ists claim, at least they felt obliged to argue against the label in a public manner.

During their interviews the Maoist respondents make it clear that the actions they took in trying to convince the population that they were not terrorist and making several statements to this fact, were in direct relation to the presence of the terrorism label. The Maoists were clearly concerned about their public image and even if they insist the people did not accept that they were terrorist, their concern with that there might be resonance was as least such that they did not leave the terrorism label unchallenged. Subsequently they engaged in activities aimed directly at the population to try and convince them that the terrorism label as used by the government was ‘wrong’.

The presence of a negative frame will bring with it a risk of resonance for the framed actor, regardless of what the actual level of resonance is and the fear of being associated with a negative frame will increase the likelihood of the actor disputing the frame. This in turn strengthens the logic of entrapment of a negative frame that the actor will try an act in a way that contradicts the dictates of the frame. Thus, it could be surmised that the stronger evidence that the framed actor think he/she has that the frame has actually resonated among the wider population the stronger they would react to disprove it. Hence in the case of the terrorism frame in Nepal, the actions taken by the Maoists to disprove the frame is the result of a logic of entrapment in the presence of a negative frame and with a perceived risk of external resonance. Or put differently, the Maoists did not perceive themselves to have any choice than to engage with the frame as they could not risk leaving it undisputed as silence may be interpreted as compliance and as such were entrapped, not within the frame, but by the frame (see Fig.6.3).

Figure 6.3 Entrapment effect of the terrorism frame
Negative and Positive Frames: Challenge and Compliance

A negative and a positive frame then generate different mechanisms in relation to the effect of entrapment. Another consequence of the different kinds of frames would be that on account of being composed of negative ideas and images, a negative frame is more likely to be challenged than a positive frame. The framed actors desire not to be associated with the frame will also make it more likely that the actor will dispute the foundations on which the frame rests. In contrast, since the positive frame contains characteristics that an actor desires to be connected with there is no wish to argue against the frame. If your qualities as an actor are portrayed as just and honest, then it would be undesirable to engage in actions that would undermine the perception of you in relation to the positive characteristics. In addition, not only is it less likely that the actor wishes to dispute his/her connection with ‘good’ characteristics, it is also more difficult to dispute the foundations of the frame. There would be little political or social cost in arguing against the indiscriminate killing of civilians, assassinations and bombings, yet to attack a frame which builds on ideas of democracy, rule of law or the safeguarding of the environment would require a much more refined rhetorical engagement. This reasoning might then lead to the conclusion that in terms of entrapment a positive frame would be ‘stronger’ or more effective at entrapping an actor than a negative frame. In the case of Nepal one could envision a situation where for example the government instead of using a negative frame as in the case of the terrorism frame, instead had employed a positive frame drawing on the Maoists’ self-proclaimed image of being for social and economic justice for the people and also for a more inclusive and democratic Nepal.311

At this point, I would like to summarize the findings of analysing the effects of the terrorism frame in relation to both the framing and the framed actor. The terrorism frame is often regarded as a strong frame to implement in terms of its effects. It has strong negative discursive connotations that can demonize and make the actions of an adversary illegitimate as well as making the framing actor appear morally superior. Further, it has strong security implications in that it allows for more forceful actions to be taken on behalf of national security with regard to both legal and military measures.

Yet as can be seen in the case of Nepal, the terrorism frame had more wide ranging effects of varying strength. The frame was strong in the sense that it allowed (enabled a specific course of action) for the securitization of the issue and the deployment of the army in response to the identified threat. Yet, it failed to make the Maoists be seen as terrorist in the sense that their

311 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.
movement was still supported and drew new recruits and their courses of actions were not restricted in any significant regard. Nor did it persuade the Maoists in the sense where they accepted the problem representation of the government’s frame. This could then lead to the conclusion that the terrorism frame was not successful, but did it lack effect?

In relation to the actor effects model the terrorism frame demonstrates three out of four logic of the effect of frames. In terms of the framing party, the government, it had the dual effect of being self-serving and providing a case of self-entrapment mainly due to the fact that the frame was institutionalised as law. In terms of effects on the framed party, the Maoists, what is also shown in this analysis is that the actions exhibited by the Maoists do not fit with traditional criteria of entrapment in that they did not feel as though they had no choice than to act according to the frame. To the contrary, they tried to motivate their actions in a way that would not fit with the terrorism frame.

Yet, instead of ignoring the frame, which would have would have been indicative of no entrapment, the actions they took were still related to the frame. The reason for why the observable actions taken by the Maoists are not in accordance with the frame is ascribed to the fact that the terrorism frame is an example of a ‘negative’ frame. In connection to a negative frame the framed party is expected to act in a way to disprove the frame rather than conform to it. This, I argue, still constitutes a logic of entrapment because the actor experiences his/her perceived manoeuvrability for action to be influenced by the existing frame. Yet in contrast to a positive frame, the actor is not entrapped within the frame, but by the frame.

War, the Palace and the Parliamentary Parties

Before moving on to discuss the construction of the peace frame preceding the peace process between the Seven Party Alliance and the Maoists it is of importance to give a short overview of what took place in terms of material and discursive events from 2001 to 2005. After the Royal Nepalese Army (RNA) was mobilised the conflict in Nepal saw a significant escalation in terms of casualties. The Uppsala Conflict Data Project (UCDP) for the first time categorises the conflict year of 2002 as ‘war’ with a best estimate of 3947 fatalities, which is more than three times the casualties since the beginning of the violent conflict in 1996. In the years that followed, fatalities remained high, averaging 1081 fatalities from 2002-2005. While the RNA and the Maoists were engaged in military confrontations that gave neither

---

312 Defined as more than 1000 battle related deaths in one calendar year. Previous categorization was minor conflict, defined as at least 25 but less than 1000 battle related deaths in one calendar year. UCDP, available at: http://www.ucdp.uu.se Accessed on March 29, 2011.
313 The Uppsala Data Conflict Project estimates 1182 total fatalities for the years 1996-2001.
side the upper hand, the political situation was changing. In this period king Gyanendra more clearly demonstrated his power and will to play a role in Nepali politics, showing that this increasingly was a tri-party conflict with the Maoists, the parliamentary parties and the palace as stakeholders. The political manoeuvring by Gyanendra allowed an opportunity for the Maoists and the parliamentary parties to unite against the palace as a commonly defined enemy and proceed to form an alliance, which led them down the path towards conflict resolution.

It is clear from the interview and newspaper material that the foremost reason given by the respondents for why the political parties and the Maoists came together in an alliance in November 2005 was the royal take over earlier that year. The post-February 1st government, headed by the king, had made statements calling the Maoists to the negotiation table. The spokesperson of the government urged all political parties and the Maoists to cooperate with the King in order to establish peace. Yet, at the government’s first press conference on February 12, the spokesperson noted that no more calls for the Maoists to come for dialogue would be made: “the call made in the king’s proclamation is enough for them if they are serious about resolving problems amicably”. He further stated that:

there is no confusion as there was with previous governments. The new government has uniformity of ideas and actions to address their [Maoists] problems if they want to shun violence and join peace politics.

The characterisation of the political parties as confused also fits with the nature of the in-group disputes and different opinions among parties as were seen in the previous chapter regarding how to define and thus deal with the Maoists. The parties themselves had indeed used the Maoist problem in the past to place blame on each other. For example during Sher Bahadur Deuba’s third term, right before the royal take over, the then government spokesperson Dr. Mohammad Mohsin voiced the opinion that the political parties were to blame for the Maoist problem, saying that: “the Maoist problem surfaced due to the political parties’ inability to gain support from the conscious minority group in the past”.

After the royal take over the newly formed Seven Party Alliance managed to rally around a common goal of restoring democracy and openly charging the king as being their target in this regard. The CPN-UML even declared that the SPA and Maoists should label the palace as their common enemy.

316 “No more appeals to rebels: Minister Dhakal,” *Kathmandu Post* February 13, 2005, 1.
In this sense the king was framed as an existential threat to a referent object of security, namely democracy. The palace, although having severely limited press freedom and placed the majority of the party leaders under house arrest during the spring of 2005, was unable to hinder the securitization move made by the political parties. Whereas before, reconciliation between the constitutional forces had been the prevailing attitude among the parties, in the early summer the parties hardened in their stance towards possible dialogue with the palace.

Reasons given for the alliance

The royal take over as well as the military stalemate between the RNA and the Maoists are both mentioned by respondents from both sides as instrumental factors in enabling the alliance between the Maoists and the Seven Party Alliance (SPA). From the perspective of the parliamentary parties and also parts of civil society there was the perception that the decision by the Maoists to enter into negotiations with the political parties was the result of a strategic necessity in light of the military deadlock, but also due to the take over by the king. Also from the perspective of the parties, the alliance is argued by respondents to be the result of strategic reasoning especially in light of the changing political landscape due to the king’s take over. Respondents from the Maoists and the Peace Secretariat drew the same conclusion with regard to the parliamentary parties’ interest in an alliance.

No doubt the king’s take over in February 2005 proved an essential turning point in the political events that then followed and it could be argued that king Gyanendra’s actions together with the prevailing military stalemate are indeed the main reasons for why the Maoist and the political parties came to perceive each other as potential allies. The military stalemate and the king’s take over are regarded here as enabling factors or catalysts that serve to explain why the alliance was made possible at a certain point in time. Yet, for the purpose of this dissertation the interesting aspect is how that alliance and the outcome in the shape of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, was formed discursively and in what way the actions of the parties in the alliance was influenced by this discursive change and context. How the actions of the parties were affected by the alliance and the particular nature of the peace frame will be treated in the following two chapters.

320 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi, NC(D) spokesperson, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008; interview with Ishwar Pokarel, CPN-UML leader, Kathmandu, November 28, 2008; interview with Shyam Shrestha, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008; interview with Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, co-president of RJP, Kathmandu, November 26, 2008.
321 Interview with Janak Raj Joshi, former Chief Secretary of the Peace Secretariat, Kathmandu, November 25, 2008; interview with Dev Gurung, Maoist leader, Kathmandu, November 18, 2008.
7. Construction of the peace frame

The adoption of the terrorism frame resulted in the labelling of the Maoist as terrorist and the deployment of the army. Its adoption also resulted in a restriction, experienced by respondents from the parliamentary parties, in ways of dealing with the Maoist that did not involve the military. The labelling of their movement as terrorist caused the Maoists to construct a counter frame in which they presented their definition of the conflict and their reasons for resorting to violence. In addition to the escalation of the violent conflict in Nepal, there were also changes in government in that king Gyanendra increased his power over the state apparatus by first dissolving the parliament in early October 2002 and appointing ministers and then by assuming executive power on February 1st 2005. This last move by king Gyanendra fundamentally altered the dynamics of the conflict and created an opportunity for the parliamentary parties and the Maoists to find common ground for cooperation. As the parliamentary parties had defined the conflict by the terrorism frame, these parties now had to alter their frame in order to allow for the possibility of an alliance and an alternative solution.

This chapter will examine the process whereby the newly formed Seven Party Alliance began to adopt a new problem representation of the conflict. The terrorism frame had allowed for military action, the new problem representation allowed for negotiations and a future alliance with the Maoist. This analysis will focus on the frames presented by the SPA and the Maoists respectively and centres on their similarities as well as their differences, especially with regard to peace, democracy, the role of the king and the Constituent Assembly. As opposed to the terrorism frame the peace frame, as it is referred to here, is an example of a positive frame and one with which the actors wished to be identified. The differences between a negative and a positive frame in terms of effects of the frame will be a focus in the next chapter, yet with regard to the frame construction process one feature of a positive frame that can be see in the context of the peace frame in Nepal is the occurrence of self-framing. The actors actively engage in connecting themselves to the connotations and contents of the positive frame and these aspects will be highlighted in this chapter.
The peace frame of the Seven Party Alliance

The royal take over in February 2005 fundamentally altered the parliamentary parties view of the domestic political situation in Nepal and their priorities with regard to perceived threats. With the royal take over the parties perceived themselves to be faced with two parallel threats: the Maoist as a continued threat to peace and the king as a threat to democracy. These parallel threats necessitated a re-evaluation of their situation and this was seen in the parliamentary parties’ framing of events during the post-coup period in 2005.

In the immediate wake of the royal take-over there were voices that pursued an argument for reconciliation between the palace and the parliamentary parties: that is a unification of the so-called constitutional forces. This view was voiced both domestically, by parties such as the RPP, and internationally, most notably by the US and India. This notion of reconciliation was evident even as five of the parliamentary parties launched joint protest programs to demonstrate against the king’s takeover during the spring of 2005. The aims of the protest program were to restore democracy and for the king to reconcile with the parties. The logic presented was, that once reconciliation between the palace and parliamentary parties had occurred and the parliament had been reinstated, the constitutional forces could tackle the Maoist problem together through dialogue. This view of events was also reflected in the statements of the party leaders. After his release from house

---

322 Interview with Jhala Nath Khanal, Chairman of the CPN-UML between 2008-present. Prime Minister of Nepal 6th of February-29th of August 2011, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010; interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010; interview with Prakash Sherma Mahat, (NC), Central Working Committee member and Member Secretary in the Deuba Commission, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008; interview with Arjun KC, (NC), Joint General Secretary of Central Working Committee, Spokesperson of Central Working Committee, Kathmandadu December 14, 2008; interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD), Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008; interview with Madhav Kumar Nepal, General Secretary of CPN-UML between 1993-2008, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1994-1995. Prime Minister between 2009-2011 (resigned 30th of June 2010), Kathamandu, December 9, 2008; interview with Kamal Thapa, Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu November 6, 2008.


324 “King, parties should engage for democracy: US,” Kathmandu Post, March 4, 2005, 1; “Restore democracy, we will help: India US urges release of political detainees,” Kathmandu Post March 10, 2005, 1.

325 At this point in time there were five coordinated parliamentary parties: Nepali Congress (NC); Nepali Congress (Democratic) (NC(D); Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML); Peoples’ Front Nepal and Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Anandidevi)

326 “Parties to launch joint protest programs,” Kathmandu Post February 27, 2005, 1.

arrest, former Prime Minister and leader of then Nepali Congress (Democratic) (NCD), Sher Bahadur Deuba, argued for unity among the parties, peaceful agitation to restore democracy to be followed by a negotiated settlement with the Maoists. Advocating a negotiated solution to the Maoist problem indicated that the parliamentary parties had changed their view on how that conflict should be handled in contrast to the solution advocated in the terrorism frame. Even though the Maoist problem was at the base of political action in Nepal for the parliamentary parties it was, during the spring of 2005, peripheral to the more immediate issue of how to relate to the palace.

After their release Deuba and Koirala, decided to work within a common framework “against the king’s direct rule.” Meetings between political party leaders during April 2005 resulted in the agreement to form an alliance to restore democracy and establish a common political agenda. Koirala, eager to show unity among the parties, stated that: “bitterness among the parties is now history.” Yet, despite emerging coordination, there was still no unified view among the parliamentary parties as to how to relate to the palace. At the same time as Madhav Kumar Nepal issued statements to the effect that democracy and monarchy cannot go together, leaders from NC and NCD were saying that, if the king was ready for reconciliation, they would be willing to comply and warning that if reconciliation between the constitutional forces did not occur, the Maoists might win.

For the first part of the spring of 2005, the agenda presented by the parliamentary parties, and NC in particular, was the restoration of democracy, reconciliation with the palace and then a unified approach in dealing with the Maoists. By May however, the tone of the parliamentary parties had changed. President of NC, Koirala is reported in the Kathmandu Post as saying that the “king has shut the door of reconciliation for national unity.” Party General Secretary of the NCD, Bimalendra Nidhi, stated that: “The king is neither willing for a negotiated settlement on the Maoist problem nor is he ready to hold elections” Other parties like the People’s Front Nepal also expressed a similar view.

By the end of June the attitude towards the palace had gone from resigned to threatening. Even Koirala, otherwise representing a party supportive of constitutional monarchy, was quoted in the Kathmandu Post as stating that: “The time has come for the king to choose between a republic and a liberal

329 At this time the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninists (CPN-UML), Madhav Kumar Nepal, was still in house arrest.
330 “Koirala, Deuba agree to set up joint mechanism,” Kathmandu Post, April 4, 2005, 1.
331 “Parties agree to unite for uniform agenda,” Kathmandu Post, April 22, 2005, 1.
332 “Koirala’s three point agenda,” Kathmandu Post, May 4, 2005, 2.
334 “‘King has shut doors for reconciliation,’” Kathmandu Post, May 5, 2005, 1.
335 “Agreement with king impossible,” Kathmandu Post, June 17, 2005, 1.
democracy in the country”. During the spring all of the leaders of the major parties expressed the same need for an alliance among the parliamentary parties to restore democracy. It is important to note at this point that, even though the views of how that democracy should look varied, the king still had a place, albeit much curtailed, in a new imagined political system. On the 6th of May the parliamentary parties declared the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) consisting of Nepali Congress (NC); the Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist Leninists (CPN-UML); Nepali Congress Democratic (NCD); Peoples’ Front Nepal (PFN); Nepal Workers and Peasants Party (NWPP); Nepal Sadbhawana Party (NSP-A) and the United Left Front (ULF). The common goal was the reinstatement of parliament. Now the parties had not simply turned a deaf ear to the palace, but were overtly criticizing the king and portraying him as a threat to democracy. Thus, after a period of disagreement on how to proceed and what their relation to the palace should be, the SPA went from advocating reconciliation with the palace to openly arguing that the king was the greatest threat to democracy, peace and national unity. Kamal Thapa, the President of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP), a party that was not part of the seven party alliance, said the following with regard to the portrayal of the king by the parties that made up the SPA:

The political parties had succeeded in creating a psychological environment where the king was demonised and portrayed as a dictator. This was the same idea as the Maoist was pushing.

Even though these thoughts, in relation to the king, had been voiced earlier in January 2005, when a standing committee member of the CPN-UML asserted that the king was the “root cause of the ongoing constitutional and political stalemate”, it was not until June that this was the argument of the majority of the parliamentary parties in the SPA. As Kamal Thapa points out, the issue of a republic and that the king was unreliable and autocratic, was a view held by the Maoist party. The portrayal of the king as such by the SPA is an indication of the parallel framing process embarked on by the SPA. On the one hand they were increasing their distance to the palace after

340 Interview with Kamal Thapa, (RPP), Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu November 6, 2008.
unreciprocated attempts at reconciliation with king Gyanendra and at the same time demonstrating an increased affinity to views associated with the Maoists. Later on, in early September, the CPN-UML declared that the SPA and Maoist should label the palace as their common enemy.\footnote{342}

Thus, for the SPA the king was depicted as the problem, standing in the way of democracy and peace. This can also be seen when examining the solution proposed by the SPA. The focus of the SPA movement was to agitate against the king, reinstate parliament and bring back democracy. The Maoist problem was something to be solved after these goals had been reached: first democracy and then peace was the order of priority, especially for the more conservative party Nepali Congress (NC). Former Finance Minister and Central Working Committee Member Ram S. Mahat of the NC explains:

If you ask NC position, our only agenda was the restoration of the parliament, our immediate, our one point agenda was parliament restored and once parliament starts functioning the power that was taken by the king would come back to the peoples’ representatives and we will deal with the Maoist, we will negotiate with the Maoist.\footnote{343}

The re-establishment of democracy was also the goal stated by then Central Committee Member and later General Secretary of the CPN-UML, Jhala Nath Khanal:

At that that time our party consulted with the seven parties to unite on a common ground, a common approach to oppose monarchy and re-establish democracy.\footnote{344}

The causal logic from the parliamentary parties was, that in order to have conflict resolution and thereby peace, democracy, and with it the legitimate government, had to be re-established. For peace to be realised was dependent on the re-establishment of democracy. The king, then as the agent who had thwarted democracy and prevented peace, for the parliamentary parties, was the problem. Respondents from the SPA mainly ascribed the problem to the king’s ambition and autocratic behaviour. They exemplified this by recounting his actions of dismissing parliament, taking executive power and imprisoning political leaders.\footnote{345} Representatives of the SPA also mention the

\begin{footnotesize}
345 Interview with Jhala Nath Khanal, Chairman of the CPN-UML between 2008-present. Prime Minister of Nepal 6th of February-29th of August 2011, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010; interview with Ram S. Mahat (NC) Central Working Committee, Minister of Finance in 2001, Kathmandu, October 15, 2010; interview with Arjun KC, (NC), Joint General Secretary of
\end{footnotesize}
situation within the royal family, especially the events of the palace massacre in 2001, as an example of the ambitious and untrustworthy nature of the monarchy.\textsuperscript{346} Thus the SPA had a peace frame that focused primarily on the king’s suspension of democracy and in their view the king was the problem and the solution was the re-establishment of parliament. (see Table 7.1). Judging from their problem representation during the spring of 2005, of the two conflicts that the SPA faced, there was a clear priority of dealing with the king first and then with the Maoist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPA frame</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Peace frame</td>
<td>-The suspension of democracy and the dissolution of parliament.</td>
<td>-King Gyanendra’s autocratic and ambitious nature</td>
<td>-Restoration of parliament through peaceful agitation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1 The peace frame of the SPA

The problem representation of the SPA focused primarily on the restoration of democracy and so they distanced themselves from the king who was seen as the problem and the cause within this frame. The relationship between the SPA and the Maoists, although made possible by the king’s takeover, can be categorised in a separate frame, representing the two processes that were central to the SPA during 2005.

Peace bringers: the self-framing of the Seven Party Alliance

With the coordination and the subsequent formation of the Seven Party Alliance the parliamentary parties were able to speak with one voice both towards the palace and the Maoist. This coordination of policy turned them into an actor again, rather than the divided forces they had been as a result of the actions of the palace and power struggles amongst themselves. After the royal takeover, the hard line rhetoric against the Maoist was reduced, instead directed against the king and his government.\textsuperscript{347}

\textsuperscript{346} Interview with Jhala Nath Khanal, Chairman of the CPN-UML between 2008-present. Prime Minister of Nepal 6th of February-29th of August 2011, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.
\textsuperscript{347} G.P Koirala commenting on the rearresting of Sher Bahadur Deuba said that: “through this act the government has branded itself as a ‘terrorist’[…]…”, “Deuba arrested,” \textit{Kathmandu Post}, April 28, 2005, 1.
Instead of arguing for the use of the military, representatives of the SPA began advocating for a negotiated solution to the Maoist problem. In this vein, the SPA urged the Maoist “to immediately stop all violent attacks and create a new environment of trust.”

This new willingness for dialogue with the Maoist was criticized or cautioned against in editorials and articles where authors argued that “although the King and Maoist seem arch enemies, both have been demeaning the political parties and trying to uproot the democratic system”. Yet Koirala defended the position of the SPA to enter into negotiations and responded to such criticisms saying that: “if they term the Maoist problem as a political problem and want it resolved amicably, then why should anyone object if we, leaders of the political parties take initiatives to bring the rebels to the dialogue table? It is our duty-the government, international community and the parties-to bring the Maoist to the negotiating table.” Such a statement indicates a 180-degree turn by Koirala since 2001 when he argued for the Maoists to be labelled terrorist and that the army should be deployed to deal with them. It also shows that the SPA adopted a new interpretation of the Maoist issue as a political problem.

As the rhetoric against the Maoists became softer rumours began to circulate that the Maoists and the SPA were poised to engage in dialogue. In late May 2005, Maoist Supremo Prachanda issued a statement that India had invited his party for talks, something that the Indian embassy however denied. This denial did not prevent the newspapers from speculating about Koirala’s visit to India in early June, 2005 and whether it included meeting top Maoist leaders Dr. Baburam Bhattarai and Krishna Bahadur Mahara. The speculations proved correct and a few days later Koirala admitted to having spoken to top-level Maoist leaders and asked them to support the parties’ agenda of restoring democracy but that he had not received a concrete response.

Appeals for the Maoist to support the SPA movement to restore democracy also became more and more frequent in the media during the summer. Leaders of the political parties took the opportunity to ask the Maoists for support and also to pledge allegiance to international norms: “We [the SPA] urge the Maoist to clearly make public their commitment to multi-party democracy, civil liberties, human rights, lawful state and all democratic norms and values”. Similar statements included ceasing Maoist destruction activities and violence against political workers. The Maoist did respond to the

352 “Will Koirala’s ‘health trip’ seek other remedies too?,” Kathmandu Post, June 4, 2005, 1.
call of the political parties, but Prachanda’s statement stopped short of supporting the SPA’s movement for restoration of democracy. Simultaneously, newspaper editors advocated that a possible alliance should be viewed positively but the political parties should move carefully and that the Maoist had to do more to prove their seriousness of purpose. Proposals for a united stance between the SPA and the Maoists came before announcements of formal talks between the two parties. In June, then General Secretary of the CPN-UML, Madhav Kumar Nepal stated: “We do not insist that they join our movement, but we can attack the same target in different ways.”

With their statements during the spring of 2005 the SPA are demonstrating their will to engage the Maoist in dialogue and to elicit the Maoist’s support for their agitation against the king. In doing so the leaders of the SPA, most notably, G.P Koirala, justified this reaching out to the insurgents as a sign of a commitment to peace. In public statements, both before and after negotiations had begun, the parliamentary parties made an effort to define themselves as being instrumental in bringing peace to Nepal. In their communication through the media, the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) was seemingly engaged in constructing an image that they were the ones taking the initiative to turn the Maoists away from violence, towards a peace process and into mainstream politics. This portrayal continued after the 12-point agreement in November 2005 when the SPA described events as if they were driving the political agenda. They stated that they persuaded the Maoists to agreed to their request for multi-party democracy as well as the request leading to the decision of the Maoists to extend the ceasefire due to expire in December 2005.

The SPA defended their actions related to the negotiation process by referring to their commitment to peace. For example upon receiving negative comments on meeting the Maoists on foreign soil (India), former PM Koirala retorted that: “I will even go to hell if necessary to bring peace in the country”. During the interviews, the respondents from the parliamentary parties saw it as important to portray their party as committed to peace and themselves as advocates of a peaceful solution, even though as in the case of NC, they had previously been the ones advocating for using the military:

NC since the beginning was thinking that there must be peaceful settlement in these issues whatever Maoist has raised it has to be settled by peaceful means that was one of the guiding features which brought us closer.

---

358 “Parties, Maoists may unite for common goal,” Kathmandu Post, June 24, 1.
359 “Maoist extend truce by a month”, Kathmandu Post, December 3rd, 2005 p.1
360 “We had face-to-face with Maoist: Koirala, Kathmandu Post, December 8, 2005, 1.
361 Interview with Arjun KC, (NC), Joint General Secretary of Central Working Committee, Spokesperson of Central Working Committee, Kathmandu December 14, 2008.
Other political leaders, such as the then Secretary General of the CPN-UML, pointed out their own importance as key persons to bring the Maoist into the peace process:

So they were looking to me to play this role and to bring the Maoist into the peace process, even during that time.362

The SPA wished to frame themselves not only as the initiators of the 12-point agreement with the Maoists and subsequently the peace agreement but also as the agents moving the process along. The SPA also emphasised this commitment to peace by contrasting their efforts with those of the palace:

While we have been trying to bring the Maoists into peaceful mainstream politics, the king and his government have been trying to provoke them into resuming violence.363

Both of the parties were of course instrumental in initiating the peace process in 2005 and signing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in 2006, yet it was important for the SPA to frame themselves as the ones who brought peace to Nepal. During the years of conflict, respondents are of the view that it has been important for the different political actors in Nepal to be seen as bringers of peace to the country and the emerging alliance between the Maoist and the SPA proved no exception.

Respondents also mentioned previous attempts at conflict resolution in Nepal that they considered to have been thwarted through non-cooperation when other actors wanted the credit for bringing peace to the country. The parliamentary parties’ unwillingness to cooperate with the king’s government between 2003-2005 and the king’s unwillingness to cooperate with the parliamentary parties were given as examples of this. In talking about the 2003 negotiations then Prime Minister Chand also brought up the issue of credit:

Everything was very secret, that was the foremost condition otherwise the other parties would have raised a cry. The problem in our part of the world, no politician can see the other getting success whatever be the case of the country and the people...[...]... still I feel that, had they, alright they did not approve of government, but after I asked them to send representatives to the talks and had they participated then I believe that the country would have been in a better position now. Because even the Maoists were not so strong then as they were later, India was also not against the talks. No ministry, including PM, we had only to hold election to make it be free and fair, so I

think that within two-three months the conflict would have been resolved. And either the NC or the UML might have come to power. Now they say that they brought peace to the country but still the country paid a heavy price for this and still we do not know, there might be more bloodshed...[...]. Why should this man [Koirala] get credit of establishing peace in the country? 

In previous years, there had been many examples of accusations of insincerity or a lack of will to engage in the peace process both within and among the parliamentary parties and between the parties and the Maoists. A leader of civil society has the following to say about the leaders of the parliamentary parties desire to be credited with bringing peace:

Yeah, to get the credit. “I am the person who brought the Maoist to the peace process so I am the champion of the peace...[...]” They are just eager to get the credit, if this was not true, if they were very much sincere on the peace process, you know from the experience of the other conflict in the global scenario, it is not so easy to sit in the peace process, there should be a very much clear agenda, they should be very much sincere. You know, they never made any documentation, no minutes nothing in black and white, there were no moderators, no facilitators, no guarantors, now you can see what happened to the comprehensive peace agreement, they wrote the comprehensive peace agreement but there were no guarantors, no facilitators, no monitors. So only they are very much eager they are very much rushed to get the credit, they just want to be popular.

In order to argue for negotiations the SPA motivated this through their willingness to bring peace to Nepal. In so doing they framed themselves as a party committed to peace regardless of the costs. That the SPA wanted to be seen as the peace bringers is also evident from the perceptions of persons from civil society. A will to commit to a peace process is a requirement for conflict resolution to commence, yet at the beginning of negotiations and even after the 12-point agreement it was unclear what peace would look like as its content was under construction. By strongly associating themselves with the goal of establishing peace the SPA would give the peace frame, once constructed, more potential to determine their actions. Thus, the nature of the peace frame that was created becomes of great importance.

The events of February 1st can be seen as a catalyst that fundamentally changed the dynamics of the Nepal conflict. Even as the leaders of the par-


365 For example see, Katmandu Post, January 9 p.1 (General Secretary of CPN-UML, Madhav Kumar Nepal accuses PM Sher Bahadur Deuba for “not being sincere in wanting to restore peace”), “Parties not cooperating with UML: M K Nepal”, Kathmandu Post, January 20th, p.8

366 Interview with Malla K. Sundar, civil society leader and member of the movement Citizens for Democracy and Peace, Kathmandu, 28 September 2010.
liametary parties were placed under house arrest they were attempting reconciliation with the king. However, the palace was not receptive and the distancing to the palace and the outright hostility directed towards the king that had taken place during 2005 indicate that the door to reconciliation between the palace and the parliamentary parties, the so-called ‘constitutional forces’, was closed. The only option for the parliamentary parties, if they did not want to stand alone against the king, was to approach the Maoists. The definite split into a three party conflict following King Gyanendra take-over allowed for a two-against-one alliance that would carry the potential to end the conflict. At that point in time, the parliamentary parties were the weaker party in that they had no army, as this was under the control of the palace and they had no official political platform, as the king had dissolved parliament therefore the strategic move might indeed be to try to form an alliance with the Maoists.

As seen from the public statements, the SPA took on the role of the peace bringers: arguing for peaceful agitation against the king, defending the possibility of negotiating with the Maoists through the motivation of peace. In doing so they altered their problem representation of the conflict once more. The terrorism frame, which had been initially attempted by Koirala and implemented by Deuba in 2001, was now continued by the palace and the SPA proceeded to argue against a military solution and in favour of dialogue. Koirala is seen supporting talks with the Maoists on the grounds that it was a political problem. This is what the Maoists had been arguing from the beginning and is especially forceful in response to the government’s terrorism frame. Thus, in order to be able to advocate for a negotiated solution the SPA had to adopt the Maoist problem representation that the conflict was politically motivated and required a political solution.

Discursively then, the parliamentary parties had shown flexibility in their causal narrative, changing their problem representation when they had altered their stance on the solution they wanted to implement. They could not keep the terrorism frame and at the same time argue for peace through negotiations. When faced with a new preferred solution of negotiation, the SPA adopted a new frame in which problem and cause were compatible with that solution. In comparison to the time between 2001 and 2004, when the government and the Maoists had propagated competing frames defining the conflict, from the spring of 2005 and onwards they shared a basic frame of the need for peace through negotiation. Yet looking closer at the problem representation there were fundamental differences as to the changes that would lead to peace and the order in which events should unfold. Before addressing the common elements and the difference in the respective frames, we will examine the outlines of the peace frame put forward by the Maoists.
The peace frame of the Maoists

In light of the emerging alliance and peace process, what was the Maoist problem representation? With regard to their view of the conflict, the Maoist problem representation never really changed. It remained tied to their perception of injustices and mismanagement of democracy and to their demands for societal change, which began with the boycott of the 1994 elections. Spokesperson for the Maoist party, and member of all three Maoist negotiation teams, Krishna Bahadur Mahara gave the party’s view on the political situation in the 1990s:

First election [in 1991 when the UPFN won nine seats] I was also one of the nine, in the three years period in the parliament, this is my experience and my party’s experience, we had not seen any new things, changeable for the people for the nations, the parliamentary activities also go very self interested to the party. Party leaders seems very self interested, corruption, especially corruption, ruling system is very bad at that time, you see. So the parliament cannot attract us on the part of the democratic process, but parliament give us a negative frustration only and our party we say, we take parliamentary does not give us any good results for the people, ultimately they are only very selfish, very self interested, very conservative thinking of the political sphere, parties were not responsible for the peoples and nation so our party decided, please, boycott this election and prepare the people war, the future progress of the peoples war, this election cannot give the good results of the peoples sides this is why we take the decision of the boycott.  

As described in Chapter 5, at the heart of the Maoist problem representation was a failure of democracy, as it was practiced during the 1990s, to produce public goods and social benefits for the people. This constitutes the problem in the Maoist peace frame and it is consistent with their counter-frame presented in response to the terrorism frame. Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, in his description of the Maoist perspective, also comments on the failure of the political system, yet he also adds the need for a functioning democracy:

If you see the 40 point demand we put forward before starting the people’s war, we were for the republic and we were for constituent assembly, we were for overall restructuring of the state, for that we had launched the peoples’ war, so people thought our main demand was socialism, no. Our problem was democracy, in a country like Nepal we have to go through democracy, then socialism. With this thing in mind we consistently raised the question of democracy, republic, constituent assembly.  

---

367 Interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara, (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008.
368 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist
In his narrative Bhattarai asserts that democracy is a central concept to the CPN (Maoist) albeit a transitory stage towards socialism. When speaking about the issues raised by the Maoists he lists two solutions to the problems of the former version of democracy as seen by the Maoists: republic and constituent assembly. These solutions are the result of the attributed causes to the problem of democracy. As seen, in the quote from Krishna Bahadur Mahara, one of the causes mentioned is the self-interest and egoistic actions of the politicians who corrupt the democratic system. This was also the aspect that the Maoists focused on early in their movement. As political developments unfolded, especially the 2001 palace massacre and later the 2002 dissolution of parliament, the king, although never absent in the Maoists critic, became the focal point. The palace was portrayed more and more as the cause of the situation in the country and the continuance of the conflict in particular.

The link between a new kind of democracy envisioned by the Maoist and republicanism was made very clear by the Maoist respondents. Like the SPA, the Maoist problem representation contained a logic of how their goal of peace should be established. One Maoist respondent presents this causal logic from within the party:

We tried all the time to make them [the parliamentary parties] accept our demands because you know they were for the monarchy and the CA was one medium to get it accomplished [implement republic] of course peaceful means, so that is why we all the time stressed the demand that was CA, something like that.

With regard to how that peace should look, the Maoists linked their political demands to the prospect of peace in a causal narrative. According to this logic, peace was dependent on the removal of the king and holding elections:

---

369 Interview with Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.

370 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, CPN (Maoist), CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, October 11, 2010.
to a Constituent Assembly. This Constituent Assembly would then institutionalise the political changes envisioned by the Maoist party. The Constituent Assembly Election was an instrument for the Maoists to implement their demands (see Table 7.2). Hisila Yami explains these demands and issues as well as their relevance to people:

CA and round table conference and political solution to the restructuring of the state. Going for republic and going for, what do you call that, secularism, so these issues. And in fact, because we raised these issues of exploitation against gender, janjatis, dalit and madhesis and all that you know that was the main reason it took just ten years to reach this state you know, because usually what happens with the traditional communist is that they keep raising the issue of class issues, not taking the extra class issues like this, but I think the specificity of our movement was that we took these extra class issues along with our class issues so as a result it really became peoples’ movement you see, peoples’ war, it was not just war or something like that, it was peoples’ war so that was one of the key elements.371

The election to a constituent assembly was seen as a political, albeit instrumental, solution from the Maoist perspective. The constitution could be rewritten and made to provide for the social changes advocated for in the 40-point demand.372 The Maoists thus established a clear connection between their principal demands of republic and Constituent Assembly Elections with that of peace. Their demands became part of a necessary process to establish peace. The demand for the formation of an interim government followed by elections to the CA was a procedural necessity to ensure equal political representation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maoist frame</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Maoist peace frame</td>
<td>-The failure of the democratic system to initiate political change and development</td>
<td>-Mismanagement and ineffectiveness of the political system -Monarchy</td>
<td>-Negotiations/ Round table conference -Constituent Assembly Election* -Republic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The CA would provide the forum to initiate the other changes envisioned by the CPN (Maoist) such as secularism and federalism that was included in their program of restructuring the state.

Table 7.2 The peace frame of the CPN (Maoist)

---

371 Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.

372 Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.
The Maoist peace frame shows consistency in their problem representation of the nature of the conflict. What is given as the problem and cause in the frame is similar to their previous description of the conflict. However when talking to the respondents in the context of the peace process, the solution differs from that of the counter-frame. This has to do with the reasons for the frame. In the terrorism counter-frame the Maoist purpose was to present a logic that motivated their path of violence and the People’s War, thus in that context this was presented as the solution. In the context of the peace process however, other solutions were presented. It is important to note that these solutions did not surface post 2005 but had been part of the Maoist demands from the start of the conflict and had been brought up by the CPN (Maoist) in the previous negotiation attempts. It can be said that the Maoists had a consistent problem description and causal interpretation of the conflict. They had one war oriented and one peace oriented solution that remained consistent in its motivation but only changed depending on the circumstances surrounding the conflict.

Differences, commonalities and underlying perceptions in the two peace frames

The rhetoric during the spring was reconciliatory and the Maoists and the SPA shared a common problem representation with negotiations as a solution. However, they differed significantly in several respects ranging from perceptions of central concepts to more detailed aspects of their respective frames.

Peace and Democracy in which order?

Both the SPA and the Maoist were concerned with peace and democracy in their respective frames. During 2005 peace through negotiations became the overarching goal for both parties but the prioritization and order of peace and democracy differed between them. The SPA respondents are quite clear in their presentation of their desired chain of events. The outspoken priority of the SPA was the re-establishment of democracy through the restoration of parliament. Then peace with the Maoist would be achieved through negotiations. The Maoist presented a reverse logic of events: for democracy to be realised, peace must first be established. This logic can be seen in the statement by Hisila Yami. She speaks about the relating of the two concepts of peace and democracy in the way put forward by the Maoists as a strategy from the party:
No, the thing is that, first they have a very one way of looking at it, unless you have peace and stability what is the use of democracy? So from that point this peace process, which has been linked, these issues are linked, and we would like to see it interlinked because getting the constitution through seeing is as strategic as getting peace and they are interrelated. Unless you have peace how can the new thing that you are looking for get established, so the problem is with them [the parliamentary parties] because they are not prepared to be a new person, a new party, new agenda, they still have the hangover from the Panchayat era.

Both of the parties thus present the issue of democracy and peace as linked but in an opposite causal way. For the SPA peace will come through democracy, for the Maoist peace is a necessary condition for democracy. In statements during 2005 and after the 12-point agreement was signed, the issue of peace took precedence over the issue of democracy. As then Party President of the RPP, Kamal Thapa, whose party was outside the SPA stated:

Peace was said to be the overriding concern and whatever needed to secure peace, whatever sacrifice should be done. They [the Maoist] sold the idea of peace.

The SPA had worked publically to portray themselves as committed to bring peace to Nepal and this made them vulnerable to pressure to succeed in this regard, which can be seen from events in 2006.

After the signing of the 12-point agreement on the 22nd of November, 2005 the spring of 2006 was defined by the Second Jana Andolan or People’s Movement which began on the 6th of April. After 19 days King Gyanendra stepped down and reinstated the House of Representatives. Although no formal peace agreement had been signed between the SPA and the Maoist the 12-point agreement confirmed their alliance to agitate against the autocratic monarchy and establish peace by ending the decade long civil war. According to the agreement the first goal of the SPA-Maoist alliance was agitation against the king through creating a nation-wide democratic movement against the autocratic monarchy from their respective positions. The reinstatement of parliament as a result of the 19 day People’s Movement could have been the end goal of the SPA as was stated in the quote above by the former finance minister in the NC government, Ram S. Mahat: “our only

373 Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.
374 Interview with Kamal Thapa, RPP/RPP (Nepal), Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu, November 6, 2008.
agenda was the restoration of the parliament our immediate, our one point agenda was parliament restored.\textsuperscript{375}

Two factors made this an unattainable position. One was the self-framing of the SPA as committed to peace, which influenced them to continue with the peace process as outlined in the 12-point agreement. As the SPA asserted their commitment to peace they were also arguing from the Maoist causal logic between the twin goals of democracy and peace.

The second factor concerned the definition of democracy, especially the Maoist definition of democracy, which differed significantly from that of the SPA and in which the restoration of parliament was not sufficient. Maoist acceptance of multi-party democracy together with a cessation of violence were the two conditions put forward by the SPA before making an alliance with the Maoists. The Maoists’ acceptance of multi-party democracy is clearly presented as a reason for the possibility of the alliance between the two. The Joint General Secretary and the spokesperson of the Central Working Committee of the NC, Arjun KC states:

Because kings arrogant approach number one and number two, Maoist showed themselves very liberal to a democratic approach. These are the two factors that we were prepared for the 12-point agreement.\textsuperscript{376}

The acceptance of a democratic framework by the Maoists could be interpreted as the success of the SPA to tie the Maoists to their logic of events in the peace process, persuading them to focus on democracy and through this peace. This was indeed how some of the representatives of the parliamentary parties saw it. This viewpoint was expressed by the Chairman of the CPN-UML, Jhala Nath Khanal:

Actually, Maoist are in a process of change, they had no belief in multi-party democracy in the beginning but right now they are in favour of multi-party democracy competition system, so they have entered this democratic way now, I hope that they will accept the basic norms of democracy, the multi-party competition and all other parliamentary rights all other basic principles of democracy because now they do not want to go to the jungle again, they want to stay here they want to work here, without a democratic path they cannot do, so it is their compulsion, and it is their need. And I hope that it is time to think for all political leaders, political parties that it is our duty to transform them and it is our duty to provide them space to move in this path.\textsuperscript{377}

\textsuperscript{375} Interview with Ram S. Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee, Minister of Finance in 2001, Kathmandu, October 15, 2010.
\textsuperscript{376} Interview with Arjun KC, (NC), Joint General Secretary of Central Working Committee, Spokesperson of Central Working Committee, Kathmandu December 14, 2008.
\textsuperscript{377} Interview with Jhala Nath Khanal, (CPN-UML), Chairman of the CPN-UML between 2008-present. Prime Minister of Nepal 6th of February-29th of August 2011, Kathmandu October 20, 2010.
With regards to their demand of the Maoists accepting multi-party democracy and how respondents like Jhala Nath Khanal speaks about it being the task of the parliamentary parties to democratize of the Maoist, speaks for a perception within the SPA that they were the ones that issued demands on the Maoist and then provided the space for them to enter the democratic mainstream. This view was also related by Shankar Pokharel also from the CPN-UML:

The second point is: the Maoist at that time did not believe in multi-party democracy so their idea of the CPN UML was that their idea of democracy was reactionary. But now what they say they believe in is democracy of the 21st century, which is the same idea as the CPN UML already did just after the 1990. They did not have their own special idea on this issue as well. The Maoist believe in the armed force, but now they are changing their idea. The CPN UML believe in the people, they did not have their own armed force. So now the Maoist are in the process of disarming their armed force it means they are changing their idea and following what the CPN UML has said all along. The people is the only force to change and bring the revolution.

It is quite clear that the respondent from the CPN-UML wishes to give the perception that the SPA in general and the UML in particular had, if not influenced the Maoists to accept democracy, then at least had influenced the Maoists to accept the multi-party democracy of the parliamentary parties.

Again, the way the respondents formulate themselves portrays the SPA as the leaders and the Maoists as the followers in the peace process. In accordance with their description of themselves as peace bringers, the parliamentary parties wish to portray themselves as the ones who brought the Maoists into the mainstream and that making democrats of the Maoists was a way to establish peace. Getting the Maoists to accept multi-party democracy was then a significant part in the framing of themselves as peace bringers.

The Maoist respondents had a very different view on their party’s relationship to democracy. Rather than being persuaded or conceding to the demands for multi-party democracy from the SPA, the Maoist respondents presented the issue of democracy as being a part of their own agenda. In order that the Maoists not be seen as reversing their own problem representation of the conflict, where democracy was portrayed as the problem, they engaged in a re-formulation of what democracy meant.

On the issue of democracy, the Maoist respondents argued that their party was already pro democracy and thus multi-party democracy was not perceived as something thrust upon them but as something their party had decided to adopt. In discussing this with Hisila Yami I ask a leading question

---

378 Interview with Shankar Phokarel, (CPN-UML), Secretary, Central Committee member, Kathmandu, October 21, 2010.
with regard to the Maoists’ view on democracy and the response is quite forceful in disagreeing with me:

EB: So that [accepting multi-party democracy] was a compromise from your side?

HY: Yes, sure, sure because they always looked at us as monolithic and anti-democratic, one party state and all that.

EB: So that was something you abandoned from your agenda…

HY: [Interrupts] No, no we did not abandon, when we were at war, this theoretical concept that we came up with: 21-century development of democracy, you see, where we say communist movements all over the word they got finished up because outside intervention, within own internal contradiction had been solved which is mainly due, which is the democratic aspirations of the people, if you are not able to do then you are reduced so that needs to be kind of addressed so while addressing this issue 21-century development of democracy came and may I say that even the communist party needs to be monitored and it needs to go into competition and allow itself to be defeated if you do not serve the people so that was nothing that we abandoned it was very much within our 21-century democracy that we had developed.

That the acceptance of multi-party democracy was something that originated from within the Maoist party as the result of analysis and a clear policy was also stressed by CPN (Maoist) Chairman Prachanda:

You know, we are trying our best to develop our idea our ideology, we are trying our best to understand the whole dynamics of change that is going on in the international arena and the international arena, and in our nation as a whole, and we came to the conclusion that for the 21st century we have to accept the political competition, multi-party competition. We had already decided it was not a strategy or tactics or something like that but it was overall conclusion of the serious study of the whole history and whole international development therefore it was not a tactic, it was our position and this peace process and constituent assembly and all these things are also not tactics or something like that, but it was well thought, well calculated policy.

Instead of being seen as being dragged into mainstream politics and coming under the rules of democracy, the Maoists wanted to be perceived as having their own version of democracy. When discussing political agendas Hisila Yami again brings democracy as the central issue, defining the conflict for the Maoists, and emphasising that it was not the same democracy as that of the SPA:

379 Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.

380 Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.
Well their [the SPA] political agenda was more of Maoist will abandon, their main stress was that we come into the mainstream and we kept saying that well you are mainstream, we are coming to new mainstream, this was our conflict, the new mainstream versus the old, which they wanted that we should come into their British type of parliament, Westminster.  

The issue of what was meant by ‘multi-party democracy’ proved a significant element in the rhetoric of the Maoists. The separation between the parliamentary parties’ version and the Maoists’ version of democracy was also stressed by Maoist supremo Prachanda:

People are saying that we have already surrendered for parliamentary democracy. We are not [his emphasis] for parliamentary democracy, we are for democracy, democracy is not synonymous with parliamentary democracy, parliamentary democracy and multi-party competition is not the same. We want to restructure the whole state and we want to go for multi-party competition there is no question in that.  

Here Prachanda makes a clear separation between multi-party and parliamentary democracy and stresses that even though the Maoists are for multi-party democracy that does not mean that they have accepted, or as Prachanda puts it, surrendered, to parliamentary democracy.

The Maoists argued the position that they agreed to multi-party democratic competition, but that this did not mean the kind of democracy that was exercised before. They were very persistent in that theirs was a different kind of democracy. Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, the Maoist second in command, pointed out that democracy was the Maoists commitment to their own definition:

No you see, multi-party democracy was our own. In 2003 we had adopted, we go for multi-party democratic system. Also in the future not only in this democratic phase of the revolution but also in the socialist phase of the revolution. So this was our own commitment. But multi-party democracy does not mean, see there was a difference, we were for multi-party competitive democracy but not for the usual type of parliamentary democracy.

---

381 Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.

382 Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.

383 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.
Suresh Ale Magar of the CPN (Maoist) commented on the party’s view of democracy and although he does not specify what it entails, he makes a point of differentiating it from that of parliamentary democracy:

It [the Maoist view on democracy] is something different. We do not have a concrete idea, but definitely it is not the kind that people in Nepal have exercised. We still hold the same view about the parliamentary system that we used to, we have never accepted this.384

The Maoist respondents repeatedly stressed two things with regard to democracy: firstly, that they had agreed within the party to accept multi-party democracy and not been forced or influence by the parliamentary parties; and secondly, that they had their version of democracy and were a democratic political force in contrast to the previous democratic system and the parliamentary parties. They way in which democracy became a discursive battle-ground is one consequence of the different peace frames of the two parties. Democracy, in its old form, had been the central problem for the Maoists with regard to the conflict, whereas for the parliamentary parties, the king was the main problem. In terms of democracy, the Maoists wanted fundamental democratic reform whereas the parliamentary parties were content with a return to the pre-February royal takeover political situation.

Even though democracy could be argued to be the solution for both parties, their views on the nature of that democracy, were vastly different. The Maoists had defined the problem of peace as the previous version of democracy, and a return to that old structure, would be inconsistent with their frame of the conflict and their frame of peace. Dr. Baburam Bhattarai sums up the Maoist perception of not being dragged into the peace process on terms dictated by the SPA, and especially not being committed to the old democratic system of mainstream politics, since that mainstream was the very thing that they wanted to change:

Westminster model. We are not for that. There are models of multi-party competitive politics and what we championed was not the parliamentary, Westminster model, and in fact this is the debate right now going on you see. In the 12-point understanding, nowhere is it written that this is parliamentary system. We had used the word, I know, I was the one that negotiated this 12-point agreement, we used the word: new political mainstream. Not the old mainstream. They still claim that they brought Maoist to their system, but there is a big debate on that. So we had used that word and we are not going to old mainstream, that is monarchical mainstream and that is the parliamentary, Westminster mainstream. So you are also not committing to our new people’s democratic model so lets have a new form of democracy in Nepal

384 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, CPN (Maoist), CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, October 11, 2010.
where you can adjust your interests and we can adjust our interests that was the understanding.  

Accordingly, the actual form of democracy was left open-ended in the agreements and left unsolved to be part of the constitution writing process. Both parties accepted this solution for the twelve-point agreement, yet it remained an issue of great mistrust even after the signing of the peace agreement a year later. Though the definition of democracy was not made clear in either the twelve-point agreement or the peace agreement, it was clear, at least to the Maoist respondents, that the issue of democracy was related to the issue of republic:

Yeah, it was not clearly manifested in the 12-point there is no mention of monarchy, federalism etc but there was clear indication when we signed the 12-point agreement there were indication that unless and until the monarchy will be overthrown there will be no real democracy so republicanism is related to that democracy that was clear right at that moment also.

Despite the disagreement about the meaning of multi-party democracy, the alliance that lead up to the 12-point agreement, was, from both parties, clearly stated as an alliance to end absolute monarchy. Through their problem representation, the Maoists had connected the issue of republic to the wider concept of peace and democracy. As such they started to fill the contents of the peace with concrete ideas discursively linked to the concepts of peace and democracy. The Maoist respondents also convey the perception that the idea of a republican set up was theirs to begin with and that the parliamentary parties had a notion that still included a constitutional monarch:

It was not their idea earlier, but circumstances have forced them and at that time we had agreed to a compromised formula to create full democracy, not republican or anything, so through full democracy we meant republicanism and for them it was a constitutional monarchy with a multi-party democracy (laughs) so we decided to settle it later on, have a neutral term with our own interpretations. So gradually they were drawn to our idea of republic.

---

385 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.
386 Fourth point of the Twelve-point understanding reached between the Seven Political Parties and Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), Agreements and Understandings on Peace Negotiations of Nepal, (Kathmandu: Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Sigh Durbar, 2007), 3.
387 The definition of democracy remains a issue that is intensely debated in the present constitution writing process. For example the issue if pluralism is entailed in the definition of democracy.
388 Interview with Chandra Prakash Gajurel, CPN (Maoist), Poliburo member, General secretariat member, head of International department, Kathmandu, October 22, 2010.
389 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in
Instead of fighting the presence or absence of democracy, the Maoist redefined it. Several Maoist respondents testify to this increased ownership of the concept of democracy and what it should mean. By bringing up the issue of democracy the parliamentary parties had unknowingly placed other weapons in the hands of the Maoists: The SPA acceptance of the demand to commit to multi-party democracy, granted the Maoist political legitimacy in the political discourse. In defining the old mainstream and the new mainstream, as different forms of democracy, where the latter included a republic, the Maoists could be argued to have dragged the parliamentary parties into a re-framed mainstream. The demands of the political parties or their version of the peace frame was as Hisila Yami perceptively states, more of a negative conditioning, focusing on what the Maoists should stop doing, i.e. abandoning violence and an authoritarian agenda.

The Maoist had one peace frame, and it was consistent with their view of the conflict from their previous counter-frame in response to the terrorism frame. In this frame the issue of democracy was redefined and willingly adopted by the CPN (Maoist). It did not give the SPA any credit for bringing the Maoists to the mainstream. The Maoists wanted to portray themselves as entering the mainstream on their own terms and so redefined the conceptualisation of mainstream in the process. With regard to their authoritarianism, the Maoists turned the tables and claimed ownership over a new form of democracy, which fit their proclaimed peace frame.

In this peace frame the parliamentary parties’ version of democracy was not seen to be good enough. In their peace frame the Maoists linked the issue of peace to the issue of democracy, fitting both concepts into the same frame. In contrast the parliamentary parties could be described as having two frames: their democracy frame and their peace frame. The former saw the king as the problem and cause, and the reinstatement of parliament as the solution. The second included the portrayal of themselves as the party capable or most suited to bring peace. This was done through the adoption of the Maoist view of the conflict as a political problem solved best through negotiations. Instead of being thoroughly connected into one frame the SPA description is two processes where one is contingent on the other but not interlinked.

While the role and relationship between democracy and peace were interpreted very differently by the SPA and the Maoists, their respective frames had more in common with regard to the role of the king. However even here there were differences in emphasis.

the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.
The role of the king in the problem representation

The king featured in the problem representations of both the Maoists and the SPA and there was a common element that is reflected in the 12-point agreement, where the first clause reads:

The democracy, peace, prosperity, social advancement and an independent, sovereign Nepal is the principal wish of all Nepali people in the country today. We are fully agreed that the autocratic monarchy is the main hurdle for this." and that these changes can only come about by: “bringing the absolute monarchy to an end”.390

The problem for the Maoists was the old democratic system of which the monarchy was a part but it was only a part of the problem. The demand for republic was voiced by the Maoists and linked to the issue of establishing peace in Nepal. This is also present in the 12-point agreement’s first clause in the changes that will come once the king is gone and that will lead to prosperity, social advancement and independence.

In their proposed solutions, the Maoists had a broad political agenda, where ridding the country of the king was but one item. Despite this commonality of the king in the problem representation of both parties, there is a fundamental difference. In the parliamentary parties’ definition of the problem the king was the sole cause. For the Maoists the king was but one cause (see Table 7.3).

The difference in what the respective frames encompass is significant. With regard to a clear proposal on how the peace and peace process should look, the SPA seemed to have difficulty formulating a political alternative to the Maoists. The SPA focus had been revival of the old parliament and then peace negotiations, a separated approach to democracy and peace, when the Maoist introduced the notion of first peace then democracy with both concepts thoroughly interlinked. The problem definition of the SPA consisted of a narrow focus on the king, whereas the Maoists took an overarching perspective with the problem being the failure of democracy to cope with political, economic and social ills.

390 Twelve-point understanding reached between the Seven Political Parties and Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), Agreements and Understandings on Peace Negotiations of Nepal (Kathmandu: Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Sigh Durbar, 2007), 1-2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peace frames</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-CPN (Maoist) peace frame</td>
<td>-The failure of the democratic system to initiate political change and development</td>
<td>-Mismanagement and ineffectiveness of the political system -Monarchy</td>
<td>-Negotiations/Round table conference -Constituent Assembly Election* -Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-SPA peace frame</td>
<td>-The suspension of democracy and the dissolution of parliament.</td>
<td>-King Gyanendra’s autocratic nature</td>
<td>-Restoration of parliament through peaceful agitation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.3 The Maoist and SPA respective peace frames.

There was enough overlap with regard to the king to lead to a common anti-monarchical movement, but these commonalities ended when the solution in terms of democracy is considered. This stems from the problem definitions of the respective parties. The Maoists advocated the link between peace and democracy: for full democracy to exist there has to be peace and for there to be peace the king has to be removed.

When the parliamentary parties in the SPA agreed to agitate against the king together with the Maoists, their frame was not the only one defining the issue. From the Maoist perspective the issue of monarchy, or rather republicanism, was also an integral part of an inclusive peace and a new form of democracy.

This is a significant discrepancy in the overall problem representations of the two parties and leads to two different peace frames. As seen from the Maoist respondents, the parliamentary parties had been reluctant to oppose the king, until the king took over on February 1\textsuperscript{st} 2005. This view of the process is validated by the respondents from the parliamentary parties as in the statement below by former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, who had twice been dismissed by the king, in 2002 and time in 2005:

\[\text{I must be honest, it was their agenda to abolish the monarchy, after the king took over we also realised that king is against democracy all the time since my student days I was imprisoned by his father, I was imprisoned by his brother, and he [Gyanendra] also imprisoned me. I did not take up arms, it was all peaceful means. If you are a democrat you were imprisoned.}^{391}\]

The issue of abolishing the monarchy was originally a Maoist idea that the parliamentary parties eventually followed. Respondents gave examples of the kind of arguments that the Maoist presented. The lack of development in Nepal was said to be due to the monarchy and because of events such as the

\[^{391}\text{Interview with Sher Bahadur Deuba (NC/NCD), Prime Minister of Nepal 1995-1997, 2001-2002, and 2004-2005, headed the fraction NCD that broke off from the NC in 2002, Kathmandu, October 13, 2010.}\]
palace massacre, the palace could not be trusted. Further it was argued that a monarch could never be a democrat.\footnote{392 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD) Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008; interview with Ram S. Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee, Minister of Finance in 2001, Kathmandu, October 15, 2010.}

The parliamentary parties agreement to the more radical solution of a republican constitution will be discussed in the next chapter as this was the result of different effect of frames. The next section will deal with the solution for constituent assembly elections suggested by the Maoists.

**Constituent Assembly Elections**

Even if the parliamentary parties were quick to assert themselves as being for peace through negotiations they, as opposed to the Maoists, had a limited problem representation and it did not contain many specific solutions apart from the re-establishment of parliament. Gagan Thapa, junior leader of the NC explains:

> The political parties till that date, they were just demanding the restoration of political and civil rights so that was nothing new for the people, and people were not particularly attracted by that slogan because they were not feeling that we wanted to this back, they were not that desperate, because for them that does not mean anything. So the agenda was not new, the face was not new, leadership was discredited. Third is that, during that period, the parties were not offering the solution to the war that we are facing, before 2005, before this agreement, before the alliance with the Maoist the parties were just demanding, ok, our movement success assures the restoration of democratic rights, civil liberties but it does not ensure peace. It does not ensure any alternative, it does not ensure any progress, prosperity, whatever, that is why, for the party members it makes sense, that was ok, because the restoration of political rights and civil liberties means election for them or several other things for them, for people it does not mean anything.\footnote{393 Interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010.}

As Gagan Thapa points out there was little to be found in the SPA alternative to the Maoist peace frame in terms of issues and especially progressive change. This silence on political issues, their definition and focus, gave the Maoists the upper hand in terms of framing the peace. In addition to the agenda of republic the Maoists also connected their original demand of constituent assembly elections to the prospect of peace. The second point of the 12-point agreement deals with elections to a Constituent Assembly. It states that the procedural agenda for this should be negotiated further between the
two parties. Once again the SPA gradually came to adopt the Maoist position for a solution. The Maoist solution to hold Constituent Assembly elections was an issue put forward since the beginning of their movement. Now the CA was presented as the tool to get rid of the king and the other political parties found themselves gradually agreeing to the CA.

Some political parties, like the CPN-UML, had gradually become more open to the Maoist demands of CA elections and later also to republicanism. Only days before the royal takeover, Madhav Kumar Nepal (CPN-UML) stated in the Kathmandu Post: “I am going to propose that the cabinet express its readiness to discuss all three political demands [from the Maoist], round table conference, interim government and constituent assembly elections”. Moreover, in January 2005, Nepal stated in the Kathmandu Post: “The king should be ready to accept the peoples’ verdict [as a result of holding the constituent assembly elections demanded by the Maoist]—whether they declare on monarchy or republicanism.” Nepal regularly returned to the same kinds of statements, arguing that democracy and monarchy were not compatible.

After the royal take over, in the early summer of 2005, the parties of the SPA, especially the UML were officially becoming more open to the Maoist demands and began presenting them as their own. General Secretary Nepal of the UML addressed the Maoists directly in an interview saying that: “If your struggle for the people is genuine, don’t take the parties as your enemies, come forward for talks. We are ready to address the issue of constituent assembly that you [Maoist] have raised”. Even though the parliamentary parties said they were willing to discuss the issues of CA, their sincerity and acceptance of the CA was doubted by some Maoist respondents:

Yes, definitely, because you know, they were not for change, people wanted change, but they were not, still now they are not for change. For example, for CA they were not, you might have heard the two year term of the CA was to terminate, Madhav Nepal, the puppet PM said well, I was actually not for the CA this is what was in many newsletters and there are many cartoons he said it. I was not, I did not support the CA. There was a very famous cartoon in the Kantipur. Madhav Nepal pointing at the CA building: I did not want you

394 Twelve-point understanding reached between the Seven Political Parties and Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), Agreements and Understandings on Peace Negotiations of Nepal, (Kathmandu: Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Sigh Durbar, 2007), 2.
395 Already in January 2005 the general secretary of the CPN-UML, Madhav Kumar Nepal, stated in the newspaper that his party was positive to UN mediation and constituent assembly elections which were both demands made by the Maoist see: “Prejudice keeping Maoists away from talks,” Kathmandu Post, January 2, 2005, 1.
and CA building: I also did not accept you! They were later compelled to support the CA.\textsuperscript{400}

Even if the SPA were reluctant to agree to the solution proposed by the Maoist peace frame they finally did so, as expressed by Sher Bahadur Deuba:

It was their agenda yes, we also accept not because they forced us to accept but because we also realized if we get rid of the king then constituent assembly is the way.\textsuperscript{401}

The increasing willingness to discuss and accept the Maoist demands of CA as a solution to the problem representation, where the king was the cause of the problem, resulted in the content of the peace frame beginning to reflect the Maoist perspective. Respondents from the Maoists commented on this process of acceptance emphasizing that the Maoist agenda was being ‘mouthed’ by other parties as well as civil society. Indeed, this was seen by the party as a way of legitimizing their agenda and the CPN (Maoist) existence as a party. Hisila Yami, in talking about these issue, does however, acknowledge that she cannot tell whether the ideas of the Maoist were internalized with the other political actors or not:

What I would say that when you coming from conflict and our ideology coming from Marxism, not only Marxism but Maoist, which is quite radically looked upon so we were extra radical because we not only took the radical lines according to the world opinion, we practiced as well, so we also felt that unless our agendas are being mouthed through the political parties and through various civil opposition and the leaders of these extra class organisations, it would help us in becoming legalised and institutionalised so we allowed, we were more than happy that civil society was coming forward and that congress and UML were mouthing our own agenda, we were very happy, whether they took it from their heart or not we do not know but it happened after all and the CA election showed the result.\textsuperscript{402}

Interestingly, even though the SPA as a group were reluctant to accept the solutions of the Maoists, several of the respondents I interviewed wanted to give the impression that their party had been the first to be open to the ideas of CA and republic within the SPA:

\textsuperscript{400} Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
\textsuperscript{402} Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.
If you compare the NC and NCD you can find that NCD, when we split we made NCD we decided to go for constitutional assembly election and at that time NC was not in favour of constitutional assembly election. The demand of the Maoist was to change the constitution to change the structure of the state and for that if people do not believe us that we are going to do in democratic way, the CA is the best way, because it is the elective mandate of the people it would be a democratic institution...[...]...NCD decided to go for CA first, even before the UML, and also federalist structure first. And also about republic.403

Respondents from the UML voiced similar arguments about being first in supporting this agenda, referring to the history of their party:

JNK: Yes, and after that we accepted CA also, in that way you can say that we tactically changed our mind also. But since the very beginning we were demanding these things...[...]...Just for example, our party actually in the beginning were in favour of the republic in favour of CA election also...[...]...

EB: In the beginning you mean..

JNK: In the beginning means, when our party was established

EB: Oh, really, oh, like in 1949.

JNK: Since that time yes, but tactically we accepted constitutional monarch in 1990, but it was on the condition that if the monarchy will follow the principles of constitution then tactically we are also ready to follow, when monarchy will break that rule we will be ready to break that rule.404

The Maoist agenda of republicanism and constituent assembly had previously been demands that had led to two failed negotiation attempts. Now they incorporated those demand into not only a political agenda but a constructed causal narrative that made them seem to be the only way to achieve peace in Nepal. The parliamentary parties then adopted this causal narrative and wanted to demonstrate that this policy was in line with their party identity.

The SPA adopted the problem representation of the conflict from the Maoist portraying the conflict as a political problem to be solved through peaceful means. Yet the SPA frame was narrow and addressed only a return to the status quo with no further political agenda beyond that. A consequence was that the SPA lost discursive ground at the beginning of the peace process in defining the issues and they had to work within a borrowed causal narrative. Seeing the conflict as a political problem again opened up the possibility of dialogue, but the political situation in Nepal and the peace process

403 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD) Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
required a more elaborate problem representation. Once again, the parli-
amentary parties ‘borrowed’ a frame from the Maoists.

“Monopoly on political opinion“: Focus on the Maoists

It can be seen, from an analysis of the respective peace frames, that the Mao-
ists had a wider frame incorporating the concepts of peace and democracy in
a logic that united their demands for republic and Constituent Assembly. In
comparison the SPA had a narrow frame focusing on the king’s disbandment
of democracy as the problem with the solution being the restoring parlia-
ment. The Maoist succeeded in redefining democracy and tying the need of a
republic and CA elections to the prospect of peace. They linked the concepts
of peace and democracy together using the common anti-monarchical feel-
ings in the SPA and made the formation of a republic through a Constituent
Assembly part of the solution and a condition for peace and full democracy.
In that way the Maoist incorporated their decade long demands into their
problem representation and formed a coherent frame for peace in Nepal.

The political platform of socio-economic and political change had been
seized by the Maoists as early as 1996 when their 40-point demand was pre-
sented to then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and Nepal’s other politi-
cal parties were portrayed as the conservative relics of an unsatisfactory
democratic system offering outdated status quo agendas. This was the Mao-
ist view and that view was even acknowledged by the parliamentary parties
themselves. The main point is that the parliamentary parties did not present
an alternative political vision:

Democracy itself was a dream, change the system, we want democracy, de-
mocracy gives you want, democracy means what, democracy delivers (imit-
tates chanting), forget about it: in 2007-2008 democracy was nothing. We al-
ready had it, we experienced it, we participated, we felt it and we felt betrayed so you have to add something new to the list. You cannot sell the same brand again and again, so now it is not the same old, it is new democracy, it is democracy without king, it is now federal Nepal, it is now secular, whatever, so this is how and the party leader was not in position, had the party leaders been this very popular visionary, maybe they would have dared to say ok no!405

Bearing the Maoist problem representation in mind, we can see that this
statement is based on that representation: that the old democracy is the prob-
lem is taken as a point of origin and this influences the kind of solutions that
will be accepted. In that light, returning to the pre-February 2005 situation,

405 Interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working
Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010.
which the SPA suggested in their problem representation, was simply not good enough. A leader of civil society explained the situation from his point of view:

Well, we can find here for the last four years after the second Jana Andolan in statement, comments and reactions is just dragged by the Maoist politics, every time the Maoist they will put forward agenda and the other political parties they will either buy or react to it…[...]…Yes, oppose it or they condemn it, or they criticize it or they agree but they are not making their own agenda. The entire politics after the second Jana Andolan, the political train is dragged by Maoist agenda. Look at the other seven parties and the Maoist and think four years or five years before none of the seven parties could make the political agenda, the political agenda that was put forward was put forward by the Maoist and other party had just agreed for that agenda, still if you make the political analysis you find that the Maoist create the agenda they put forward the agenda and the other parties support. That is the truth.

EB: Why couldn’t the political parties have an agenda of their own? What happened?

MKS: I think the problem with the other political parties they have the problem of the legacy and they just want to stand on that legacy and they just want to have the profit from that credit…[...]…You know when you talk to NC, they always say, we the party who launched the revolution against the Ranas, who launched the popular movement in 1990, so we are the democratic party, but they could not build up the new political agenda, just played with the previous legacy.  

The Maoist problem representation attributed the problem to the former democratic set-up. This robbed the parliamentary parties, who had indeed been revolutionary in both the movement against the Rana regime in the 1950s and the introduction of democracy in the 1990s, of a platform based on democracy. The Maoist did not deny them their radical history, and, as we saw in Chapter 5, the Maoists used the parliamentary parties’ violent past as an argument against the terrorism frame. When the Maoists proclaimed that the kind of democracy represented and implemented by the SPA was not able to provide for the people, the SPA was left with a past that they could not use as a political agenda. Without it they appeared to have nothing.

When speaking to Maoist respondents, this perspective is clear and not surprising. After one respondent stated that the parliamentary parties were defensive I asked him to elaborate:

EB: Why do you think that the parliamentary parties were so defensive?

SAM: Well because of the ideological politics, because they are the reactionaries, they are the status quo forces they do not have and can not have the forward moving agenda they did not have the plan they did not have the initiative, the desire to address the problems that the low level people had been facing. Their power is the state they are only strong if they were reactionary, this is why I say politically revolutionaries are always superior and reactionaries are always inferior…[…]…

Prachanda, the Maoist chairman, voiced the same opinion about the lack of a political agenda from the parliamentary parties:

That is because they are confused about the overall change that is going on, this tremendous political change that they could not grasp the essence of this change and they are confused and therefore there is a problem. This political stagnation that is going on in Nepal, is because they cannot grasp the content of this tremendous political change these problems are there. But we from our part is trying our best to convey this message and convince them that they should agree to go forward.  

Other political leaders also share the view that the SPA did not present an alternative vision:

The political parties allied with the Maoist without an alternative vision. To bring them into the mainstream is in itself amiable and praise worthy, but to do this without a vision or just accepting their position is not good.

Civil society leaders also shared this perception of the parliamentary parties lacking a political vision:

But on the whole Maoist were far ahead (progressive) than the political parties on major issues:, republic, inclusiveness (women: 50 percent, parties only 33), full proportional system. Also involving UN in the peace process, but political parties were slow to agree on this.

NC and UML not only did they not have a strong political agenda, they were also not ready for this [the agenda put forward by the Maoist] agenda as well! NC and UML did not have a strong political agenda at that time…[…]…

---

407 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, 10th of November, 2010.
408 Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and Chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.
409 Interview with Kamal Thapa, Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu November 6, 2008.
410 Interview with Shyam Shrestha, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
411 Interview with Shashee Shrestha, UCPN(Maoist) previously United Peoples Front of Nepal, Kathmandu, September 30, 2010.
Even discussing political agendas with people involved in the facilitation of the peace process failed to produce a clear answer to the concepts put forward by the parties of the SPA:

Because actually yes, what did they sell I cannot remember, what did Congress put forward? Is it democracy or?\footnote{Interview with Markus Heiniger, third party facilitator in the peace process, Kathmandu, December 2, 2008.}

This perceived lack of political vision can be traced back to the SPA frame. In essence the SPA constructed two narrow frames, one with a focus on democracy and one with a focus on peace. The SPA centred on portraying themselves as peace bringers but apart from that did not present a comprehensive problem representation.

The logic of the two-frame approach with democracy first and peace second, was also contingent on the important aspect of reconciliation with the palace. Failure to achieve this left the Maoists as allies in achieving the SPA goal of restoring parliament by agitating against the king. Not arguing against this strategy in principle, brought the Maoists into the political equation and at a stage when the SPA seemed unprepared for a challenge by another political force. But the Maoists were just that. They had made the necessary changes with regard to their take on multi-party democracy and had always, even at the outbreak of the insurgency had a consistent and comprehensive political alternative. By allying with the Maoists before they had achieved their goal and become the legitimate democratic force in Nepal, the logic of events from the SPA point of view did no longer apply.

With a narrow problem definition as the base of their frame, but with the ambition of being seen as the party that brought peace to Nepal, the SPA allowed room for the Maoist peace frame. The SPA’s view on democracy and their legitimacy as leaders were undermined, when the Maoists connected the possibility of peace to a new definition of democracy, where peace was a goal that the SPA had tied themselves to. The Maoists had a broader political vision, in terms of how peace should be achieved, encompassed in a broader frame, which gave them a position to dominate the agenda.

The same facilitator s quoted above, also inadvertently presents his perspective on the Maoist dominance over the agenda when he was asked what the Maoists said they represented:

And the Maoist, peace if you like, no I do not think peace, the republic and change. NC did not put forward much to change, also they did not, because I mean they could, Koirala could have put forward what he really had done: I brought peace because I brought them to the table, which is partly true and that of course, then of course they would have told, no, no, no we forced you to accept, so there was not real competition about the peace thing which actu-
ally...now in the after CA election time, peace is being labelled with Maoist, you know. So if you come say, yes, peace process is important and sometimes it is already like: ah, you are from Maoist?

Here the respondent starts out his train of thought by pointing out that the NC leader Koirala could have, theoretically, presented another version of events, which would place him, his party and the SPA as the drivers of the peace process and its contents. Yet, before he even finishes that train of thought he points out what the Maoists would do in that case. Here he is inadvertently giving voice to the discursive struggle of which peace frame would be dominant and he lands in the observation where the concept of peace and the peace process specifically are intimately connected to the Maoists even with regard to other political issues like the CA elections.

On a discursive level the Maoists succeeded in deciding the shape and content of the peace frame by linking peace to democracy and the kind of peace to their own political agenda, showing the competitive aspect of the alliance between the SPA and the Maoists. The co-operative venture to end the king’s rule and reinstate democracy could be argued to have been motivated by the undesirable military stalemate and the wish to (re)claim power for both the parliamentary parties and the Maoists. It could also be seen as a coming together over issues that dealt with the norms of political organisation and the role of the state. It is clear that the Maoists were the party that capitalised on the peace frame, shaping it according to their demands.

The way that the Maoists formulated the peace frame also took away the parliamentary parties’ foundation as the democratic forces. They no longer had a politically viable platform and instead of developing new political content they borrowed their agenda from the Maoists. Why did this happen? The next chapter will look at the effects of the peace frame to see the way it influenced the parties.

---

413 Interview with Markus Heiniger, third party facilitator in the peace process, December 2, 2008.
8. Effects of the peace frame on perceived manoeuvrability for action

As has been stated by respondents from the parliamentary parties and also from civil society, the peace frame was dominated and shaped by the Maoist agenda. The CPN (Maoist) were successful in linking the issues of peace with the need for a republican constitution and with their original demand of a constituent assembly. Democracy, or specific aspects of the democratic process were left unattended. What was made clear from the Maoist problem representation was that reverting to the “old” democracy of the 1990’s could not be a solution since this was perceived as the fundamental problem of the conflict.

The ‘new mainstream’ or the ‘new Nepal’ was categorised by the Maoists as positive peace and inclusive democracy and contained a progressive agenda of socio-economic and political change. The SPA, having attached their image to that of peace bringers without any specific content except a return to the status quo, found themselves incapable of presenting a political alternative of their own and became more aligned with the Maoist problem representation. The next section will address the four logic of effects to see how they played out as a result of the establishment of the peace frame.

The self-serving effect of the peace frame

From the interviews with respondents and the process by which it was constructed the peace frame that emerged in Nepal can be said to have the Maoist as the framing actors. According to representatives of the SPA, civil society and third party facilitators to the peace process, the contents of the peace frame were clearly associated with the Maoist party. The Maoist problem representation became dominant and was gradually echoed by the members of the SPA. Respondents from the parliamentary parties admit to that the agenda as a whole and particular issues, such as republic and constituent assembly, were propagated by the Maoists.

Not only did their problem representation become dominant, the Maoists determined its content by connecting the issues of peace and democracy with republic, secularism and constituent assembly elections. These were issues that the Maoist had advocated since the beginning of the insurgency and about which they had been consistent throughout negotiations, in issuing the
same demands and arguing for political and socio-economic changes. Leader of the Maoist negotiation team in all three negotiations, Krishna Bahadur Mahara recalled:

Because we had given the slogan, two, both slogans, the owner of the slogans is our party, the election of the CA and republican issue, we were the first party to raise this question, from 2001. In first negotiation period when I came into Kathmandu I give the government, our negotiation point is this: interim government, CA elections and ultimately republican, at that time nobody wants against the king, about the CA they also did not…Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister say: it is not my power to give you the election to CA, they say all party, UML and NC and other parties also, say this constitution means 1990 constitution they say this is a very good democratic constitution we cannot change this, they want to please come in compromise, leave your slogans. So, from our party viewpoint of the slogans comes to, from the peoples’ war the peaceful movement to achieve the slogan this is our gain. So I say it is successful for us.

Mahara makes the point that republic, constituent assembly and interim government were Maoist issues and these particular issues that had thwarted two previous negotiations were an agreement could not be reached. It was shown in the previous chapter that representatives of the SPA also credited the Maoists with these slogans and both the Maoists and the SPA recall that some of the parliamentary parties were slow to accept them. Mahara also states that the achievement of these slogans in the peace process is a sign that their slogans were successful, and that this was in line with the party’s interest (see Fig.8.1).

Figure 8.1 Self-serving effect of the peace frame

---

414 Interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara, (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008.
For the logic of self-serving to be possible there has to be a combination of two factors: the actor as the framing agent, (in the case of the peace frame this was the Maoist), and perceived internal resonance.

In terms of internal resonance within the Maoist party it is evident from the uniform answers given by the Maoist respondents that there was agreement within the party leadership, regarding all parts of the problem representation, on how to view the parliamentary parties and the king.\textsuperscript{415}

In the case of the government’s terrorism frame the analysis pointed to a strategic use of the frame in order to achieve the interest of the framing actor. The frame was, according to the statements of the respondents from the governing parties, used in an instrumental way to achieve a desired goal. In the case of the Maoist peace frame there are indications that the Maoists were strategic in linking their demands to the prospect of peace and also democracy as seen in this previously presented quote by Hisila Yami:

So from that point this peace process, which has been linked, these issues are linked, and we would like to see it interlinked because getting the constitution through seeing is as strategic as getting peace and they are interrelated.\textsuperscript{416}

The Maoist had been arguing for their political agenda since the boycott of the 1994 elections and officially so from the issuing of the 40-point demand in 1996. The political change that they wished to establish and to which they connected their image as a party is quite clear. The demands that they presented in the three negotiations are, according to Maoist respondents, seen as ways to achieve the position from which to enact these changes. Constitutional assembly was seen as instrumental in achieving the goal of a republic

\textsuperscript{415} Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, October 20, 2010; interview with Dev Gurung, CPN (Maoist), General secretariat member, member of the Maoist talk team in the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, former Minister of Law and Justice, 22nd of August, 2008 after the CA elections, Kathmandu, November 18, 2008; interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, October 11, 2010; interview with Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist), Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010; interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara, (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008; interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010; interview with C.P Gajurel, CPN (Maoist), politburo member, General Secretariat Member, head of international department, Kathmandu, October 22, 2010.

\textsuperscript{416} Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.
and an adherence to a multi-party democracy was the path chosen to move their revolution away from the battle-field. This was confirmed by both Party Chairman Prachanda and second in command Dr. Baburam Bhattarai among others.417

From the Maoist respondent there is a view that the way the peace frame was constructed and the issues linked was a strategic way to achieve their goals. The same interpretation was made by respondents from the SPA, both in regard to the peace process specifically and the Maoist attitude to democracy.418 But respondents both from within and outside the SPA, were also referring to the strategic character of the Maoist party in general.419 By saying that the construction of the peace frame with the related adherence to a multi-party democratic frame work appears to be strategic is not the same as concluding that the Maoist acceptance of multi-party democracy was not sincere. Though there are respondents who doubt that the Maoist commitment was genuine there are also those who believe that they had changed their approach.420

In the previous chapter, the Maoist respondents assert this is a genuine commitment, the result of careful analysis and debate. Regardless of the sincerity of the commitment by the party the frame construction can be argued to have been strategic on the part of the Maoists so as to achieve the goals they had set out ten years previously.

**Persuasion—a partial effect in the SPA**

In analysing the effects of the terrorism frame there was no indication of persuasion on the part of the Maoists. Instead they did their utmost to distance themselves from the label of terrorism. The Maoist counter-frame built on a logic of impossibility for the CPN (Maoist) to be a terrorist organisations.

417 Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, October 20, 2010; interview with Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010.

418 Interview with Arjun KC, (NC), Joint General Secretary of Central Working Committee, Spokesperson of Central Working Committee, Kathmandu December 14, 2008.

419 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD) Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008; interview with Kamal Thapa, (RPP), Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu November 6, 2008; interview with Dr. Kiyoko Ogura, scholar and expert on the Maoist movement, Kathmandu, November 11, 2008.

420 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD) Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
They were politically motivated and had a political agenda and all Maoist respondents asserted that position. In the case of the Maoist peace frame it has been demonstrated that the SPA adopted the Maoist problem representation of the conflict and the wider Maoist peace frame containing the demands of the Maoist that the SPA had previously rejected. The causal narrative presented by the Maoists that democracy and peace were not compatible with a monarchical constitution led to the solution of a constituent assembly and a republican constitution. This solution was finally adopted by the SPA.

Yet, the exposure to another actor’s counter frame can be both an effect of entrapment and of persuasion. In order to establish persuasion the frame would have to demonstrate perceived internal resonance and in the case of the peace frame there are indications of persuasion within the SPA, but with regard to this effect the parliamentary parties appear split, not only between parties but also internally.

Gagan Thapa, a former General Secretary of the Nepal Student Union, the student wing of the Nepali Congress, and a current member of the Central Working Committee of the NC, gave the following view on the matter:

GT: They [the NC leadership] forgot that we were not serving the party line at that time, in one way we were attracting the people, in another way we were helping the interest of the Maoist, but we would not stop there, when we reached 2005 there was already a very significant number of people within the NC and UML who were already close to these agendas that were perceived to be forwarded by the Maoist, Nepal and Nepalese community, so it was before 2005, I was already very popular, staunch republican and all other agendas, which were termed progressive agendas, we were very happy and very proud to be associated with those agendas, so it was not after 2005, so it was not only the Maoist, it was already there within the party. So I was standing for republican order, I was standing for federalism, I was standing for secular Nepal, I was standing for all those things.

EB: Truly? Like a marriage of ideas?

GT: Like a marriage of ideas, I was convinced and I was standing for that and party was ignoring all those things. Right? My point is not that I was right, my point is that how it evolved. So party was not stopping, neither was it trying to, very formally starting this discourse within the party, the leadership was just thinking it is nothing harm for us, these young people they are not married to these agendas, they just pushing these agendas so there is no harm. But the consequence was there was already a very significant population within the party who were in a way married to those agendas. So every time we went into the public meeting, my speech those days I used to say that, we did not use say go talk to Maoist and then accept their agendas, we used to say that we want NC to take a very radical decision, we want NC to decide for this republican setup, we want NC to be more progressive, so this is how the pressure is coming within the party.421

421 Interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010.
Gagan Thapa is proclaiming his conviction for the issues that he acknowledges as “perceived to be forwarded by the Maoist”. In being committed to these issues he also disputes Maoist ownership of them because when accepted by himself and other people within the party it became their issues. Hence, he does not see it as propagating Maoists’ interests although he recognises that it might have been perceived that way.

Thapa also draws attention to a division within the party between those who were pushing for a more progressive agenda, which was linked to the Maoists in the minds of many, and those who were not. That this division existed and that ideas ascribed to the Maoists were taken up by the younger cadres in both NC and UML was acknowledged by senior leaders within both parties. UML leader Jhala Nath Khanal and current Chairman of the party said in his interview:

*Actually in our party, Madhav Kumar Nepal was the leader at that time and the whole rank and file was more radical than the leadership…[…]…And in left parties the rank and file was comparably left than leadership and in the whole democratic movement the Congress rank and file was more left than the leadership, that situation was there and the whole people, general people, were also, I mean they were tilting towards the left, that is why the country in general was left oriented.*

Jhala Nath Khanal is confirming the view that the rank and file within the UML were more radical or left orientated than the party leadership. He mentions that the same situation was true for Nepali Congress. This was also corroborated by Central Working Committee member of the NC and former Finance Minister, Ram. S Mahat:

*Yeah, yeah, yeah, of course, even within the Congress there was a radical view, much closer to the Maoist, they wanted the monarchy to go, who were ready to accept Maoist agenda largely.*

The split between junior and senior leadership among the parliamentary parties was also recognized by the Maoist. When asked a general question about what the parliamentary parties thought of the Maoist political issues, Hisila Yami made a note of the distinction:

*See when you say a party, there is a division there, because there are certain top party leaders who have their own mindset that does not necessarily match with the lower cadres, because we raised these extra class issues they affected the lower cadres more than the traditional politicians, the top level, so that contradiction is also there, we can realise this. Now when it comes to the so*

---

called real hard-core leaders, now you see, these issues are not theirs you see, we really brought it and it was the situation which matured that also allowed them to come to decisive kind of decision on these ones, they always look here and there, tried to get support from this country or that country, see they always have to go in that line. So I would say to many extent in that level it was a superficial kind of acceptance, whereas I would say at the same time from the grass root they kind of pressured them on all these issues that we had raised. At the lower level it may be a kind of heart to heart, but at the upper level it is more superficial.\textsuperscript{424}

Hisila Yami’s response confirms the idea that there was a division between the junior and senior cadres within the parliamentary parties with regard to acceptance of the Maoist issues and agenda. She also reflects over the relationship to the Maoist agenda. All the parties within SPA committed to a republican set up in formal agreements, so in the end there was formal acceptance. Hisila Yami’s perception of the relationship was that among the junior cadres there might have been a ‘kind of heart to heart’, similar to what Gagan acknowledges as a ‘marriage of ideas’, whereas the acceptance among the senior leadership was more ‘superficial’. It seems as though the main parties of the SPA were split in their acceptance of those issues that were perceived to have been raised by the Maoists.

As a result of this intra-party split the NC and the UML would be expected to have experienced in-group disputes of what frame the party should represent. Maoist respondent C.P Gajurel also speaks of this split on issues with regard to the NC and he confirms the attitudes described by Gagan Thapa:

Yes, and one section of NC were always in favour of republic for example Narachari Achya, he was always against monarchy he always favoured republican and Gagan Thapa these people particularly, a small section of NC, were always in favour of republic but the majority and most elder leaders were in favour monarchy and democracy will go together in the case of Nepal. So there were two opinions in NC.\textsuperscript{425}

So within the NC there were two opinions on how the party should position itself with regard to the issues tied to the peace frame. Within the NC and the UML, the junior cadres, or the rank-and-file were perceived and self-proclaimed to be adopting the ideas and progressive agenda of the Maoists. It has to be remembered that the NC did not, as a party, accept the republican agenda until very close to the CA elections. The NC recognised the king as a problem yet the their solution was just short of removing the monarchy. In

\textsuperscript{424} Interview with Hisila Yami, CPN (Maoist), Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Kathmandu, October 5, 2010.
\textsuperscript{425} Interview with C.P Gajurel, CPN (Maoist), politburo member, General Secretariat Member, head of international department, Kathmandu, October 22, 2010.
contrast, the junior members argued for the issues that were associated with the Maoists and even though Gagan Thapa acknowledges that these were perceived to Maoist issues, the argumentation pursued by the junior cadres was directed towards connecting these issues with NC identity and ideology:

When my party started in before 1959, during the establishment of NC it was not just for democratic say it was for the changing the social structure, pushing the new economic policies, making people more equal and Congress even, it was in 1956 or 57 its convention it even endorse democratic socialism as its principle so Congress have always had this, pride of being a member of the social democrat family and then there was a team in the general Congress heart, this is one reason that Congress deviated from this basic ideals of social democracy but they never questioned what social democracy means, what social democracy is how you define it but that was the understanding there was a feeling I rather say, there was a feeling...[...],...within the NC we were not pushing the Maoist agendas we were in one other way advocating the very original ideas of NC. ...[...],...Even referring to one particular meeting, which was in 1949 in one small village in India and at that particular meeting decided that now NC whole agenda is CA, that was 1949. So then we used to refer to that particular meeting. This has been our issue, so CA is our issue, that is I mean how things worked.426

Here Gagan Thapa gives an example of the way in which the junior cadres attempted to argue and convince the top leadership of their views. By using identity arguments connecting the present suggestions for political change with the NC’s own political past and parts of their historical orientation, they portrayed the acceptance of these issues, as a natural thing for the party in line with its previous agendas. In addition they brought up arguments closely connected to identity in pointing out the NC’s connection to social democracy.

This way of arguing and the tying of an actor to an issue by linking it to that actor’s identity is akin to Mattern’s idea of representational force. By arguing that the NC is a social democratic party it would be in character with those ideals to take up the agenda of political, social and economic change as their own, not as the ideas of the Maoists. The support for these issues and the way in which it was done by the younger cadres of the NC and UML put pressure on the top leadership of these parties to adopt what was perceived to be Maoist ideas and political agenda. Senior leader of the NC, Ram S. Mahat acknowledged this pressure and related confidingly:

I will tell you, even Mr. Koirala was overwhelmed by the pressure even from his cadres, young cadres.427

426 Interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010.
That this was not a silent internal debate was clear in that the pressure coming from within the parties on the top leadership was also recognized by leaders of civil society:

There was a big pressure in interim parliament also, and also inside the NC they wanted to retain on the constitutional monarchy, but some others like the progressive forces in the NC they want to have the republic, and the younger cadres also.\textsuperscript{428}

It could be questioned whether persons like Gagan Thapa and Narachari Achaya truly did change their interests and opinions on the issues. It might be argued that the narratives are retrospectively altered to be in line with the winning side after the CA elections. However, statement and actions from the time of the debates and demonstrations show that these views were adopted and voiced before the success of the Second Jana Andolan and long before elections were held and at great personal risk.

Respondents who openly argued against their party line were criticised and lost privileged positions. Respondents who claimed to have argued for the demands put forward by the Maoists also took part in the demonstrations against curfews with the risk being on the receiving end of violent response. Some were arrested and voiced their opinions openly in court without the support of their party’s leadership. At that time expressing these ideas was not a good way to build political career credit within the party. It seems reasonable to argue that these people were indeed persuaded by the contents of the frame and took it as their own (see Figure 8.2).

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{persuasion_effect_of_the_peace_frame.png}
\caption{Persuasion effect of the peace frame}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{428} Interview with Malla K. Sundar, civil society leader and member of the movement Citizens for Democracy and Peace, Kathmandu, September, 28 2010.
Even though parts of the rank and file and junior leaders seem to have been genuinely persuaded by the peace frame and causal narrative of the Maoist, the majority of the party cadres were not persuaded. They struggled to find acceptable alternative options for action within the peace frame. Perceived external resonance is connected to the space for manoeuvrability in terms of restrictions, and in contrast to the external resonance of the terrorism frame, the peace frame was in a context of significant response from the general public.

External resonance and the peace frame

The Maoist peace frame linked the issues of democracy and peace to the implementation of a republic and a new constitution through elections to a Constituent Assembly. This peace frame generated considerable external resonance, at least in the politically active capital of Kathmandu. In the spring of 2006, the 19 days of demonstrations in April, known as the Second Jana Andolan, drew hundreds of thousands of people to the streets chanting slogans calling for a Constituent Assembly election and a republic. However, and as stated before, actual external resonance is not a necessary condition for the frame to have an effect. Perceived resonance is sufficient to influence perceived manoeuvrability for action. Having said this, the magnitude of the demonstrations in Kathmandu speaks for an actual external resonance in terms of the Maoist peace frame. This section will look at how the SPA and the Maoist perceived resonance of the peace frame and how this in turn influenced their perceived range of manoeuvrability.

The main parliamentary parties experienced an ideological split in terms of the older and younger generation of cadres. They were in a situation where the party leaderships were pressured on how to identify themselves and also how to act. In addition to this internal pressure there was a perception within the SPA of an external pressure coming from the wider population in general and civil society in particular. Dr. Narayan Bahadur Khadka of the NC stated:

> Then they come out and they bring up: oh this coalition is not on time and oh the peace is being jeopardized, oh the peace process must go on. Sometimes they pick up these issues to warn us: you politicians are lagging behind. But then on certain other issues they were exposed on their real political intention, their political background and you know of late much of them seemed to have favoured the Maoist agenda.\(^{429}\)

Narayan Bahadur Khadka echoed comments of the senior leaders of the main parties in the SPA with his perception that civil society pushed for the

---

\(^{429}\) Interview with Narayan Bahadur Kadhka, NC, Central Working Committee Member, Kathmandu, October 21, 2010.
peace process to continue and that the political inclination of the civil society leaned towards the Maoist agenda. This leftist inclination also drew the attention of other observers and a senior leader of the NC related a conversation with representatives of Western states\textsuperscript{430} who had asked him why the whole country had become leftist.\textsuperscript{431} Central Working Committee member Ram S. Mahat also elaborated on what he meant by radicalization of the civil society:

RSM: Well, civil society, by and large we have good relations with civil society they are for democracy and when we were fighting against the autocratic regime and spearheading the movement they supported us they fought with us, so we in fact we welcomed them, but they were going a bit too far, you know, favouring Maoist to come and all that, even accepting some of the Maoist agenda, so civil society went to some extremes, but although we started the movement so civil society supported us. So we said, ok, we are happy with that, but with respect to Maoist they went a little too far, more than we expected them to go, too much radicalisation in civil society.

EB: Could you make some examples of this radicalisation?

RSM: Radicalisation, like the asking for CA election without talking of arms, without resolving the arms issue, how could you demand immediate holding of CA election that was my argument, even in those days, we had not signed any agreements with the Maoist, even before the peace process started, lots of discussion should have taken place, they would demand, ask for CA election without any precondition. I said CA election is fine, I will accept CA election even in favour of republic, but what about the Maoist violence, what about their arms, what about their armed outfits? That must stop, they must stop violence, give up arms and be ready for multi-party plural politics before holding CA election, that used to be my point of view but civil society used to go all overboard.\textsuperscript{432}

The general perception of the political inclination of civil society in Nepal in 2006-2008 seems to have been that it was more leftist in orientation and openly voicing the demands of the Maoists. This was also the perception of other parties outside the SPA coalition. Surya Bahadur Thapa, founder of the RPP and five times Prime Minister, of which the latest time in office was 2003-2004 under the king’s government recalled:

Maoist made such a ruckus the other parties were lost, so in that period this civil society also was inclined to Maoist, journalists also. In that period eve-

\textsuperscript{430} The respondent did not specify which ones and I did not follow this up.
\textsuperscript{431} Interview with Arjun KC, (NC), Joint General Secretary of Central Working Committee, Spokesperson of Central Working Committee, Kathmandu, December 14, 2008.
\textsuperscript{432} Interview with Ram S. Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee, Minister of Finance in 2001, Kathmandu, October 15, 2010.
ryone was with their fanfare, slogans and they begin to think this is a reality.433

The Maoists acknowledged this tendency in civil society and from their point of view this support for their issues from civil society was seen to play a role in making the SPA adopt the Maoist agenda:

So in fact it was this Second Jana Andolan, it was the civil society who spread the movement in the urban areas, in the country-side we were waging war so we could not come openly, so the civil society people played a very positive role and in fact they also played a positive role in drawing the parliamentary forces towards us.434

Baburam Bhattarai points out the positive role that civil society played in “drawing the parliamentary forces toward us.” Other Maoist respondents also pointed out the role of civil society in influencing the peace process:

Well, that gave us bargaining power, let us put it this way, people you know read the slogans of the Maoist because in fact it was their polices. For example we are for the autonomy on the basis on ethnicity, the people demanded this, not only that it was the janjatis who wanted change, who want to go, to move forward, these were the people who read the slogans that the Maoist party had brought.435

In this comment Suresh Ale Magar, mentions increased bargaining power as a result of the adoption of the Maoist slogans by civil society. He also seems to find this natural in that the Maoist slogans were the slogans of the people. This fits well with the Maoist party’s self-perception. However, the SPA did have an alternative frame consisting of the king as the problem and the solution was to re-establish democracy by reinstating parliament. This frame was slowly disappearing during 2006 as the SPA began to adopt the Maoist peace frame. From the interviews it can be seen that the SPA experienced pressure to adopt the Maoist agenda both from the member parties and from civil society due to a perceived internal and external resonance of the Maoist peace frame. In addition to the perceived resonance, another explanation was given by respondents for the original frame by the SPA failing to take hold.

434 Interview with Baburam Bhattarai, CPN (Maoist), Standing Committee Member and Vice Chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Leader of the Maoist talk team in the 2001 negotiations as well as the peace negotiations in 2005 and 2006, Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present, Kathmandu, October 23, 2010
435 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar, (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, November 10, 2010.
This was presented as having to do with the perception of the credibility of the leaders within the SPA.

**Discrediting democracy: lack of credibility of the SPA**

Within the frame analysis field the aspect of the audience and the issue of resonance is central in determining the success or failure of a proposed frame. In the case of the parliamentary parties it almost seemed as if they were “frameless”. They did not have a well-defined political program of the political changes they wanted to implement and, respondents repeatedly refer to the status-quo like character of their policies or to a lack of vision. The platform of the SPA vis-à-vis the Maoist had arguably centred around democracy, where even there the Maoist had presented an alternative to that of the parliamentary parties. The SPA did not challenge this alternative. Why? The democratic aspect would appear to be the weak political point of the Maoist. Ideologically they had moved from a proletarian revolution and the implementation of a one-party state to an abstract concept of ‘people’s republic’. And as pointed out by respondents from both sides of the conflict, the slogans of civil society were twofold: peace and democracy.

From a discursive point of view there seemed to be advantage to be gained with a frame centred around democracy. Though presented as the democratic force, the SPA was relatively silent on the issue of democracy when faced with a competing Maoist view. This was despite the fact that the parliamentary parties were in a position where they could claim that they had not initiated the conflict and never broken off negotiations. Furthermore, they had a long history of fighting for democracy in Nepal and they had been the direct victims of the king’s direct rule. Democracy was their domain and they identified themselves as the democratic force, but they failed to present a frame that resonated with the public and their frame was overshadowed by the Maoist’s peace frame.

In order to understand this failure, it is necessary to look at the audience’s perception and, perhaps more importantly, what the leaders of the parliamentary parties believed that the public perceived. In an interview with a leader of civil society the perception of the parliamentary parties in relation to democracy was introduced as a topic of discussion:

EB: During this time the political parties said that they were the democratic force in Nepal, how did the people react to this, did they see them as the democratic force?

BPS: I think this has already been answered by the votes they got (laughs). Isn’t it?

EB: (laughs) Clever answer, ok, let me rephrase the question: How come you think they were not seen as democratic?
BPS: It is because democracy is in their mouths not in their hearts and mind.
EB: How do you see this?
BPS: It has been proved from the previous of their reign.
EB: So failure to provide?
BPS: Yeah.
EB: Corruption?
BPS: Not only corruption, the idea was also corrupted. I mean, they were not in favour of democracy even though they were speaking for democracy if they had such kinds of ideas you know they had have a pretty long time, they could have done something for the people.436

Here the respondent makes a connection between democracy and the provision of political goods for the people. Other respondents pointed out the failure of the parliamentary parties to deliver in the past. This sometimes came up outside the scope of the question as posed. An example of this arose in the interview below with retired General Sadip Bahadur Shah:

EB: I see, and this was also the reason given by the political parties to form the alliance with the Maoist, that this was against the autocracy of the king?
SBS: Yes, I would say so. But then I would also like to add another point, since 1990 and 2005. The political parties actually had been given the opportunity for almost 15-16 years to fulfil the aspirations of the people, they did not do so either. I am not of the saying that I blame them, no, they had the opportunity, but there was lot of mis-governance. And because of that mis-governance there were vulnerabilities and lapses, which the Maoist exploited. It is not the king’s lapses and vulnerabilities that he committed which the Maoist were ready to exploit, it was the democratic parties that misbehaved.437

Another leader of civil society, Malla K. Sundar raises similar points of failure to deliver political goods to the people as the reason for lack of support, both during the Second Jana Andolan and the subsequent Constituent Assembly Elections:

It is just because, in my perception, the major true causes, one is that the role played by the parties when they were in the state power I think their not satisfactory, their delivery was not satisfactory, people were very dissatisfied with the old seven party leaders so people were not in the mood to support them, I think they are just watching what they would do.438

436 Interview with Bishnu Pukar Shrestha, Civil society leader, Kathmandu, September 27, 2010.
437 Interview with retired general Sadip Bahadur Shah, Retired General (then the Royal Nepalese Army) Kathmandu, September 26, 2010.
Respondents from civil society and outside the political sphere speak of dissatisfaction with the leaders of the parliamentary parties and their lack of commitment to democracy. This centres around a key component in Benford and Snow’s analytical framework on resonance, namely credibility. If the frame articulator is perceived to be credible this increases the chance of resonance of the frame that the actor is trying to communicate. In the case of Nepal the credibility of the leaders of the SPA and the performance of the parties in government during the 1990s appear to be in question, which would indicate a reduced chance of resonance. Even though these statements and reflections speak for a rather unified view, this kind of critique may not be surprising coming from those areas of society that hold a critical light towards the democratic process and political life. That said, the view that the political parties had not performed according to what was expected of them, was voiced by party leaders themselves. Senior leader and presently the General Secretary of the CPN-UML, Jhala Nath Khanal stated:

Actually, we used all these things, because at that time, the leadership of the political parties had not worked properly, they had not saved the peoples’ rights, that had not worked in that period according to the constitution in a democratic way.

The perception, by the people, of the parties’ poor performance, as described by leaders in civil society and by the representatives of the political parties effected the SPA’s credibility as a frame articulator. Their failure to act in a ‘democratic way’ and to deliver, caused the people to question their credibility at this time. After their failure to implement democracy and provide political goods during the 1990s and the their failure to gain the support of the people during the protests against the king’s takeover on February 1st, 2005, the political parties were in a difficult position vis-à-vis the people of Nepal.

The continuous splits within the parties, such as NC split in to NC and Nepali Congress Democratic (NCD) headed by Sher Bahadur Deuba and the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) into RPP and RJP (Rastriya Janashakti Pary) headed by Kamal Thapa, and the lack of support for sitting governments lead to a perception that the parties were distracted by infighting and personal prestige. This view was noticeable in the media. An editorial in the Kathmandu Post commented on the splits saying that “when leaders begin forming political parties on the basis of personal egos rather than those

---

439 Interview with Ishwar Pokharel (CPN-UML), General Secretary and Central Committee member, Kathmandu, November 28, 2008.
441 Critique against the government were common, regardless if the critique came from a party that had representation in government or not.
based on political ideology, the final result may not be all that helpful to the nation”.442

Linked to the poor governance was also the notion that the political parties were corrupt and motivated by personal gain. This was most clearly seen in the Second Jana Andolan in April 2006. The political parties attempts to gain the support of the people and mobilise them in the streets failed and during the interviews, civil society leaders reflected upon this failure:

Political parties were very unpopular due to corruption. No one came to their protest program, people were not in their support. I and some friends took the initiative to get the civil society out in the street in support of the political parties. They had to admit that they had made mistakes and that they would not repeat them, only then would the people follow. Had invited the senior leaders of the political parties to hear what the people had to say.443

Regardless if this was a widespread view or only one held by the people I interviewed, this perception of the political parties as corrupt, ineffective and self-serving was acknowledged by respondents from the parliamentary parties as well. One respondent stated simply that: “People’s view of the political parties were not good.”444 As such they were fighting to regain their status as the democratic force of Nepal, to be a credible option to both the monarchy and the Maoists.

As seen from in-group disputes and smear campaigns during 2005 the parties were quick to point the finger at one another, emphasising the image of a weak and corrupt leadership. This kind of attack was seen in the process of forming the SPA. The NWPP, which in the beginning stood outside the Seven Party Alliance because it blamed the NCD and CPN-UML for the current political crisis, in March 2005, formally said that they were debating whether or not to join the alliance. One condition for them to join was that the NCD and CPN-UML offered an official apology for their ‘betrayal’ along with full commitment to the movement.445 The SPA, upon its formation, acknowledged this inter-party blame placing and the negative impact it had on the public opinion: “we are not digging out who made the mistakes but we have a lot to do to convince the people that political leaders have learned lessons from the past”.446 In the words of a civil society leader, the problem was not the issues of democracy or the demand for a restoration of parliament per se, but ability of the political parties to be credible political actors:

443 Interview with Shyam Shrestha, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
444 Interview with Prakash Sharan Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee, former Minister of Finance, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.
446 “Mistakes will not be repeated: Leaders,” Kathmandu Post May 12, 2005, 2.
It was clearly manifested that people did not support the king, because this was the assumption since political parties could not rally the people. But the people were in favour of democracy just did not like the political parties conduct.\textsuperscript{447}

As a direct consequence of this perception, the leaders had to redeem themselves, at least verbally, in order for the people to follow them in the 19-day movement in April, 2006. One of these gestures of atonement was at a mass meeting in Baneswhor, outside the Ring Road in Kathmandu. Malla K. Sundar, a leader in civil society recalls:

EB: So you mentioned, that the people were being passive towards the political parties because of their failure in the past to implement polices. Could you tell me about the meeting at Bhaneswor? Because the political parties were invited, no?

MKS: The political parties were invited, but they were just listeners, just audience and speakers were all from the civil society, even for the political parties they were not arranged the seat on the dais, they had to sit on the audience side. This was a huge gathering, since after a long time of the movement by the seven parties, that was the biggest mass gathering which was organised by the civil society, so that shows that how the police people had faith in the civil societies.

EB: What was the purpose of this meeting?

MKS: It was actually, to motivate the people, to correct the political parties what they had done and the civil society openly requested the political leaders to confess in front of the people that they had made the mistake and that they would not do it again.\textsuperscript{448}

The present leader of CPN-UML, Jhala Nath Khanal, speaks about this meeting as well, recognising that the motivation of this arrangement came from the people’s negative perception of the political leaders. He presents the meeting at Baneshwor as an opportunity to gain support from civil society:

They [the governments in the past] had not done [provided for the people] and many political leaders became corrupt so there was very deep indignation among the people against this type of political leaders, that is why we other political leaders used this opportunity, using this civil society and civil society actually during this period played a very good role, very good role.\textsuperscript{449}

\textsuperscript{447} Interview with Shyam Shreshta, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
\textsuperscript{448} Interview with Malla K. Sundar, civil society leader, Kathmandu, September 28, 2010.
\textsuperscript{449} Interview with Jhala Nath Khanal, Chairman of the CPN-UML between 2008-present. Prime Minister of Nepal 6th of February-29th of August 2011, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.
Mr. Gagan Thapa of the NC also recalls the meeting at Baneshwor and he also confirms the toned down role of the parliamentary parties:

They invited all seven leaders in Baneshwor, that was a program were the leaders did not speak, they were there as listeners as an audience, I was in detention, but I later on read the news so that was the time when these civil society leaders publically they asked the leaders, their parties to decide formally to accept these agendas so that was two or three months, so the party leaders were reluctant but they were not very happy with this particular group, but they were not in a position to ignore or deny.\footnote{450 Interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010.}

The parliamentary parties of Nepal were negatively affected by perceptions of corruption and inefficiency tied directly to their character and credibility as frame articulators. This was especially the case when that frame focused on democracy. This people's perception is voiced by leaders of civil society as being real and widespread. The politicians acknowledged this when they agreed to ask civil society and the people at Baneshwor for forgiveness, promising to do better should they regain the peoples’ support.

This negative image of leaders of the political parties partly explains their inability to mobilise the people for their cause of reinstating democracy after the takeover by the king. They were not seen as credible actors as spokespersons for democracy. This view of the parliamentary parties then ties in with the framing attempts of both the Maoists and the SPA. The SPA argued that the solution to the problem, which was defined as the king threatening democracy, was to reinstate parliament. However, a return to the status quo situation of 2002 was not a realistic solution since the people did not perceive that as a desired state of democracy. As Gagan Thapa sums up his view of the people’s perception of the parliamentary parties and why their agenda was not perceived to resonate among the people:

Again two or three reasons: One is the leadership was discredited, there was nothing to offer to the people, it was the same leadership, the same face, nothing to offer, that is that. The other is the political parties till that date, they were just demanding the restoration of political and civil rights so that was nothing new for the people, and people were not particularly attracted by that slogan because they were not feeling that we wanted to this back, they were not that desperate, because for them that does not mean anything. So the agenda was not new, the face was not new, leadership was discredited. Third is that, during that period, the parties were not offering the solution to the war that we are facing, before 2005, before this agreement, before the alliance with the Maoist the parties were just demanding, ok, our movement success assures the restoration of democratic rights, civil liberties but it does not ensure peace. It does not ensure any alternative, it does not ensure any progress, prosperity, whatever, that is why, for the party members it makes sense, that
was ok, because the restoration of political rights and civil liberties means election for them or several other things for them, for people it does not mean anything. I think this is why, three reasons.\textsuperscript{451}

As is pointed out in the statement above and by respondents from civil society, the old democratic procedure was not enough. It had negative connotations in relation to the behaviour of the leadership. This is where the Maoist agenda of a new democracy, a new Nepal becomes relevant. It stands in contrast to the status quo ante, where there had been a failure to provide public goods, corruption and self-serving leaders. When the SPA were not perceived as democrats, but rather as corrupt and inefficient, and not utilising democracy to initiate the changes demanded in 1990, it was all but impossible for them to argue a frame centred around a return to that old democratic system, or themselves as a democratic force.

With regard to external resonance, the Maoist peace frame resonated on both a partial internal level, convincing young cadres within the main parliamentary parties of their ideas. The Maoist peace frame was also perceived to resonate on an external level. It was taken to heart by the civil society, which adopted the Maoist slogans and chanted them in the streets. This perception of the situation is described by both members of civil society and members of the parliamentary parties. Politicians from the parliamentary parties were perceived as 'undemocratic', with their failure to provide political, their ineffectiveness and their corrupt behaviour. These identity traits made it difficult for them to argue a problem representation focused on solving the problem by reverting back to the 'old' democracy. This negative external resonance on behalf of the frame of the SPA also strengthened the external resonance of the Maoist peace frame. In a situation of high, perceived external resonance, what effect did this have on the perceived manoeuvrability in terms of entrapment?

Entrapment within the peace frame—isolating alternatives

From the narratives it can be established that ownership of the peace frame was perceived to be Maoist even though the SPA later on adopted it and argued that it was in line with their identity and original issues. It was the Maoist causal narrative, infused with their demands that constructed the dominant frame. All actors had to relate to this frame that had been picked up in the slogans of civil society. Ownership of a frame does not mean that the frame cannot have a restricting effect on the actor who constructed it.

\textsuperscript{451} Interview with Gagan Thapa, Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010, Kathmandu, October 8, 2010.
This was seen with the terrorism frame and the entrapping effect it had on the government. In contrast to the terrorism frame, the peace frame appeared to resonate to a much more significant degree on the external level and there was more pressure from civil society for the peace frame to be followed, i.e. take actions that were in accordance with the frame.

The first entrapping effect of the peace frame targeted both parties and presents a case of entrapment for the SPA and self-entrapment for the Maoists. The entrapment concerned the continuation of the peace process. Achieving peace had been the overarching purpose for the forging of the alliance. The specific way that peace should come about had been integrated into the peace frame and communicated to the public. After the Twelve-point agreement, several respondents testify that the public pressure to continue the alliance between the SPA and the Maoists and to sign the peace agreement was significant. As stated by senior leader of the UML Pradeep Gyawali in regards to what made the peace agreement possible in Nepal:

Second factor that enabled the Comprehensive Peace Agreement: Pressing demands from the people, give immense pressure to the parties not to escape from the peace process.\textsuperscript{452}

The peace frame had firmly linked the possibilities of peace to the holding of talks and signing of a peace agreement to the perceived pressure from the public on both parties to stay within the peace process. In accordance with the Maoist line, the peace frame presented the conflict as a political problem and that peace could only be brought about through negotiations with a continued alliance between the SPA and the Maoist. As stated by one facilitator of the peace process:

People wanted peace, so that was the main agenda of the people. All the political parties had to address these aspirations of the people. Peace was the first agenda. For peace to be necessary you had to have talks. And thus it was necessary to struggle against the king. That was the logic to the people.\textsuperscript{453}

This repeats the logic of the Maoist peace frame in that it connects the prospect for peace to the agitation against the king. In itself struggle against the king might not have been a necessary ingredient for the parliamentary parties and the Maoists to end the conflict through negotiations but in the peace frame, as constructed, it was seen as a causal imperative.

\textsuperscript{452} Interview with Pradeep Gyawali CPN (UML), Central Committee Member also member of the government negotiation team during the 2006 peace negotiations. Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.

\textsuperscript{453} Interview with Prakash, facilitator, Kathmandu, December 8, 2008.
The Maoists also acknowledge the pressure exerted by the public but, in line with purporting it to be the party of the people’s will, did not view themselves pressured by that will. Here, there is a significant difference from the effects of the terrorism frame when the government felt entrapped by their own frame. In the case of the Maoist and the peace frame this seems not to have been a perceived problem. As one Maoist representative argues with regard to pressures and demands from civil society:

No, in fact people had been warning us not to do something against the people or in favour of the autocratic monarch. People wanted peace but that did not mean they pressured us to sign any agreement. In the case of the terrorism frame the government ended up in a situation of self-entrapment when their interest in relation to a solution changed. This is not to say that their desires were altered, it can still be argued that the desire and will of the government was that of an overarching interest to end the conflict. The way in which they wanted to end it changed from deployment of the army to a negotiated solution and in that situation the previous terrorism frame became a restricting factor. It limited what they perceived themselves able to do or advocate, leading to the self-entrapment effect recounted in Chapter 6.

In the case of the peace frame the Maoists might simply be denying that they felt any pressure to conform to the frame. However, considering their consistency in policy, especially since the adoption of multi-party democracy in 2003, there is nothing to suggest that they, like the government after 2001, had changed their policy on how to achieve their goal and what this entailed. Their frame had perceptibly resonated among the public. Junior cadres within the SPA were advocating for their slogans and the top leadership were taking on board the causal logic of the necessity of a constituent assembly. There seemed to be no desire from within the Maoist party to go back to war or escape the peace process. It was, by all accounts, taking them in the direction that they wanted to go.

Even if the idea was not entertained by the SPA, escaping from the peace process was not perceived as a viable option by the parties, nor was solving the conflict in a way other than negotiations. In contrast to the Maoist respondents the representatives of the SPA pointed this out in interviews. When compared with the terrorism frame, the peace frame, in giving negotiations as the solution, effectively isolated opinions that advocated for alternative solutions to the conflict, as such solutions did not fit within the peace frame and its representation of the problem. Consequently, alternative solutions that did not share the problem as represented by the peace frame were seen as unacceptable courses of action. A senior leader of the UML narrated

[454 Interview with Suresh Ale Magar (CPN-Maoist), Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections, Kathmandu, December 3, 2008.]
that options for a different solution to the Maoist conflict were present at the time, but were never vocalized. The narrative also clearly identifies the peace discourse as dominant with the people.

Some leaders of the NC in the position of the extreme right, they time and again argued for the decisive war but they were isolated. Because people, dearly wanted sustainable peace, people were very worried about continued conflict and violence so the demand of this the voice for peace was so strong that nobody clearly and publically adhered the position of the war, but there were some, this type of elements, this type of arguments that the Maoist are not trustworthy and their intention is not good, sooner or later they will take over the state power so we must ready to fight. Yet, you must have noticed that the rank and file of the NC especially they younger generation was very radical and they clearly stand for the end of monarchy and they clearly stand for the CA election so their voice were not decisive, so they were in the corner still had their voices but nobody hear.\textsuperscript{455}

Limiting certain causes of actions, or making them less likely, is a feature of the effect of a frame. Akin to discourse analysis framework, the way that an issue is defined also sets the perception parameters for how this issue can be dealt with. In this instance it meant that reverting back to a military solution was not an option due to the changed frame regarding the conflict from the SPA perspective. However, even when keeping to discursively viable solutions, such as following the road map for peace, both pressure and limitations were placed on the parties as to what they could and could not do.

Resonance and republic—entrapment of the SPA

In contrast to the Maoists there were indications in interviews that the main parties of the SPA were not entirely happy with the course of the peace process. There was a sense of regret and of being overlooked when the respondents recalled the process. Senior leader, Ram S. Mahat of the NC voiced this perception of the situation at the time:

Because he [fellow party member] was very much close to the Maoist at the time and I was holding a different view, when I suggested something contrary to what they were intending, he would immediately react: this would endanger the peace process. The process will stop if we do this and of course everybody wanted peace. Because the anti-feeling to the monarchy was so strong, anti-Gyanendra feeling was so intense so any such argument, you know, did not have a place.\textsuperscript{456}

\textsuperscript{455} Interview with Pradeep Gyawali CPN (UML), Central Committee Member also member of the government negotiation team during the 2006 peace negotiations. Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.

\textsuperscript{456} Interview with Ram S. Mahat (NC), Central Working Committee, Minister of Finance in 2001, Kathmandu, October 15, 2010.
Here Ram S. Mahat is commenting on the perceived external resonance as well and especially the anti-monarchical sentiments that were strong with the public. He never mentions his own view on the matter, only that such an argument did not have a place in the context. The definition of democracy that was entailed in the peace frame, although not defining many aspects, such as type of democratic system and the role and meaning of pluralism, was clear on the connection between democracy and monarchy. C.P Gajurel from the Maoist gives his interpretation of the understanding between signatories of the Twelve point agreement:

Yeah, it was not clearly manifested in the 12-point there is no mention of monarchy, federalism etc but there was clear indication when we signed the 12-point agreement there were indication that unless and until the monarchy will be overthrown there will be no real democracy so republicanism is related to that democracy that was clear, right at that moment also.457

Regarding the monarchy, the effects of the peace frame were clearly perceived as restricting the space for discussion or alternative views. Several of the respondents testified as to how republicanism was pushed by the public. They compare it to the absence of this demand during the First Jana Andolan in 1990. Bimalendra Nidhi, General Secretary from the then NCD said:

In 1990, during the peace movement, was not for the abolition of the monarchy, but to bring back the monarch within the constitution. At that time if anybody spoke about the abolition of the monarchy, they were branded as extremist and anti-democracy, not helping the peoples cause. But now in this movement (Jana Andolan II) if anyone spoke a single word in favour of the monarchy they would be branded anti-peace. This is there.458

Bimalendra Nidhi confirms the perception that the prospect of peace and the need for a republic were connected as presented in the Maoist peace frame. Being for republic meant being for peace, being pro-monarchy was equal to being against peace. That same perception with regard to the relationship between republic and peace and monarchy and continued conflict was mentioned by senior leader Jhala Nath Khanal of the CPN-UML:

Actually, there was fear to such people perhaps because the general mass was very aggressive at that time, very aggressive if anyone wants to say some kind of very soft word towards the administration or monarchy, there could

457 Interview with C.P Gajurel, CPN (Maoist), politburo member, General Secretariat Member, head of international department, Kathmandu, October 22, 2010.
458 Interview with Bimalendra Nidhi (NC/NCD), Party General Secretary of the NCD and later when the NCD and the NC merged again he was Party General Secretary of the NC until 2009, Kathmandu, November 13, 2008.
be punishment from masses, in that way masses were very aggressive. It was a little bit difficult for such people to express their views also.\textsuperscript{459}

In 16 years there had been a clear shift in sentiments about the monarchy. In 2006 speaking for the monarchy was outside the parameters of the established peace frame and was perceived by the SPA to label you as anti-peace. This pressure was felt by the conservative parties within the SPA and they complied, albeit reluctantly, to the Maoist demand for republic. This was recognised by both parties and national facilitators to the peace process.\textsuperscript{460}

The Maoist respondents were aware of the public pressure on the SPA, and said that without that pressure the more conservative parties, like the NC, would never have agreed to republic. The spokesperson for the Maoist and the leader of all three Maoist negotiation teams, Krishna Bahadur Mahara explained:

> The mass movement, the 19 day movement, mass movement in the street the public, the people give only the slogan on the republic, but the leaders, GPK from NC and other leaders they have never give the slogan of the republican, so this is our party how gave the slogan firstly, initially and via the pressure of the mass it ultimately comes in the decision.\textsuperscript{461}

Mahara emphasises that pressure from the mass movement was instrumental in changing the mind of the leaders of the SPA. He points out that his party was the first to call for republic, and integrate it into the party’s peace frame. Much of the anti-monarchical sentiments were a result of an unprecedented attack on King Gyanendra and the royal family by a growing part of the political parties and civil society. For a while the anti-monarchy sentiments were limited to king Gyanendra himself and a distinction was made between his person and the monarchical system as a whole. This distinction was gradually faded and the Maoists linked the ending of monarchy to the possibility of peace and republicanism became the only politically viable opinion.

All the parties finally agreed to this development with the UML being the first to join the Maoist on this issue. Yet even the left wing party begun speaking about the need for a ceremonial monarch and not outright republicanism.\textsuperscript{462}

Prior to the Second Jana Andolan, but only a few month before the alliance with the Maoist through the 12-point agreement became official, the

\textsuperscript{459} Interview with Jhala Nath Khanal, Chairman of the CPN-UML between 2008-present. Prime Minister of Nepal 6th of February-29th of August 2011, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.

\textsuperscript{460} Interview with Daman Nath Dhungana, facilitator in the peace process, Kathmandu, November 9, 2008.

\textsuperscript{461} Interview with Krishna Bahadur Mahara (CPN-Maoist), Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party, member of all Maoist negotiation teams and team leader for the 2001 negotiations, Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections Kathmandu, October 11, 2008.

\textsuperscript{462} “People want ceremonial monarch: Gautam,” \textit{Kathmandu Post}, June 20, 2005, 1.
parliamentary parties had taken steps towards a new view on monarchy. On the closing day of the NC’s 11th General Convention in September 2005, the party decided to remove ‘constitutional monarchy’ from its party statutes. The second largest party, the CPN-UML, who had been clearer in its stance for a ceremonial monarch, followed suit and argued that a common goal of the SPA should be a democratic republic. Although Koirala attempted to argue for a solution short of republicanism, this proved unsustainable and he and his party were forced to tow the republican line.

Several respondents narrate that this was not the will of the party, but that their stance changed due to the circumstances, as alternative solutions to republicanism were not politically possible, especially with regard to the upcoming CA elections. Senior leader Ram S. Mahat of the NC speaks of the view of the late party leader G.P Koirala:

And personally Koirala did not want the monarchy to go like that, he was in favour of ceremonial monarch, this king was unpopular, his son also was unpopular. Even toyed with the idea of baby king and all this, but things were going out of his hand.

The Maoist respondents acknowledge that there was such a middle road debate:

So middle road [ceremonial monarch, baby king], there is no possibility of middle road. People tried to hand out middle road to negotiate but actually the middle road was practically not possible.

What C.P Gajurel describes as “practically not possible” relates to the perceived external resonance described above and the sense that such arguments could not be voiced for fear of being branded as anti-peace.

The leaders of the parliamentary parties also expressed their desire for more discussion of the issues of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Yet the experienced pressure was such that important aspects, such as the issue of army integration, were left unattended. These issues did not fit within the propagated peace frame and were given little or no space in the political discourse.

So everybody was clamouring for the CA election as it would solve everything and all that, people were not giving too much thought to resolution, dismantling their armed outfits, so it was overtaken by subsequent develop-

---

463 “Monumental shift,” Kathmandu Post, August 31, 2005, 6, see also “Constitutional monarchy out of NC statue,” Kathmandu Post, September 1, 2005, 1.
466 Interview with C.P Gajurel, CPN (Maoist), politburo member, General Secretariat Member, head of international department, Kathmandu, October 22, 2010.
ments, the issue of the Maoist army was not taken seriously and we went to the election, although there were voices at the time, if you look at the newspapers in those days, people said that, we said that they must demobilise forces before going to elections, but nobody was listening.

EB: True. You say that during this time everything went really fast and everybody was clamouring for elections, when you say everyone…

RSM: Everyone means civil society, foreign donors, press, media even political parties. Without understanding the implications, the potential dangers of Maoist arms and combatants.  

Prakash Sharma Mahat, senior leader of the NC voiced the problem of bringing up this the issue of disarmament in public:

Actually it was a big risk, everybody was, for example UML when we talked to each other, they say this is wrong, they should implement but in the public they also do not want to say: ok if you do not do this then we will not move, they feared that they would be branded as blocking the peace process so nobody wanted to take that. And there was even civil society very much euphoric with Maoist and probably this mainstream parties trying to block this change they probably, they still want to keep the king, and immediately when we insist on those things they will bring this issue, oh they do not want, they to block this process of, especially the election for the CA because they do not want it , they want to keep the king as well so probably they have some plan working with the kings, that kind of, so they did not want to face that. So I think throughout this process there is a lack of firm determination on the part of the parliamentary leadership that this is the right thing to do, I will stand up even if there is some temporary opposition, I will stand up to this, this is right and this is what we wanted to do. Nobody deared to stand, to say that these are the things if we do not implement it will have far reaching consequences later, nobody did that…[…]…Because there is so much pressure on the NC that ok: if you do not do, or you probably do not want election so this is the kind of problem that was created so we focus only on election.

Some respondents mention former president of the NC, Mr. Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, as an example of one who openly opposed the peace frame. A respondent did not agree with Mr. Bhattarai’s opinions but he is nonetheless spoken of as a brave individual:

Forget even the general people, can just mention one guy, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai who was the party president, I mean former party president of the NC, former PM, when KPB stood for this, no I am for this constitutional monarchy and democracy, right, he was blamed in all the media and I was asked one question time in one television channel and I replied to the interviewer: though you and myself, KPB has all the right as an individual to

---

468 Interview with Prakash Sherma Mahat, (NC), Central Working Committee member and Member Secretary in the Deuba Comission, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.
say it. Because we have been saying it for the last 30-40 years so what’s wrong if Bhattarai still believe in this, that is how we understand democracy, but people even, even people like Bhattarai when he was not left, so how could one common individual stand and say that: no, I am for democracy, I am for peace, I am for prosperity but I do not buy this idea of republic, I do not buy this idea of federalism, I do not buy this idea of Maoist and parties coming together. You would easily be blamed as this regressive, reactionary, pro-palace whatever, so that is why nobody had that courage at the time. Only people like Bhattarai, even in those very difficult times, he had that courage, because I mean, it comes from your inside, he had that moral courage to stand, when we were all advocating this getting more and more people’s support for this idea, he was the only one, that is why I have still very high regards for him, but there were very few.\textsuperscript{469}

Gagan Thapa gives an example of the alternative logic that some individuals tried to communicate. Bhattarai’s position was that he was for peace, democracy and prosperity but also for the monarchy. In the face of the Maoist peace frame, ideas about democracy and peace being compatible with constitutional monarchy were seen as unacceptable. Such ideas fell outside the frame and individuals voicing those ideas were questioned on their commitment to the fundamentals of the frame or their causal narrative. The idea that peace can come in a solution that preserves the monarchy was regarded as irrational and illogical. The CA elections were similarly tied to the peace frame, and a political leader in Nepal at that time could not argue against those issues without being labelled anti-peace (see. Fig.8.3).
Strategy in face of perceived external resonance

The parliamentary parties perceived themselves to be entrapped by the peace frame and that this perception caused them to concede to Maoist demands although they did not necessarily wish to. Speaking about the discussions throughout the peace process, Ram S. Mahat from Nepali Congress commented on the direction and identity of the party:

But there is a strong section within the party which feels that NC has lost direction because we gave up our traditional values, we gave up our traditional believes, like B.P Koirala, even in the worst days when he was imprisoned for so many years, even during those days he still believed in the institution of monarchy in Nepal. In a country of diversity, ethnically and all that, monarchy could serve as a unifying force, a symbol of national unity. Without monarchy our nationalism could be in danger, this is what B.P Koirala said and he thought now we give up monarchy just like that in a sentiment we are considering what B.P Koirala said, without considering what the dangers might be. So this feeling is there.470

This feeling of lost direction and identity was not only an internal perception in the NC. Former Home Minister and leader of the RPP, which was outside the SPA, Kamal Thapa, reflected on the SPA’s situation and gave his view of their reasoning:

But it was false. I mean they [the parliamentary parties] had that perception [that they could not argue against the Maoist] but it was not the case, it was a false impression that they had. They could have rejected the CA or new constitution. Maoist had said that they will respect the will of the people. Even republic was not an original demand of the Maoist. Political parties sacrificed this in order to defeat the Maoist they thought they had to be one step ahead, more revolutionary than the Maoist. They needed to sacrifice their identity. This means that they were finished and this is what happened [he is referring to the lost CA election]. People saw that in the name of competition they sacrificed their identity and their ideology. It was not a question of power. Of course there was fear but the people was also not happy. The political parties joined the republican bandwagon just before the election. They had a crisis of identity…[…]… The political parties allied with the Maoist without an alternative vision. To bring them into the mainstream is in itself amiable and praise worthy, but to do this without a vision or just accepting their position is not good.471

The view of identity-less political parties was also put forward in the media, where it was argued that the lack of an identity and a clear political project

471 Interview with Kamal Thapa, (RPP), Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu November 6, 2008.
from the parliamentary parties that had attracted young people to the slogans and demands of the Maoist.\textsuperscript{472} Even though in a cooperative spirit, the Maoist stressed the need for the parties to develop a political program, indicating that such a program was lacking.\textsuperscript{473} Regarding the unilateral ceasefire declared by the Maoists, Prachanda, in an interview in September 2005 two months before the Twelve Point Agreement, stated that the main reasons were: “to inspire the seven political parties to come in cooperation by clarifying their immediate slogan, to reinforce the movement of civil society, to increase political intervention upon the old state and to consolidate party’s relation with the broad masses by honouring their sentiment and aspiration etc.”\textsuperscript{474}

Kamal Thapa, similarly to Ram S. Mahat, comments on those issues that the parties within SPA did not press and how this was perceived to be contrary to their ideology (especially in the case of the NC). He talks about the decision to go along with Maoist ideas as a strategy of the SPA. When asked about of the political parties’ reasoning in their dealings with the Maoist, respondents had different views. Several of the respondents emphasise the strategic character of both the Maoists and the political parties’ reasoning and this is seen as the explanatory factor for dealing with issues brought up in the actual negotiations. There were issues, such as army integration, that were deferred to be dealt with at a later time. Several respondents describe a fear of being branded as anti-peace if they had been perceived as stalling the peace process. There are views that issues were purposefully delayed for strategic reasons. One respondent gives the following example:

We [the SPA] were amazed to see that they [the Maoist] were ready to hand over weapons before the CA. Koirala thought that this issue should be made in the CA where he thought that he would have majority.\textsuperscript{475}

The quote is the perception of a leader of civil society but with regard to the CA elections, several respondents from the SPA confirmed that the two main parliamentary parties, the NC and the UML both believed that they would win the CA elections:

That is also…we probably thought that we would win the election and we would give this situation…because in fact I was part of the cabinet at that time, I was finance minister in the joint government also. This coalition gov-


\textsuperscript{473} Interview with Pushpa Kamal Dahal a.k.a Prachanda, CPN (Maoist), Founder and chairman of the party, elected Prime Minister and served between 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009, Kathmandu, October 20, 2010.

\textsuperscript{474} “Interview with Comrade Prachanda”, in Janadesh (People’s March: voice of the Indian Revolution) vol.6 no.10, October (2005): 1.

\textsuperscript{475} Interview with Shyam Shrestha, civil society leader, Kathmandu, November 17, 2008.
ernment was becoming too much because the Maoist were putting obstacles and hurdles in every decision whenever we wanted to have any transparent deal with respect to some major projects, there was obstruction, when military commanders were in for promotion they would put obstruction, you know. We thought that once we have election, we could get rid of these people (laughs)…[…]… We could have our own government and take the decisions.476

Ram S. Mahat related that NC Party President, G.P Koirala had told him that it was best to hold the elections because the Maoist would not win many seats.477 During the interview he also elaborated on the reasoning of the NC vis-à-vis their political competition for the CA elections:

Probably one thinking within one section of NC was how much they do, Maoist, they may not get so many seats, so by delaying, probably they will increase few seats so what is the problem. And some quarters that was feeling that we have real fight with UML so I mean in that course maybe a bit more seats, Maoist will not have much, so we were pretty aware that the fear factor is the major factor within peoples’ minds.478

The notion that the CPN-UML was the greatest competitor for the NC was also the perception within the UML. Then General Secretary of the UML, Madhav Kumar Nepal said with regard to the election strategy:

It was the Nepali Congress, my opinion is that they wanted to see the Maoist to be strong because they were afraid of our strength, the UML. So they thought that the UML is the real threat, Maoist is nothing, because Maoist is an armed, terrorist group and they can show to the world, look, this is a terrorist outfit with the help of force they can be tackled but the UML being a moderate political party, left party it cannot be handled by the use of force so let the Maoist strength be increased so there will be a division of the votes. UML votes will be taken away by the Maoist. That thing actually has helped the Maoist on the one hand and has actually totally, you can say, put the Nepali Congress into this pitiful situation.479

Here Madhav Kumar Nepal is connecting to the old constructed perception of the Maoists as terrorists and this perception would weaken their position in the elections, something that the NC believed they could utilise in order to discredit the CPN (Maoist). Although this is a statement from outside the NC

and it cannot be confirmed to have been a party strategy, it is nevertheless interesting to see that Nepal regards this as a possibility.

Looking at the situation from 2005 and onward from a framing perspective it would be inconceivable to overtly play on both the terrorist identity and the identity of the ‘reformed, multi-party democracy friendly Maoists’ with whom it was legitimate, or even, as we have seen some respondents refer to it, the duty of the government, to negotiate with. When the SPA began to push for negotiations with the Maoists this was an indication that their frame of the conflict and, the Maoists, had changed. It would not be possible for them to argue the need to include the Maoists in elections and at the same time officially refer to them as terrorists. This would have put the SPA in the politically unjustifiable position of allowing a terrorist organisation a place at the negotiation table and in mainstream politics.

Respondents from both main parties testify to the existence of strategic reasoning in the on-going peace process and upcoming CA elections. They argued that the reason the SPA identified with the Maoist agenda was because that agenda was popular with the people so the parliamentary parties wanted to get on the bandwagon before the election, with the strategic view of agreeing to and adopting Maoist demands.\(^{480}\)

An analysis that concludes both a presence of entrapment and strategic reasoning is in itself not contradictory. Although the respondents provide empirical evidence to support that they perceived themselves entrapped within the peace frame, there seems also to have been a strategic element to complying with the demands of the Maoist. This compliance could take the form of deferring important questions based on the assumption that they would win or adopting what appeared to be popular slogans in order to get more votes. In making these strategic choices the actors were operating within a discursive restriction and their choices of strategy were severely limited. They did not perceive there to be any room to speak for a preservation of the monarchy, or to argue for amendments of the constitution. Instead they saw the writing of a new constitution as the only option. They acted according to their constructed interest, but only had limited choices within the dominating peace frame. The respondents’ narratives describe a situation devoid of options for action or room for discussion. There was no room for arguments such as proposals for a constitutional, or ceremonial monarchy. Those options were foreclosed and even though respondents speak of strategic reasoning they spend more time retelling what they could not do rather than what their plan or even interests were at the time. The sentiment is that parties were “caught” by the peace frame and forced to act in accordance with it,

\(^{480}\) Interview with Janak Raj Joshi, former Chief Secretary of the Peace Secretariat, Kathmandu, November 25th, 2008; interview with Kamal Thapa, Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu, November 6, 2008.
even though it stripped them of their political profiles or ideological foundations:

If we said something we would be branded to be against the peace process. There was a lack of making sure that agreements would be implemented. There was a big risk in trusting them [the Maoist]. When they [the parliamentary parties] talked they said it was risky and there should be monitoring [of the arms and army] but they did not say this in public, if so they would be branded as anti-peace or pro-royalist. If they had any objection, they [the Maoist] said we wanted to block republicanism or CA elections etc. Throughout the process there is a lack of determinism from the parties, but nobody dared to stand up for these principles.\(^{481}\)

To speak of strategy in terms of the perceived best option in a situation of discursive restraint is another aspect, usually forgotten, when speaking about the strategy and frames. In the case of the terrorism frame we saw the more traditional way of approaching this relationship, namely in the sense of an actor using or constructing a particular frame to suit a constructed interest. Such a frame, with perceived internal resonance, would demonstrate the self-serving logic of effects. In the case of the peace frame however, the frame itself influences what is regarded to be strategic action, what is perceived as advantageous and what is not.

In Nepal in 2006, it was deemed political suicide by the SPA to openly speak in favour of the king and any kind of solution to the monarchy short of republic. It was also politically ruinous to be against secularism, federalism or the need for a Constituent Assembly election and a new constitution. With all those discursive restrictions placed upon the SPA by the peace frame the actors still, and indeed are expected to, act in a rational and strategic manner. Strategic reasoning can be expected and the presence of such strategic reasoning does not undermine the dual function of frames in restricting or enabling behaviour of actors. In the case mentioned above the problem of army integration appeared to be unsolvable in the negotiations. Letting the negotiations fail or be delayed because of disagreement was not a possible cause of action to the parties as informed by the dominant frame. The one perceived alternative was to try to get the upper hand politically (win the election) and deal with the issue in your own way afterwards. This is perfectly rational and strategic but still a cause of action emerging from, and being dependent upon the nature of the actors’ interpretation of the peace frame.

---

\(^{481}\) Interview with Prakash Sherma Mahat, (NC), Central Working Committee member and Member Secretary in the Deuba Comission, Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.
Self-entrapment of the SPA

It might seem odd to speak about self-entrapment on the part of the SPA as they felt entrapped by the Maoist peace frame. The SPA felt unable to initiate discussions about the future of the monarchy, present alternatives to CA elections or voice the ideas for another solution to the conflict. Entrapment is a strong force in influencing an actor’s perceived range of manoeuvrability but I argue that, in the case of the peace frame, the SPA suffered both self-entrapment as well as entrapment. The dual case of entrapment is due to the two-step process of the formation of the peace frame discussed in the previous chapter.

In redefining their relationship towards the palace and the Maoists, the SPA presented, and invested in, the perception of themselves as peace bringers. The SPA argued the need for peace, even linking it to personal prestige and sacrifice. As such they had worked to be perceived as the peace bringers and this identity was now used against them. In committing to peace without having an agreement of what that peace should look like, both the Maoist and SPA signed a discursive carte blanche. Whatever the result of the framing of that peace both parties would find themselves having to honour it. When the Maoist later successfully filled the peace frame with their own demand-related contents the SPA found that they could not argue against those contents. In a way that is curious since political issues are debated all the time, there is seldom consensus and disagreement is part of the political process, however, in this case, arguing against the CA elections and republic would not be seen as having a different take on an issue, but as arguing against peace. With civil society, people from their own parties and the Maoist holding them to their own self-defined identity as peace bringers, the parliamentary parties felt that they would be branded as anti-peace if they proposed political alternatives that fell outside of the constructed peace frame, especially relating to the role of the monarchy.

Even though republicanism had not been spelt out in the 12-point agreement, it was a Maoist demand and the parliamentary parties were silent on the issue on how the monarchy should be restricted. In addition, civil society was perceived to be operating within the peace frame, pushing for the demands of the Maoists and connecting those demands with the prospect of peace. By associating thoroughly to the cause of peace, the SPA were susceptible to, in Mattern’s terminology, representational force: they were the peace bringers in Nepal and had to support matters which were perceived as connected to the success of peace. That this pressure was indeed felt by the SPA was confirmed by UML leader Pradeep Gyawali:

---

482 Remember G.P Koirala’s statement of going to hell if necessary to bring peace to the country.
Lot of external pressure from the people for peace. Yet the peoples voice for peace was so strong that nobody of the political parties dared to say anything that would make them seem anti the peace process.⁴⁸³

Because of their self-identification with the goal before the actual content of that process had been established, the SPA was sensitive to pressure created by the external resonance of the peace frame, which came to be perceived as a Maoist construction. It is possible to speak of entrapment in the sense that the peace frame ‘belonged’ to the Maoist as it had been filled with their issues and demands during the process of construction. It is also possible to speak of an effect of self-entrapment in that the parties had first identified with the goal of peace a priori the construction of the actual frame and that once constructed they were perceived to have made the issues entailed in the frame their own, either by persuasion or pressure (see Fig. 8.4) This was also the observation of one of the respondents:

Political parties were caught by their own ‘peace frame’ and forced to concede to the demands of the Maoist. Maoist did not compromise and received more than they were asking for.⁴⁸⁴

![Figure 8.4 The self-entrapment effect of the peace frame](image)

It took equal effort for the two parties, the Maoist and the SPA to join together in an alliance, as seen in the previous chapter, but it was the Maoist party that was able to incorporate their demands and political vision into the peace frame in Nepal. The political parties, on the other hand, failed to mus-

⁴⁸³ Interview with Pradeep Gyawali CPN (UML), Central Committee Member also member of the government negotiation team during the 2006 peace negotiations. Kathmandu, November 4, 2008.
⁴⁸⁴ Interview with Kamal Thapa, Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal), Kathmandu, November 6, 2008.
ter the necessary credibility among the population. This failure was due to their perceived inefficient and corrupt governance during the period of democratic rule from 1990 to 2002.

The formation of the peace frame was a result of two successful processes, both instigated by the parliamentary parties: the re-politicisation of the Maoist conflict and the portrayal of the king as a threat against democracy. As the Maoists started to define the peace process and reversed the causal narrative to make peace a pre-condition for democracy, their party program and demands became integrated into the peace frame. The issues of republicanism and the need for a new constitution (elections to Constituent Assembly) became intimately connected to the possibility of bringing sustainable peace to Nepal. What had been a wish for peace now had a tangible content; issues that were part of a plan for peace and that could be ensured in agreements and implemented in practice. The peace frame was also advocated by civil society and regardless of the actual level of resonance or the reasons for resonance among the public, the respondents from the SPA perceived civil society as voicing Maoist slogans, defining them as radical in their political positions.

The respondents testify to feeling limited in what they could say and argue and even though this limitation was only a perceived reality, it was regarded as real by the key decision makers and they made their decisions accordingly. The fear of being labelled anti-peace was so strong that it undermined the parties’ ideological convictions and made the NC change the party constitution to exclude adherence to monarchy. When it came to actual negotiations and acceptance of demands, the perception of the political parties was that they were “caught” and did not have any option other than to “keep on singing” the Maoist tune:

View of the Maoist and also some parts of civil society: that if not go ahead with elections would be branded as anti elections/pro-king. It was a fear atmosphere that they [parliamentary parties] would be branded, just keep on “singing”. Did not fight the propaganda from the Maoist, we could not do it.485

Not challenging the Maoists on their demands may have been instrumental in bringing about the peace agreement and led to the successfully held elections. Yet, the representational force, using Mattern’s terminology, being so unevenly divided between the Maoist and the parliamentary parties, does not correspond well an ideal scenario of a reasoned consensus. The agreed goal of bringing peace was used by the Maoists and later by civil society to put the parliamentary parties into a non-choice situation. Linking the peace frame to the removal of the king and the related issues of republic and con-

---

Constituent assembly limited the range of actions available to the parties to one logic: “If you are a party that strives for peace then you have to be for a republic”. Implied in this is that other solutions were not only excluded but that the issues were locked down and not available for discussion to any degree. For example: the monarchy was regarded as a threat to democracy and theoretically there were other ways of dealing with this, ranging from republic to ceremonial monarch yet any discussion or delay in the peace process was seen as a betrayal of the identity assumed by the parties in claiming that they were for peace.

Even as the alliance was burgeoning and there was a common goal shared by the SPA and the Maoists, the road of how to get there, and as illustrated above, succeeding in portraying themselves as the leaders of this, became more and more important as the elections drew nearer. Most likely the presence of the election made it unlikely that actors would try to achieve a reasoned consensus and instead their interaction stressed the competitive aspects of the relationship. As the cooperative venture became more like a discursive struggle, the options for action became more restricted for the parliamentary parties.

Further, by successfully capturing the peace frame, the Maoists did not have to be particularly active in persuading the parliamentary parties. They were caught by the restrictions of the frame, which they had accepted through their identification with the need for peace. In the case of the peace frame, the initiative for democracy and peace was taken by the political parties, then discursively lost to the Maoists. Due to the representational force of the peace argument and having linked their identities to this, the political parties were unable to influence the content of the frame to any great degree. They were trapped on a particular road and perceived that they had no choice but to follow it to the end.

“Just keep singing”—the power of the positive frame

In the beginning, the peace frame was hollow, or rather it was sketchy but even though it had little content both actors were committed to an undefined goal of peace. From a discursive point of view this was a gamble by both sides and in a way both parties had signed the peace agreement before it was written. This meant that both parties were committed to the peace process and all agreements made at this point, including the 12-point agreement confirming the united stance between the Maoists and the SPA, were loosely formulated so as to not jeopardize the end goal of peace. At this point the peace frame could be argued to be self-serving for both parties. The Maoist became a legitimate actor seeking a political solution and the SPA became the actor fighting against the oppressive rule of the monarchy and aspiring to bring the insurgents into the mainstream. In the construction of the peace
frame it became clear that the Maoist succeeded to fill it with their own political demands and the SPA were not able to offer alternatives or push for compromises.

When it came to the details how peace should look the interests of the Maoists and the SPA differed. The Maoists had clearly been more successful in proclaiming its agenda, which was perceived to have resonated with the public. So the goal of the peace frame was a goal and a quest with which both parties wanted to identify or be identified. When it came to mapping out the road to get there it gradually became a Maoists peace frame. The SPA were effected by two logic of frames: self-entrapment in that they had so strongly tied themselves to the cause of peace and entrapment in that what that peace entailed was constructed by the Maoists.

A conclusion that can be drawn from an analysis of both frames is that a frame is appears stronger in terms of entrapment if the actor has initiated it. A key feature of the entrapment of the SPA in relation to the peace frame was their own framing of themselves as peace bringers, which they were then afraid of losing. Their main concern was not to be seen as anti-peace. Also, the strongest aspect of the terrorism frame, in terms of effect, could be argued to be the self-entrapment of the parliamentary parties. This occurred despite that the frame did not resonate externally to a significant degree. The failure of the terrorism frame in this regard was still connected to the actor that had initiated it and a withdrawal would undermine both the frame and the credibility of the actor that had constructed it. So even a weak frame, in terms of resonance, such as the terrorism frame in Nepal exerted its strongest effect over its creator.

In this logic the peace frame would have held the same amount of force over the Maoists as over the SPA. However, because of their discursive success in tying their demands to the frame itself, the Maoist experienced no conflict between what they wanted to do and what they could do. The political process was going their way. Yet for the sake of argument what if the Maoists would have wanted to resume fighting? Having portrayed themselves as peace bringers and arguably being the owners of the peace frame, could the Maoists have gone back to fighting? This has not yet happened, but that is not because the peace process had gone exactly according to the ideals of the Maoists. The CA elections were postponed twice. After the election with the Maoists proclaimed the winners it took them four months to be granted access to parliament. Also after a political scandal involving the sacking of an army general resulting in counter orders between the Prime Minister Prachanda and the President Ram Baran Yadav, Prachanda resigned and the Maoist party left the government.

Despite renewed accusations of reactionary and imperialist forces at work, the Maoists remained within regular politics as part of the opposition. It could be argued, as many of the respondents did, that they are now accus-
tomed to a privileged life and positions of power and that they do not wish to
give it up. They did give a lot of that up when they left government but they
stopped short of returning to war. If they had, they would have lost all their
credibility as a responsible and peace affirming political revolutionary force.

Another conclusion that was introduced in discussing the terrorism frame
is the categorization of frames into negative and positive and that this is re-
lated in a significant way to the logic of entrapment. In comparison to the
terrorism frame where the label of terrorism was intended as a way to restrict
the Maoists, the peace frame, was never overtly said to have the purpose of
restricting the SPA, yet the peace frame was perceived to have done so by
representatives of the SPA. The Maoist respondents were sensitive to the
strategic benefits of their own frame, so the issue here is less concerned with
true intent or strategy and more concerned with the perceived manoeuvrabil-
ity for action in the presence of a negative or positive frame. How does the
nature of a frame determine the manoeuvrability of an actor?

The peace frame can be defined as a positive frame. The characteristics
underlying the frame are those of a reasonable and diplomatic actor commit-
ted to a bloodless conflict resolution for the benefit of the nation. As dis-
cussed in the chapters on the terrorism frame, negative and positive frames
can both lead to entrapment but through different mechanisms. In the case of
a negative frame the actor is expected to reject the characteristic implied by
the frame as not representative of him/her. In the case of a positive frame the
actor is expected to want to identify with the characteristics with which the
frame is associated or to want to be identified with those characteristics.
Regardless of whether the motivation is internal or external there is a desire
to identify with the frame. This means that even if the desire to be identified
comes from purely strategic motivation, the actor will want to be seen to
comply with the frame rather than to challenge it. Thus, with a negative
frame the wish would be to challenge the frame, in the case of a positive one
the desire is instead to comply. This is the reason that there was no debate or
discursive conflict to be seen with regard to the initial call for peace by the
parties.

Both actors wanted to be identified as the party for peace and so the
framework of the frame under construction was not questioned. Indeed, it
could be argued that there was a race to be more strongly identified with the
frame. So why could the SPA not argue against a republican set up? Firstly,
due to the mechanisms of a positive frame, they would have had to argue in
a way that did not undermine the foundations of the frame. The Maoists
could, without political cost, argue against the foundations of the terrorism
frame and in that manner work around it to achieve their desired range of
manoeuvrability. The SPA could not go back on their commitment to peace
as this would be seen as being for a continued conflict and thus they could
neither attack and reject the contents and definitions upholding the frame.
They would have to put forward the logic that it was possible to be for peace and at the same time be in favour of, for example, a constitutional monarch. This task was made increasingly difficult with the perceived external resonance, from an active and visible civil society and a vocal strand of younger cadres within their own parties. The goal of the frame: peace, was intimately tied to certain issues creating a very well defined causal narrative: in order to have peace we need to get rid of the monarch and in order to do that we need to form a constituent assembly. Being so closely connected to the end goal of peace, to which the SPA had committed early on, the political issues attached by the Maoists were well near undisputable. The narratives from the SPA respondents testify to a real sense of not being able to discuss issues or come up with alternative political solutions with the reason clearly stated that it would brand them as anti-peace.

In terms of rejection and identification, a positive frame seems to be more effective with regard to controlling the perceived range of manoeuvrability. The actors will not want to challenge the frame as they wish to identify or be identified with it. Even if an actor realizes that the frame could potentially limit them in an undesirable way and wishes to reject the frame, this appears to be a much more difficult rhetorical task than with a negative frame.
9. Findings and concluding discussion

How did frames affect the perceived manoeuvrability of actors in the Nepal conflict and peace process? This was the empirical research question presented in the beginning of this thesis. The analysis has shown that the investigated frames, the terrorism frame and the peace frame affected the actors in several different ways. In the over fifty interviews conducted with key actors in the decision-making process, respondents described situations corresponding to all four forms of logic of actor effects presented in the model. Sometimes the frame influencing their perceived manoeuvrability was created by themselves quite intentionally with a specific policy in mind; at other times the strategic link between frame and action was less clear. In certain instances the actors interviewed were exposed to frames constructed or held by another actor and either challenged it or found themselves agreeing and acting in accordance with it.

Yet, regardless of the circumstances in which the frames were constructed, the actors perceived themselves to be influenced by them. A main point of concern in the study was how this influence affected their perceived manoeuvrability for action and how this influence differed depending on the situation.

This chapter will recapitulate the empirical findings and elaborate on some of the conclusions from them. The empirical findings are in themselves a result of the new approach developed for this thesis to study actor effects of frames, and even though the empirical results are mainly case specific, the model and the four forms of logic have general applicability. The new approach to analysing actor effects of frames, together with the formalised model, constitutes the main theoretical and methodological contribution of this thesis. This chapter also includes a discussion on positive and negative frames and their respective influence on perceived manoeuvrability for action.

Main empirical findings and conclusions

Analysing the terrorism frame and the peace frame in Nepal using the new approach to the study of frame effects produced a greater understanding of the process and contributed to explaining the outcomes in Nepal. By moving away from the view of frame effects as essentially resonance, to seeing them
as perceived manoeuvrability, the new approach allows the analysis to capture frame effects that would be neglected by more traditional approaches. The sections below will go through these effects as they were found in the case study and the conclusions that can be drawn.

Effects of the terrorism frame

In the case of the terrorism frame the effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability were evident both in the case of the government and the Maoists. In the case of the government, the effect of the terrorism frame was initially a self-serving one. The government wished to use the army and perceived the terrorism frame as a necessary condition for them to do so in a way that would be considered legitimate. At the time of the application of the terrorism label there was consensus between and within all parliamentary parties and so there was internal perceived resonance for the terrorism frame.

If this process had been analysed from a traditional frame analysis perspective that placed focus on the success of a frame, the adoption of the Terrorist and Disruptive Acts Ordinance by the government with the support of parliament could be argued to be a case of successful framing. Resonance was established, the frame had been institutionalised in law and the preferred solution to the problem of the Maoists became available to the government. However, by focusing on effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action instead of success, the terrorism frame, once implemented, continued to have an effect on the framing actor. Respondents described how they felt restricted by the frame when they later changed their approach to dealing with the Maoists. Without changing the way they framed the conflict, the parliamentary parties could not officially sanction solutions that lay outside the terrorism frame, such as negotiations.

Viewing the effect of frames as perceived manoeuvrability, the terrorism frame was revealed to result in self-entrapment. The parliamentary parties expressed that they felt trapped by a frame of their own construction in that the desired course of action was not perceived to be available. Regardless of the actual level of resonance with a wider audience, Sher Bahadur Deuba, the political leader most connected to a peaceful solution through negotiation at the time, described how he felt restricted and felt that he could not initiate a dialogue since he had implemented the terrorism label. The logic of self-entrapment seen here would not have been captured by a focus on the success or failure of a frame as that would have constituted the end point in the analysis. Of course, another study could have been made on a later attempt by the government to frame the Maoists in a more benevolent way. However, such a framing attempt did not occur until four years later and the self-entrapment experienced by the framing actors during that time would have gone unnoticed.
The terrorism frame also contained another dimension which would have been lost had the analysis been conducted from a perspective concerned with success. By its very focus, a success perspective takes the framing actor’s point of view: will his/her frame resonate or not? Although the focus is on the audience, where the frame resonates, to speak of success or failure is to speak from the framing actor’s point of view. With such a focus the effect of the frame on the Maoists would have been ignored. The Maoists were neither the framing actor behind the terrorism frame, nor did they constitute the audience, so they would not have been included as a factor in a traditional frame analysis. Only by seeing effects as perceived manoeuvrability for action did the effect of the frame on the Maoists become an integral part of the analysis. Thus, instead of overlooking the effect on the Maoists, the new approach made it possible to identify two possible types of effects of the terrorism frame on their perceived manoeuvrability for action: the logic of persuasion and the logic of entrapment.

From the interviews with Maoist respondents it is evident that the terrorism frame was not perceived to resonate internally with either the party or the individuals I spoke to. The respondents regarded the government’s decision to label them terrorists with a variety of different emotional responses ranging from a dismissal of the label through humour and irony to serious expressions of injustice and indignation. These reactions were an indication that the label itself was not internalised. As well as the written material from the party, the Maoist respondents also showed that they had a very different interpretation and explanation of events. They also differed in their perception of themselves as an actor, which entailed a counter-frame describing the reasons for conflict and a reason as to why it was illogical to label them terrorists. Central to this logic was that the Maoists had a political agenda and purpose and could not thus be defined as terrorists. An expressed aversion to the terrorism label and a pronounced counter-frame to the government’s problem representation supported the conclusion that the terrorism frame did not have a persuasive effect on the Maoists.

The other possible logic of effect on the Maoists was entrapment and in the course of the analysis this logic presented a problem. In the first instance there seemed to be no case of entrapment in the terrorism frame. The Maoists verbally protested against the label, presented causal logic for why they took the actions they did, and if some of these actions were in line with what could be perceived of as terrorism they made an effort to distance themselves from those actions and apologised publically. A case of entrapment would manifest itself in an actor expressing a feeling of being caught within the frame, that is, his/her actions would have been perceived to be restricted to the behaviour and solutions implied by the frame itself. Here, the Maoists instead made an effort to be perceived to act outside the frame, both through their words and their actions. Subsequently, the Maoists did not show signs of entrapment as I have defined it. On the other hand, as discussed in Chap-
ter 6, they did not show indifference to the frame. Indeed, their efforts were
directly focused on creating distance to the frame by producing a counter-
frame with a problem representation different from that of the government
and with the explicit purpose of defining themselves as not being terrorists.
In terms of perceived manoeuvrability, the Maoists were not entrapped within the frame. They did not feel forced to act in accordance with the dictates
of the frame, i.e. they did not feel forced to act as terrorists.

Yet, the lack of indifference and the awareness of, and concern over, a
wider external audience makes it difficult to conclude that the frame had no
effect. These observations instead support the conclusion that the terrorism
frame did have an effect on the Maoists’ perceived manoeuvrability in the
form of a restriction. Indeed, the Maoist respondents described a situation
where not to react against the terrorism label was unthinkable and undesir-
able.

These results lead to an interesting general conclusion. As stated above, a
case of entrapment would normally make an actor feel forced to act within
the frame, in accordance with the characteristics it invokes. However, in the
case of the terrorism frame that would be an absurd expectation. If those
were the criteria of entrapment, no terrorism frame could ever lead to en-
trapment, except for cases where the group takes pride in a negative charac-
terisation of itself. Empirically, we can also see that the actions of the Mao-
ists can be categorised as a rejection of the frame. The reason why the terro-
rism frame at first sight seems awkward in the analytical framework is not
because it cannot lead to entrapment, but because it entraps in a different
way, and this is because the terrorism frame is a negative frame.

Whereas earlier studies on entrapment deal with positive frames with
which the actor wishes to be identified, a negative frame incites rejection on
the part of the framed actor. Thus, in the case of the terrorism frame, the Maoists exhibited behaviour and actions that were related to the frame being
negative: they rejected it, they attempted to refute its inherent logic and they
tried to disprove its accuracy in describing their movement. Thus, a case of
no entrapment is not manifested as rejection of the frame at hand, but as
indifference to it, and the interviews show that the Maoists were anything
but indifferent. Thus, from my findings with regard to the Maoists’ reactions
to the terrorism frame, I conclude that they were not entrapped within the
frame, but by the frame. That is they felt the need to act in relation to the
frame but not in accordance with it.

One conclusion that I draw from the empirical findings is that entrapment
can be present with both negative and positive frames, but works in accord-
ance with different mechanisms. In the case of a positive frame, the framed
actor wishes to identify with, or at least to be identified with, the character-
istics included in the frame. The case of the peace frame in Nepal is an exa-
mple of a positive frame. The characteristics of the frame are those of a demo-
cratic, fair and peace-loving actor, all of which are traits that the actors wish
to be identified with. The actors thus have an incentive to act within the frame. In the case of a negative frame, for example the terrorism frame, the impact is the opposite: the actor wishes to abstain from doing anything that would be seen to be in accordance with the frame and thus rejects it. In both cases the actor perceives his/her manoeuvrability to be linked to and determined by the frame.

What the case of the terrorism frame also showed is that frames can have an effect on action without resonance. In the case of the terrorism frame there was no indication that the frame had any significant external resonance. Not even the parliamentary parties claimed that it did, and the Maoists, as expected, consistently argued that it did not. Regardless of the situation, none of the parties actually knew what the wider population of Nepal thought about the frame. Yet for both parties in the conflict the frame had an effect of entrapment and in both cases it was the perception of resonance that was crucial. From the parliamentary parties’ point of view, even if they did not refer to any pressure from the population to treat the Maoists as terrorists, they perceived themselves to be seen as associated with the frame. If they changed their policy and argued for negotiations that would make them seem inconsistent in the eyes of the public. The Maoists in turn, although they claimed that there was no resonance among the public, felt the need to engage with the terrorism frame and present their own explanation for why the government had chosen to label them terrorists due to a perceived risk of resonance. Notwithstanding whether people in Nepal actually viewed them as terrorists or not, the Maoists did not want to be seen that way. Thus their counter-frame was not only directed internally at party cadres but also communicated at mass meetings and in statements.

Admittedly, perceived resonance and risk of resonance are not identical concepts, yet what they do have in common is the power to influence action even in the absence of manifest resonance. At the moment when action or behaviour was decided upon, there was no demonstrated actual resonance among a wider audience. Thus, both perceived resonance and perceived risk of resonance were in themselves sufficient to influence action.

Effects of the peace frame

In contrast to the terrorism frame, the peace frame was rather under-defined when the notion of a peaceful solution surfaced. Furthermore, the peace frame was a case of simultaneously competing frames, in contrast to the terrorism frame, where the Maoists reacted to the government’s label of their party and movement. Even though the framing processes were parallel in that different alternatives to the peace frame were advocated by both the Maoists and the SPA, I have regarded the Maoists as the framing agents in this process as the resulting peace frame was to a large extent identified by respondents from parliamentary parties and civil society as being connected.
to the Maoists. The perception of external resonance of the peace frame was also made more manifest in the shape of the second Jana Andolan, in a way that the terrorism frame was not, and as a consequence the perceptions of the SPA and the Maoists of what kind of frame the people supported were stronger.

In terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action, the peace frame resulted in a self-serving logic for the Maoists. From the time they entered the political process in 2005 they had a consistent framing of the conflict and also of the peace to be made. They effectively linked the issues of peace and democracy together and tied them both to the necessity of their previous demands for constituent assembly elections and a republican constitution. Even though the pressure from civil society since the 12-point agreement was for the parties to continue the peace process, this was not perceived as entrapment by the Maoist respondents. The fact that they did not feel forced to do something that they did not want to was further evidence that the peace frame was in accordance with their own constructed self-interest. The Maoists had skilfully designed the peace frame in accordance with their demands so in terms of entrapment the interesting actor was the SPA.

The SPA experienced three forms of logic of effects. According to the actor effect model only two forms of logic would in principle be possible for one actor, yet in the case of the SPA a case was also made for the logic of self-entrapment. This is due to the self-framing of the SPA as peace bringers as part of their framing processes in 2005, and arguably this is what made them increasingly susceptible to entrapment by the peace frame constructed by the Maoists.

The self-entrapment of the SPA, somewhat ironically, originates from their commitment to peace. In the terrorism frame, the respondents from the parliamentary parties testified to a clear policy goal of being able to make legitimate use of the army and in 2005 the goal was peace. Yet, unlike in 2001 when the goal was a tangible and concrete policy, the goal of peace in the spring of 2005 was undefined and was more a commitment to the idea of peace than an actual policy. As we saw in Chapter 7, the priority of the SPA was the reinstatement of parliament, preferably after reconciliation with the king, and then negotiations with the Maoists. They publically voiced their commitment to peace and the necessity to conduct negotiations with the Maoists. To pave the way their upcoming alliance with the Maoists, the SPA also changed their problem representation of the conflict. Toning down the harsh rhetoric against the Maoists that had prevailed earlier, they instead argued from a perspective that was similar to the way the Maoists had portrayed the conflict almost from the beginning. Instead of a violent conflict instigated by terrorists that could only be solved through military means, the SPA adopted the position propagated by the Maoists that this was a political conflict that required a political solution. Thus, the SPA attempted to cast
themselves in the role of the peace bringers that brought the Maoists to the mainstream, but they did so through the use of the Maoists’ definition of the conflict. However, at that time the SPA did not have a clear view of what that peace should look like and the framing of that peace was thus still open to be constructed and challenged.

Despite lacking a comprehensive view of the peace, the SPA were clear in their prioritisation of democracy over peace. However, due to the failure of reconciliation with the palace, the Maoists were included in the political process at an earlier stage than the SPA had anticipated and thus the Maoists were in a position to put forward their view of the process and what it should entail.

The SPA at this point only had a narrow problem representation that centred on the need to bring back democracy. The suspension of democracy was regarded as the fault of the king and the solution was the reinstatement of parliament. In some respects there were similarities between the peace frames of the Maoists and the SPA. The Maoists, however, had a broader frame of the conflict and from that also a broader frame of the peace. In terms of causes, both parties considered the king an impediment to peace, which is one reason for the alliance between them. Yet, whereas the SPA blamed the king alone, the Maoists still had a structural view containing the inherent failure of the old democratic system as well as the previous conduct of the political leaders. In terms of solutions the Maoists also presented a much broader perspective than the SPA. Where the SPA saw the reinstatement of parliament and a return to the pre-February 2005 status quo as sufficient, the Maoists argued for a new constitution and significant socio-economic changes.

What the Maoist had, which the SPA lacked, was a comprehensive peace frame, and more importantly one where the issues of democracy and peace were interlinked. The concept of democracy, which was the central concept for the SPA, was dismissed by the Maoists as reactionary and as a reversion back to the old status quo. Instead the Maoists linked their own re-conceptualisation of multi-party democracy to the prospect of peace, and their democracy also included an end to the monarchy. The Maoist peace frame made it clear that an impediment to peace was the old form of democracy, which was the one that the SPA were trying to reinstate. In their problem representation the Maoists also connected their old demand of constituent assembly elections to the peace frame as part of the solution. In this way the logic of the Maoist peace frame undermined the peace frame of the SPA with its more narrow focus and connection to a discredited view of democracy.

The way that the Maoists incorporated their own demands into the peace frame contributed to a clear logic of what was needed. The problems of the old democracy, which were caused by mismanagement and ineffectiveness, could only be solved by a new republican constitution. In addition to being a
much broader and more encompassing frame than that of the SPA, the way that these issues were linked to the prospect of peace was the key element behind the entrapment of the SPA. The SPA had no proper alternative to the Maoist political vision but they were committed to peace and thus they found themselves unable to argue against the Maoists’ demands.

It was seen from the interviews that the members of the SPA became more or less unwilling supporters of a republican constitution and constituent assembly elections, despite their previous aversion to such a solution. The reason for this, and more importantly for why the SPA did not argue for an alternative solution, can be seen by applying my approach to frame analysis to the case. The SPA’s early declaration of a broad commitment to peace had the effect of self-entrapment when they were identified and wanted to be identified with the goal of peace. This commitment was the primary reason why they became entrapped by the specific peace frame advocated by the Maoists. As the Maoists constructed their peace frame by linking their central political demands to the possibility of peace the SPA respondents felt that they could not argue for any other political alternative. The way that the issue of, for example, republicanism was linked to peace made arguing against republicanism synonymous with arguing against peace. The interviews with the members of the SPA revealed that this notion of risking being branded as anti-peace was strongly perceived and a significant factor in influencing their behaviour.

In a sense the most significant point in the process from a framing perspective was the decision to adopt the Maoist definition of the conflict. This led to the self-identification of the SPA as committed to peace and undermined their own preferred system of democracy. The Maoists’ conflict definition disqualified the earlier parliamentary system in Nepal and robbed the SPA of their political platform. The subsequent Maoist peace frame further disadvantaged the SPA’s position by connecting the commitment to peace to the removal of issues that the SPA stood for, such as a constitutional monarchy. This left the SPA without a political direction and in a difficult position from which to positively profile themselves before the elections.

One could ask whether the SPA were strategic in their final acceptance of the Maoist frame. The presence of strategic reasoning does not undermine the effect of the peace frame in terms of entrapment and it is clear that actors within the SPA would have preferred a different outcome to what actually happened. As I see it, in relation to the effect of frames on perceived manoeuvrability for action, the presence of frames does not preclude strategic action, but influences it. The frames, and their content, influence actions in a way similar to that of the material or institutional context within the concept of bounded rationality. Thus, an actor in any given situation is expected to act in a rational way in accordance with the information available to him/her.

In addition to limitations brought about by a lack of perfect information or the inability to clearly foresee the consequences of one’s actions, strategic
choice will be influenced by the existing frames as they are perceived by the actor. A case in point in the Nepal context is the issue of army integration that was perceived to be unsolvable in the negotiations leading up to the peace agreement. Letting the negotiations fail or be delayed because of disagreement was not seen as a possible course of action for the parties as this would be interpreted as being an anti-peace action. Wanting to discuss issues at length made you run the risk of being accused of wanting to prolong or sabotage the peace process. In light of this restriction on action, one perceived alternative—trying to get the upper hand politically (win the election) and deal with the issue in your own way afterwards—can be considered strategic and perfectly rational but still a course of action emerging from, and dependent upon, the nature of the peace frame. Thus, the SPA were not strategic in constructing or applying the peace frame yet could still have been strategic in adapting to the boundaries it provided.

Yet in this context it should also be mentioned that the respondents, especially those from the SPA, clearly underestimated the power of the frame in place. Their reasoning was that they agreed with the Maoist demands ‘for now’ thinking that they could change their strategy later. This, however, proved impossible once the frame became cemented and was perceived to have resonated with the public.

There were also respondents from the SPA who stated that they had been persuaded by the Maoist peace frame. This effect appeared to be mostly present among the junior cadres of the parliamentary parties, and respondents from the NC and the UML confirmed this. The effect of persuasion is difficult to determine as it could be claimed retrospectively in the face of the Maoist election win. However, the actions of the respondents at the time confirm that persuasion had occurred in that some cadres argued openly for Maoist demands against their own party line and in one instance were even arrested in conjunction with demonstrations and did not retract their position in court.

**Theoretical implications of the findings**

Even though this study has engaged with one case—the case of the Nepal conflict and peace process—it has provided the opportunity to study two frames that proved to be very different in nature and composition, as well as in their mechanism with regard to entrapment.

To reject or to identify with (or to be seen to reject or identify with) a frame are two mechanisms that separate a positive and a negative frame in terms of effects. This also implies two different types of expected behaviour in relation to these two categories of frames. In the case of a positive frame the expected behaviour would be for the actor to try and conform to the frame and in the case of a negative frame the actor would be expected to
oppose the frame. This is not to say that we can predict the exact behaviour of an actor from whether a frame can be categorised as positive or negative. Yet, similar to the categorisation of frames as negative and positive, the behaviour of an actor can be expected to fall into general conform and oppose categories. The particularities of each type of behaviour will depend on the actual content of the frames.

Positive and negative frames could be seen as equally effective but different ways of producing an effect in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action. Yet, I would argue that the mechanisms operating in relation to positive and negative frames are relevant when considering the effectiveness of a certain frame and I feel this would be an interesting aspect of frame effects to look into. What would be more effective in influencing the perceived manoeuvrability for action: a positive or a negative frame? This general question about the effectiveness of frames is outside the scope of this thesis but to some extent the question of effectiveness can be discussed by drawing on my findings. What was the effectiveness of the terrorism frame? We have seen that it produced three of the four forms of logic of actor effects in Nepal. Yet how effective was it at producing these effects?

As argued above with regard to the effect of entrapment there are different mechanisms at work depending on whether the propagated frame is negative or positive. As pointed out in Chapter 2 when discussing the effectiveness of frames there is a tendency to focus on resonance as a measure of a frame’s effectiveness. The factors that are argued to pertain to effectiveness, such as the status of the frame constructor and the cultural relevance or significance of the contents of the frame to the experience of the audience, have all been included as factors of resonance by, for example, Benford and Snow. Even though the linguistic and rhetorical components of frame construction have a bearing on the effectiveness of frames, a statement can be made on the macro level effectiveness of negative and positive frames. This can be done by theorising about the implications of their respective mechanisms of entrapment. With regard to effectiveness, I believe that the weakness of the terrorism frame that we observed empirically in Nepal can be partly attributed to it being a negative frame.

Ultimately, the terrorism frame did not effectively stop the Maoists from committing acts that could be described as terrorist (killing civilians, extortion, abductions, etc.). Why was this? As seen above, the Maoists spent a lot of time and effort portraying themselves to be part of a just cause and not the kind of organisation that used terrorist methods. This is to be expected if one accepts the mechanisms of rejection and challenge in a negative frame. Because the negative frame in a way encourages dispute and does not contain values and characteristics that the actor wishes to uphold, the very foundations of the frame can more easily be rejected or challenged. The consequence is then that the frame will be attacked and disputed, yet this does not necessarily translate into a change in behaviour per se. That is, the effective-
ness in terms of limiting the perceived manoeuvrability for action may be weak.

I would argue that the reaction to a negative frame of rejecting and challenging it creates more space for manoeuvrability as it allows the framed actor to challenge the propagated frame without fear of a social or political backlash. In order to evade the restrictions on behaviour that would identify their action as terrorist the Maoists simply had to attack the definition of terrorism, and it can be seen from the narratives that they indeed chose this road. They continued killing and abusing the civilian population but attempted to define their actions as not being terrorist activity. Instead of changing their behaviour, the Maoists argued that the people they attacked were in fact not civilians but, for example, spies or informants, making them out to be legitimate targets in a war. Also, by stressing that they were a political organisation, they moved to exclude any action on their part as a terrorist activity. Confronting a negative frame, the resulting entrapment could more easily be discursively manipulated to let the actor maintain his/her perceived room for manoeuvrability. In its strongest form, the negative frame would force the framed actor to stop doing something. In the case of the terrorism frame in Nepal the frame could be argued to have placed such restrictions on the Maoists, yet the frame was also challenged in such a way that certain actions were simply reframed rather than refrained from.

If the mechanisms behind a negative frame make it easier to challenge and reject and thereby reformulate the frame, allowing a maintained range of possible actions, what about the mechanisms of positive frames? Are they stronger in the sense of more effectively influencing the perceived manoeuvrability for action?

In terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action, in the context of a negative frame all actions that can be defined as being outside the frame are theoretically available to the actor. It is still a case of entrapment however since the Maoists felt the need to act in relation to the frame. That is, they were wary not to be perceived to step inside the frame and thus had to be aware and relate to the boundaries created by the negative frame in order to stay clear of them. If conceptualising perceived manoeuvrability as a concrete space defined by the frame, a negative frame would grant more perceived manoeuvrability than a positive frame as the space within the frame is smaller than the space outside the frame. The available space for action of course also depends on how big the frame itself is. As we saw both with the terrorism frame of the government and the counter-frame of the Maoists, as well as in the peace frames of both parties, the scope of the frame may vary. However, regarding the mechanisms of entrapment, a positive frame would appear more powerful as it provides less room in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action than a negative frame.
The usefulness of the new approach and the actor effect model

As seen from the discussion above the new approach to the study of frame effects presented in the thesis makes it possible to analyse a wider range of frame effects than in earlier research. The four forms of logic of the actor effect model based on this approach incorporate actors and effect dimensions that are excluded from traditional frame analysis.

The approach and the model were developed on the basis of a combination of theoretical critical review and empirical challenges. They have proved to be fruitful in analysing the case of Nepal, but I believe they are not case specific and have wider applicability. Here I want to draw attention to the key aspects of the approach and highlight some features that make the model useful in other contexts and cases.

In Chapter 2 I argued that the traditional framing perspective collapses effect and effectiveness and that this is the result of a dominant focus on the success of frames and of equating effect with the presence of resonance with an intended audience. Moving away from the focus on success and modifying the concept of resonance allowed a new conceptualisation of the effect of frames. This is the core of my new approach, which focuses on effects on actors involved in the framing process, and more specifically effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action.

The object of framing being a subject

Much of the analytical focus in frame analysis has been on the framing of an issue. In that context, analytical concepts such as ‘frame disputes’ and ‘counter-framing’ refer to two or more actors competing over the framing of the same issue, such as prostitution or immigration. In the case of Nepal the object that was framed was at times not an issue, but another actor. For the terrorism frame the object of framing were the Maoists and for the peace frame the SPA framed themselves as peace bringers. Having an actor as the object of framing adds a new meaning and dimension to disputes over frames. With the object of framing being an actor, the object has agency and can thus react and respond to the framing, creating a further dimension of interaction in the framing process. When an actor is the object of framing, the frame disputes and counter-framing also have the potential to involve identity and character traits more directly and to a larger extent, making the frames more personal and actor focused than if that the object of framing were an issue.

The second aspect with regard to the object of framing being another actor has to do with the place where effects occur and this is directly related to the re-conceptualisation of the effect dimension of frames. When the framed object is an issue, the audience becomes an evident object of analysis in
terms of where the effects of the frame can be found. If instead the object of framing is another actor, but not the audience, the frame has an effect on that actor. As we have seen, similar mechanisms of actor effects can be at work even in cases where the object of framing is formally an issue, as with the peace frame in Nepal.

Modified resonance

In traditional frame analysis the determining variable for the success or failure of a frame is resonance. If resonance is present the frame is accepted and thus successful; if resonance is absent the frame is rejected and thus unsuccessful. This dual outcome is the extent of frame effects from a successfullness perspective. In a frame analysis that focuses on successfullness, the concepts of success, resonance and audience are analytically combined and what is measured is the effectiveness of a frame rather than its effect. In asking about success the focus of analysis is on the audience since they and only they have the power to accept or reject the frame, i.e. the agency granted to the audience consists only of (consciously or unconsciously) saying yes or no to a framing attempt. Thus, the focus on resonance in frame analysis is intimately connected to a perspective where the effects of a frame are assessed in the audience.

My approach, with its focus on the effect of the frames on the actors involved in the framing process, the framing actor and in some cases the framed actor, is fruitful in modifying and broadening this perspective. From a constructivist perspective what is perceived is just as important in terms of effects as what is actual. In terms of resonance this translates into a theoretical assumption that perceived resonance will generate an effect even if there is no actual resonance. That is, if an actor perceives there to be resonance for his/her own frame or the frame of a competitor or adversary, this will be sufficient to influence the behaviour of that actor. This is true both in relation to a frame that the actor wishes to resonate and one that the actor does not wish to resonate. In the latter case the perceived risk of resonance is sufficient to have an observable effect on behaviour. This was demonstrated empirically in the case of Nepal, where frame effects were sometimes observed without any evidence of actual resonance. Thus, in summary, when we are interested in the effects of a frame on the actors in the framing process, what the audience actually feels about the frame, i.e. whether it actually resonates or not, is of secondary importance. Perceived resonance is sufficient to influence an actor’s perceived range of manoeuvrability for action.
The model based on my approach to frame effects in terms of perceived manoeuvrability for action (see Fig. 9.1) is designed to be as general as possible. My empirical analysis has shown the capacity of the model to cope with different kinds of framing processes as well as different kinds of frames. As was discussed in Chapter 2 and pointed out in the analysis, the framing processes in Nepal include cases where the framing object is an issue and an actor. It was pointed out that the forms of logic behind the frame effects were analytically similar in both types of cases, but that in a frame construction process with another actor as the object an emphasis on arguments focusing on identity could be expected. This in turn may have analytical relevance in terms of other characteristics of the frame. Nevertheless, the model can accommodate both issues and actors as the object of framing.

The model separates framing by oneself and framing by others as a distinguishing feature linked to effects. In traditional frame analysis the framing agent figures in the criteria for actual resonance. In my model the specific qualities of the framing agent are toned down and the importance of the distinction is more general. The purpose of this distinction is to stress the competitive and coercive aspects of the framing process and to highlight that an actor’s framing may also have consequences in terms of effects on himself/herself.

The model is encompassing in that it covers all conceivable types of framing effects on actors’ perceived manoeuvrability for action. Even though it is an analytical construct, the empirical analysis gives credence to its fruitfulness from the way respondents described their situation, although not all types of effects were present in both of the frames.
The case of Nepal is a case of frames in a context of conflict and peace. This specific context implies a theoretical expectation of finding clearly divergent frames that change over time. Yet the model should also be applicable to different contexts and cases. It could be used to analyse a process consisting of different frames, or different framings of a single issue by several actors. There is nothing to suggest that the model could not be applied to cases of international politics where contextual factors such as culture may differ between framing agents.

The model is not limited to cases of strategic framing. Regardless of the awareness level of the framing agent the frame produced can result in one or more of the effects covered in the model. In the study of Nepal it was concluded that the government’s use of the terrorism frame was strategic, with the expressed aim of being able to use the army against the Maoists. It was made clear from the interviews that using the terrorism label was a means to an end, a necessary action in order to create a context where the use of force would be seen to be a reasonable and legitimate policy. There are also some indications that the peace frame was used strategically by the Maoists, yet the evidence is not conclusive. From the interviews it seems that the Maoist leaders were aware of the political connection between concepts such as peace and democracy and their own demands of constituent assembly elections and a republic, yet the extent to which this was a conscious framing attempt to make the SPA comply with their agenda could not be conclusively determined.

The model can be used to predict in general terms the kind of effect that is likely under specific circumstances. If the two dimensions in the model can be identified in any one case we also know which of the four types of effects we should expect. This effect would then represent the actor’s view on his/her perceived manoeuvrability for action.

However, as we have seen from the discussion above, different kinds of frames may be stronger or weaker in influencing the perceived manoeuvrability for action depending on, for example, if they are positive or negative. The empirical implications of this relationship in different contexts and identifying other factors that may determine the strengths and weaknesses of a frame’s capacity to influence perceived manoeuvrability for action would be an interesting path to explore in further research.
Interviewees

Here follows a list of all the interviewees. Name, party affiliation is given for all respondents together with notable positions held. The respondents are presented in groups with regard to party affiliation. In terms of informants their name and present or past occupation is presented.

UCPN (Maoist)

Pushpa Kamal Dahal aka Prachanda
Chairman of the UCPN (Maoist) Prime Minister 16th of August 2008-4th of May 2009
Matrika Yadav
Member of the UCPN (Maoist) until 2009, then split to form own party CPN (Maoist)
Krishna Bahadur Mahara
Standing Committee member, spokesperson of the party and member of all talk teams and Former Minister of Information and Communication in the Cabinet formed after the CA elections. Talk team leader in the 2001 negotiations.
Dev Gurung
General secretariat member, former Minister of Law and Justice, 22nd of August, 2008 after the CA elections
Suresh Ale Magar
Central Committee member, member of the Constituent Assembly after the 2008 CA elections
Hisila Yami
Central Committee member, politburo member, former Minister of Physical Planning and Works, former Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation.
Dr. Baburam Bhattarai
Standing Committee Member and vice chairperson of the UCPN (Maoist). Finance Minister after CA elections. Prime Minister of Nepal 29th of August 2011-present.
C.P Gajurel
Politburo member, General secretariat member, head of International department
Nepali Congress (both NC and NCD)
Bimalendra Nidhi
Party General Secretary of NCD, Party General Secretary of NC until 2009, elected member of the CA.
Arjun KC
Joint General Secretary of Central Working Committee, Spokesperson of Central Working Committee
Gargan Thapa
Former leader of the Youth wing of NC, Central Working Committee member since 2010
Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat
Central Working Committee member, Former NCD now NC, former Minister for Energy
Sher Bahadur Deuba
Pradip Giri
Central Working Committee, former member of NCD, now NC
Dr. Narayan Bahadur Kadhka
Central Working Committee
Dr. Ram S. Mahat
Central Working Committee, former Minister of Finance
Narahari Achaya
Party member

CPN (UML)
Jhala Nath Khanal
Madhav Kumar Nepal
Pradip Gyawali
Central Committee member
Ishwor Pokhrel
General Secretary, Central Committee member
Shankar Pokhrel
Secretary, Central Committee member

RPP/RJP/RPP-Nepal
Surya Bahadur Thapa
again on 6th of February 2010 to form the National Shakti Prajatantra Party (NSPP)
Kamal Thapa
Party President of RPP until 2006, former Home minister under Gyanendra’s direct rule, split and formed RPP (Nepal)
Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani
Vice Chairman of the RPP until 2004, Finance Minister under the Thapa government in 2003. In 2004 left the RPP and joined Surya Bahadur Thapa and RJP, co-president of the RJP. Minister of Finance, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Labor & Transportation, and Minister of Housing & Physical Planning in governments formed during the Panchayat era.
Lokendra Bahadur Chand

Other parties
Narayan Man Bijukchhe
Leader of the Nepal Peasants and Workers Party
Machin Man Singh Shrestha
Last Prime Minister of Panchyat era (partyless system)
Ramesh Nath Pandey
Former Foreign Minister, appointed by king.

Civil Society and facilitators
Padma Ratna Tuladhar
Facilitator and Human Rights Activist
Daman Nath Dhungana
Facilitator
Prakash
Facilitator
Shyam Shrestha
Civil society (Citizens for Democracy and Peace)
Bhisnu Pukar Shrestha
Civil society
Malla K. Sundar
Civil society (Citizens for Democracy and Peace)
Shashee Shrestha
Civil society (womens’ rights) and former United Peoples Front, currently member of the UCPN(Maoist) party
Krishna Pahadi
Civil society
Gopal Dahit Tharu
Civil society (Tharu community)
Professionals (including academics, journalists, lawyers, military and third party facilitators)

Kiyoko Ogura
Academic, expert on the Maoist movement
Markus Heiniger
Third party facilitator
Hannes Siebert
Third party facilitator
Sadip Bahadur Shah
Retired general of (R)NA
Prof. Sushil Raj Pandey
Political scientist
Yubraj Ghimere
Senior journalist
Dr. Surya Dhungel
Constitutional expert, Head of the constitutional committee
Prof. Sridhar K. Khatri
Political scientist
Executive Director of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS).
Sarad Shah
Close to royal family
Dr. Janak Raj Joshi
Former secretary of Nepal Government, Peace secretariat
Mallik
Former secretary of Nepal Government, Peace secretariat
Dr. Shastra Dutt Pant
Political scientist
References

Articles and Books


Holloway, Wendy and Tony Jerfferson, “Eliciting Narrative Through the In-Depth Interview.” *Qualitative Interview* vol.3 no. 53 (1997).


250


Newspapers

“‘Parties, Maoists may unite for common goal,’” Kathmandu Post, June 24, 2005.

“‘Emergency a compulsion,’” Katmandu Post, December 9, 2001.

“‘King has shut doors for reconciliation,’” Kathmandu Post, May 5, 2005.


“Committee for talks with the Maoist soon,” Kathmandu Post, February 7, 2005.

“Constitutional monarchy out of NC statue,” Kathmandu Post, September 1, 2005.


“Dhakal warns parties not to join hands with Maoists,” Kathmandu Post, June 21, 2005.


“Koirala, Deuba agree to set up joint mechanism,” Kathmandu Post, April 4, 2005.
“Koirala’s three point agenda,” Kathmandu Post, May 4, 2005.
“Make democratic republic common goal,” Kathmandu Post, September 10, 2005.
“Mistakes will not be repeated: Leaders,” Kathmandu Post, May 12, 2005.
“No more appeals to rebels: Minister Dhakal,” Kathmandu Post, February 13, 2005.
“Onus on king to reconcile with parties,” Kathmandu Post, February 27, 2005.
“Oppn demand end to emergency,” Kathmandu Post, December 12, 2001.
“Parties agree to unite for uniform agenda,” Kathmandu Post, April 22, 2005.
“Parties to launch joint protest programs,” Kathmandu Post February 27, 2005.
“People want ceremonial king: Gautam,” Kathmandu Post, June 20, 2005.
“Restore democracy, we will help: India US urges release of political detainees,” Kathmandu Post March 10, 2005.
“RPP urges king to initiate dialogue with parties,” Kathmandu Post February 24, 2005.


“We had face-to-face with Maoist: Koirala, Kathmandu Post, December 8, 2005.

“Will Koirala’s ‘health trip’ seek other remedies too?,” Kathmandu Post, June 4, 2005.


**Documents and webpages**

“Political Line of CPN (Unity Centre)”, adopted by the Unity Congress of the then CPN (Unity Centre) in December 1991, in *Some Important Documents of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)*, Nepal: Janadisha Publications, 2004).


State Department, “Foreign Terrorist Organizations,” in Country Reports on Terrorism, released by the Office of the Coordinator for Counter-terrorism, April 28, 2006.

Terrorist and Disruptive Acts (Prevention and Punishment) Ordinance, 2058 (2001)


Statsvetenskapliga föreningen i Uppsala

Skrifter utgivna genom Axel Brusewitz

2. Axel Brusewitz, Studier över riksdagen och utrikespolitiken. II. Nordiska utrikesnämnder i komparativ belysning. 266 sid. 1933.
5. Sven Lindman, Parlamentarismens införande i Finlands statsförfattning. 85 sid. 1935.
10. Arne Björnberg, Parlamentarismens utveckling i Norge efter 1905. 400 sid. 1939.
11. Arne Wåhlstrand, 1905 års ministärkrise. 434 sid. 1941.

Skrifter utgivna genom C. A. Hessler

34. Sten-Sture Landström, Svenska ämbetsmäns sociala ursprung. 179 sid. 1954.
44. Carl Arvid Hessler, Statskyrkodebatten. 462 sid. 1964.
Skrifter utgivna genom Leif Lewin

85. Evert Vedung, Kärnkraften och regeringen Fälldins fall. 233 sid., 8 sid. ill. 1979.
98. Axel Hadenius, Roger Henning, Barry Holmström, Tre studier i politiskt beslutsfattande. 188 sid. 1984.
120. Torsten Svensson, Socialdemokratins dominans. En studie av den svenska socialdemo-
123. Anders Lindbom, Medborgarstaket i välfärdsstaten. Förrädrainflytande i skandinavisk
124. Stefan Björklund, En författning för disputationen. 234 sid. 1996.
127. Åsa Lundgren, Europeisk identitetspolitik. EUs demokratibistånd till Polen och Turkiet.
128. Per Löwdin, Det dukade bordet. Om partierna och de ekonomiska krismena. 496 sid.
1998.
129. Jan Teorell, Demokrati eller fâtalsvälde? Om beslutsfattande i partiorganisationen. 391
sid. 1998.
130. Barry Holmström, Domstolar och demokrati. Den tredje statsmaktens politiska roll i
131. Shirin Alhák, Att kontrollera staten. Den statliga revisionens roll i den parlamentariska
demokratin. 335 sid. 1999.
132. Torkel Nyman, Kommittépolitik och parlamentarism. Statsminister Bostöm och rikspoli-
ill. 1999.
133. Per Ola Öberg, Jörgen Hermansson, Per-Åke Berg. I väntan på solnedgången. Arbets-
livsfondens tillkomst och verksamhet, en studie av makt och rationalitet inom förval-
tningspolitiken. 342 sid. 1999.
134. Anders Berg, Staten som kapitalist. Marknadsanpassningen av de affärsdrivande verken
135. Sverker Härd, Den godtyckliga demokratin. En studie av olika metoder att tillgodose
kravet på proportionell rättvisa. 216 sid. 1999.
137. Anna-Carin Svensson, In the Service of the European Union. The Role of the presidency
138. Ann-Cathrine Jungar, Surplus Majority Government. A Comparative Study of Italy and
Finland. 384 sid. 2000.
139. Leif Lewin, Svenskt kynne. En konferens anordnad av Humanistisk-samhällsvenskapliga
140. Ingrid Widlund, Paths to Power and Patterns of Influence. The Dravidian Parties in
South Indian Politics. 404 sid. 2000.
141. Carl Melin, Makten över trafikpolitiken. Korporatism, lobbying och opinionsbildning
142. Joakim Johansson, SAF och den svenska modellen. En studie av uppbrottet från förval-
143. Johan Matz, Constructing a Post-Soviet International Political Reality. Russian Foreign
144. Torsten Svensson, Marknadsanpassningens politik. Den Svenska Modellens förändring
Case of Integration. 181 sid. 2001.
152. Per Strömblad, Politik på stadens skuggsida. 226 sid. 2003.


**Skrifter utgivna genom Li Bennich-Björkman och Jörgen Hermansson**


Skriftserien ingår från och med nr 94 i serien Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.