The Constant Struggle Over Land

A case study of the Maoist movement and collective resistance to land acquisition in India

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Abstract

Concurrent with the acceleration of globalization there has been an increasing tendency of communal conflicts. Resisting the possibility of the Indian government to acquire land, an expanding movement of opposition is taking place. The purpose of this paper is to highlight what motivates people to turn toward violence. The paper focuses on the Maoist movement in Chhattisgarh, India, tracing the processes of the relationships of violence within the society as well as the collective feeling of deprivation. Aiming to emphasize what makes people join the Maoists in their violent struggle a correlation between the motivations and the final action is demonstrated. The findings conclude that violent relationships existing within the society reinforces violence, which can be a fundamental factor when people are motivated to joint the Maoists in their rebellion.

*Keyword:* Communal Conflict, Land, Violence, Maoists, Deprivation

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1 Introduction

“The forest is the very basis of our lives. We exist because the forest exists. Thus, we strive to protect the forest, at any cost” (HDRC 2005:21)

In the era of globalization, an assimilation of economic development is sustaining our lifestyle of consumption, more production and an accelerated exchange of goods all over the world. At the same time attention is being paid to human rights with the certainty that this is a perquisite of the globalization. However, many of the world’s nations do not follow the restrictions on their industrial expansion and environmental pollution. Concurrent with the acceleration of globalization there has been a tendency of increased communal conflicts (Gurr 1993:131). Resisting the exploitation of natural resources as well as the modern ideology of economical capitalism, people strive to hold on to their communities, traditions and land

Criticisms has come about regarding the neo-colonial Land Acquisition Act (LAA) in India, which was established by the British colonial rule in 1894. Different aspects are criticized, one being the states possibility of acquiring land for “public purpose”. Public purpose is defined vaguely and the LAA has enabled private industries to access and obtain land that by the state is regarded wasteland¹ (Basu 2007:1281; Committee Report 2009:14,18; Mearn 1999:32; Ramanathan 2011:10,11). Further critique concerns whether the act constrains the possibilities for the poor people to administer and access land when the government prioritizes private stakeholders to develop industries (Mearns 1999:30-33).

Opposing the capitalistic development and the states domination of acquiring land, the communist movement in India first emerged short after independence in 1951, coming to be named the Naxalites movement. Today there are two prominent groups within the Naxalite movement, the Peoples War Group (PWG) and the Maoists Communist Centre (MCC), forming the underground Communist Party of India (Maoists)² also called the Maoists (Gupta 2007:165-175; Roy 2011:65,74,75). The Maoists fight an armed war against the government, struggling for a new political system, arguing that they represent the most marginalized groups in society (HRW 2008:7-11; Prasad 2010:13-15). The Maoists movement in the region of Chhattisgarh has increased from sixty thousand participants in 1995 to one hundred fifty thousand in 2010 (Prasad 2010:12). In 2006 the Indian Prime Minster Singh declared the Naxalities as “The single biggest internal threat” (HRW 2008:7-11; Prasad 2010:15), imposing the

¹ According to the Committee Report (2009) the definition of wasteland should be classified into cultivable and non-cultivable. Today this expression is blure (Committee Report 2009:18)
² The Communist Party India (maoists) should not be confused with the Communist Party India (marxist), which has had a strong political position in the West-Bengal and do not support violent struggle (Memo 2011).
government military force Salwa Judum to quell the violent movement. This has led to a pattern of revenge and constructed a vicious cycle of violence (Gurr 1993:15,16; Roy 2011:81-87). Deprivation due to landlessness is present all over India. However, due to the enormous affiliation to the Maoists movement in Chhattisgarh during the last decades it is of interest to understand what motivates the tribal people in Chhattisgarh to enter the Maoists movement and choose the path of violence.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this paper is to capture the personal and societal relationships that motivate the people to join the Maoists and turn towards violence. To do this I will use two theories, Relative Deprivation Theory and the Civilization Theory, when analyzing the data. By looking at the data through these perspectives there will be mapped how land acquisition in India motivates people to collective choose violence.

1.2 Research Problem

According to the state of India, when claiming common land or wasteland this should be benefiting the people, something that often do not happen (Committee Report 2009:166-169; Padel & Das 2010:337). The opposing violent and nonviolent movements against land acquisition have increased during the last decades (Prasad 2010:12; Swain 1997:822,823). According to the Maoists they fight against acquisition of land, and exploitation of forests, and in this manner it is relevant to look at how the contradictions the Maoists see in Indian society can motivate more people to join their rebellion. However, there is also a huge nonviolent resistance to land acquisition, especially in the neighbor-state Madhya Pradesh (Ekta Parishad 2012). Therefore it should be possible to trace specific motivations of why the Maoists choose violent opposition. I will look into what motivates people to turn towards violence, and what constraints are present in the society when this occurs.
1.3 Research Question

How can land acquisition by the Indian government be a contributing factor when people decide to participate in the violet Maoist movement?

To be able to answer this research question I will focus on these two sub-questions:

- How do land acquired by the India government affect the landless people?
- What are the subjective motivations for the Maoists to oppose the state?

1.4 Limitations and Critique

To limit myself I will use the time frame from 2005 and forward, were an escalation of the violent opposition to the state is prominent. I will only look at how the Adivasis\(^3\) (tribal people) and Dalits\(^4\) (casteless) are situated regarding land acquisition, as they are the major land-less and agrarian-dependent people in India (Committee Report 2009:103). A larger amount of data is also available when it comes to the exposed situation of Adivasis and Dalits. Of course is it not possible to describe the Adivasis and Dalits as homogeneous groups due to the fact that no group is static (Desai & Dubay 2011). However, generally speaking, the Adivasis and Dalits have been classified as the most marginalized and suppressed groups within the Indian society. I am aware of the critique that should be raised as a researcher reinforces the use of static groups (Desai & Dubay 2011:42). The subjective perception of the Maoists will be analyzed within the state Chhattisgarh. A question to be raised is why looking at the situation of landless people all over India but only the outcome in Chhattisgarh. Since the research aims to explain what motivates people to join the Maoists in their violent rebellion, and not to explain the violent movements within India in general, this specific region as being the heart of the movement will capture some of the main causes. Furthermore, since the paper seeks to capture the subjective motivations among the Maoists, primary sources would of course strengthen this perspective and the limitations of possibilities to collect this material need to be taken into consideration (Esaiasson et al. 2007:228).

Critiques could be raised against my selection of using two different theories,

\(^3\) Adivasis is the word tribal people use themselves, in public record Scheduled Tribes is used.
\(^4\) Dalits is the word the casteless people use themselves, in public record Scheduled Caste is used.
instead of enhancing the different aspect of peace researcher Johan Galtung’s concept of conflict transformation or political scientist Ted Gurr’s theory of collective political action. My intention with this paper is to explore and describe what motivates people to choose violence. As will be demonstrated below within the Civilization Theory, violence creates violence (Galtung 1996:200). Since the Relative Deprivation Theory does not covers the aspect of violence already present in the society, I find Galtung’s aspect of structural and cultural violence crucial when looking at motivations of turning into violence. Even though Gurr clarifies patterns of discrimination and inequalities within society taking place when people feel deprived (Gurr 1993:6), he do not define those as violent aspects. Finally it could be questioned whether a case study is a relevant model for the Relative Deprivation Theory, or a comparative study would have been more relevant when looking at different outcome when feeling deprived. Since the aim of my research is to map the motivations when turning towards violence, both within the group but also looking at the relationships in the society, the Relative Deprivation Theory will be used as a tool when highlighting the subjective groups- feeling of deprivation.

1.5 Previous Research

Authors such as Arundath Roy (2011), Felix Padel (2010), Jan Myrdal (2010) have written articles, and carried out interviews and observations on the struggle and oppression in the case of the Maoists in India. Dipkat K. Gupta (2007) has written a paper on the Rational Choice Theory and the Naxalite movement in India, which can find similarities to the feeling of frustration and deprivation in the option of turning towards collective political action. Hence, causes of why the Maoists is using violence, as well as the suppression by the state towards them has already been mapped. However, there is no material present in the theoretical framework of Civilization Theory or Relative Deprivation Theory. This paper is therefore a relevant supplement in the context of violent relationship present in the societal structures and violence reinforced through cultures. I argue that this is essential to understand when breaking a vicious cycle of violence. This paper will thereby be an addition to the literature of the Maoists in India, looking through new lenses and describe a complex interlinking of what motivates violence.
Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the part will explain the Civilization Theory, since the theory will be used in the analysis in order to map the violence present in the society. Thereafter the Relative Deprivation Theory will be presented, which in the analysis will be used to trace the subjective feeling among the people that make up the Maoists.

2.1 Civilization Theory

During the 1960s, the prominent peace researcher Johan Galtung came up with his dual concept of peace. Positive peace describes the “social justice”, and negative peace is the “absence of violence” (Galtung 1969:183; Ramsbothan et al. 2007:9). In negative peace structures of social injustices can still be present, which legitimate the deprivation of people. During the 1960s, Galtung represented the view upon peace research in Europe and the American peace researchers criticized the unscientific trend that was taking place in Europe. However, with some revising of his ideas, and the paper “Violence, Peace and Peace Research“ in *Journal of Peace Research* (Galtung 1969), Galtung redeemed himself and lifted peace research to a new dimension, embracing the concept social aspect and latent violence (Lawler 2008:83,84). As a continuation of positive and negative peace the aspect of cultural violence first emerged during the 1990s. This was then seen as a component to the famous paper “Violence, Peace and Peace Research“. In Johan Galtung’s book, *Peace by Peaceful means* (1996), the aspect of cultural violence is presented as Civilization Theory.

Cultural violence enhances and legitimizes structural and direct violence (Galtung 1996:196). The cultivation of a culture and the acceptance reinforces itself because of the culture schooling and collective heritage (Baumann 1999:25; Galtung 1990:291). Galtung argues that entire cultures cannot be violent, but that violent can spread across and be present within different domains of a culture. Cultural violence has the capacity to legitimize and normalize violence, making it acceptable within the society (Galtung 1996:196).

Galtung identifies six examples of cultural violence, which are based on religion, ideology, languages, art, empirical science and formal science (Galtung 1990:291; Galtung 1996:201). I will briefly explain three of these examples—religion, ideology and empirical science—because I find them to be most applicable for this paper. I will bear all aspects of cultural violence in mind when doing the research, but due to limitations of space, a selection must be made.

Highlighting Galtung first point, religions has created and reinforced the
presence of a God. According to the most prominent religions (Christianity, Islam and Judaism) there is a God everywhere, and people within the society can be situated closer to or further away from God. In contrast to God, the creation of Satan enabled the division of good and bad, and has the possibility to push people into heaven or hell, misery or luxury, with strict criteria for their hierarchical place. On the basis of this, a creation of the “self” and the “other” can occur, where one’s religious status has the possibility to determine one’s assets in the society (Galtung 1996:201-203).

Furthermore, since the influence of religion has diminished to a certain degree because of secularization, the dominant aspect setting the norm in the modern society can be seen as political ideologies. Modernity would advocate for the division between “self” and “other” rather than the religious “God” and “Satan”. By dividing the “self” and the “other” and raising ones own group by attributing the “self” as good and the “other” as bad, the group identity will be strengthened and polarization can emerge. The group seen as bad or not as worthy is then the victims of structural violence, where oppression and exploitation takes place. Eventually what Galtung label as a “self-fulfilled prophecy” will occur, where people are debased as a consequence of exploitation and as a consequence of exploitation they are debased. Creating the masses of people into an “it”, will legitimize and naturalize the dehumanization (Galtung 1996:203,204). Dehumanizing can lead to acceptance of direct violence. Galtung argues that the state thereby has the possibility to decide what is right and wrong, based on the ideology of nation-state, justifying violence and killing in war (Galtung 1996:204).

How can we then find logic in the continuing violence legitimimized through cultural violence? Galtung argues that empirical science is also a factor when verifying the acceptance of exploitation. As an example, empirical science is justifying the neoclassical economic structure, making it logical for the majority of the global society. Since the neoclassical economic doctrine is understood as the science of economic correctness, comparative advantage within the economic marked is the logical manner of an economic structure in the global society. The basis of the verifying happens through cultural acceptance. Due to this, countries with raw materials and cheap labor are the ones extracting their resources for the demand of the elite in the global society. The normalized idea of advantaged within the economic marked, is legitimizing the status quo in the economic system where structural violence is present everywhere (Galtung 1996:205,206).

Galtung explain four terms he see as reinforcing violence in the structure; penetration as the domination of the elite who are higher in the social hierarchy, segmentation in which elites neglect people lower in the hierarchy to participate, marginalization meaning that the elite keep the people who are lower in the hierarchy outside the central domain, and fragmentation which is when people who are lower in the hierarchy are separated from each other. Hence, cultural violence is creating a space between the “Other” and the “Self”, meaning that the hierarchy in the society enable people higher up to deprive people lower down (Galtung 1990:294,296,301,302; Galtung 1996:198,199). The presence of structural violence is thus embedded in the structures, it is latent and constructed
through a spectrum of time (Galtung 1969:173).

The way direct violence manifests, seeing it and feeling it, we do not always recognize the latent violence that is deeply rooted in society. Structural and cultural violence makes it possible for the direct violence to bloom, and flower more easily (Galtung 1969:173). The violence emerging in the society is not necessarily targeted against the manifesting perpetrator, but has deeper implications in the societal structures (Galtung 1996:70-73). However, the oppression through structural violence creates deeply rooted frustration within people and groups. This might lead to direct violence in a society where people feeling frustrated try to free themselves from the oppression of structural violence. Furthermore the structure tries to suppress the rioting with direct violence. Galtung argues that it is a common misconception to blame the manifesting violence as the cause of conflict (Galtung 1996:200). Both structural and cultural violence deprive people from their needs. This can be turned into collective trauma, which will enter the subconscious among the actors affected and create contradictions within the actor. Concluding the Civilization Theory it should be clear that “violence breeds violence” (Galtung 1996:200).

2.2 Relative Deprivation Theory

The relative deprivation theory emerged during the Second World War with the sociologist Samuel Stouffer attempting to explain the unexpected connection of people who served in the army and their feelings of satisfaction (Walker & Smith 2002:1). During the 1980s, the theory received harsh criticism, and was used less, but has gone through a revival 20 years. Now it is used when trying to explain the aspect of psychological subjectivity, primarily when it comes to group identity and collective behavior, of feeling deprived (Gurr 1993:123,124; Walker & Smith 2002:2). Rather than aiming to justify or satisfy any claims for groups, the Relative Deprivation Theory makes it possible to better understand and analyze the motivational process of social movement as well as the processes of violent conflicts (Abrahamsson et al. 2001:84 Walker & Smith 2002:2).

Oxford Dictionary defines deprivation as “state of not having the normal benefits of adequate food, housing, health care etc” (Simpson & Weiner 1989:323). Relative deprivation is present when people feel they have the right to obtain certain goals, benefits or goods in the society, but the possibility to obtaining those factors is distant (Gurr 1971:10-13). The capacity of a group to achieve those goals in relation to the expectation of achieving the goal defines how deep the deprivation is. Deprivation can therefore be understood as the feeling of unsatisfied basic need, immaterial or material, that can represents the condition behind social injustice with the lack of power for the involved group. What do we feel are our social rights to do, hold, have, receive and believe and what are we permitted to obtain by other people or groups in the society (Abrahamsson et al. 2001:84; Gurr 1993:34,35)?

In Minority at Risk (1993) Ted Gurr describes the collective feeling of
deprivation through communal identity groups, in which the identity is built on common historical experience, myths, religion, language, ethnicity, region, residency or caste (Gurr 1993:3-5).

Gurr describes economic, political and ecological/demographic stresses as the three factors that are present when relative deprivation occurs. A significant argument raised by Abrahamsson, et al. should be added to Gurr’s description, regarding how relative deprivation is not a description of poverty, but instead the subjective perception of how societal conditions are unjust (Abrahamsson et al. 2001:78; Gurr 1993:40-51). Therefore, relative deprivation could be seen as a complimentary explanation, the socio-psychological aspect, as to why people are motivated to take collective action when confronted with social, political and economic inequalities (Abrahamsson et al. 2011:78).

Gurr names four points that should be present when a group manage to turn into collective action when feeling deprived. First of all Gurr argue that disadvantaged groups is of importance when shaping the “common interest in collective action” (Gurr 1993:126). Those disadvantages are political and economic differentials, demographic and ecological stresses and group discrimination. The grievance that occurs within a group depends on its disadvantage, which again will affect its possibility to mobilize political action. Secondly Gurr highlights that the salience of the group identity is crucial to overcome differentials within the group. The group identity will influence the establishment of grievance (as well as the disadvantage mention first) and the “potential for political mobilization” (Gurr 1993:126,127). Thirdly, Gurr points out the importance of having thigh networks with a good possibility of communication for the cohesion of the group. If there are formations of coalitions within a network, the efficiency might be better. The structures and organization within the network influence the strength of mobilization as well. Finally Gurr states that subordinate groups which are oppressed by sustained forces, often creates grievance. However, if the disadvantaged group has a history of being oppressed by force, the grievance will intensify, but the possibility to act will be reduced (Gurr 1993:128,129).

The force driving communal identity groups to political claims could be found in every society. However, depending on the way the state deals with groups claiming their right, the outcome of the group’s behavior will differ (Abrahamsson et al. 2001:82; Gurr 1993:92). For example the political power has the possibility to neglect the social demand of a group, and a consequence could be the expression of spontaneous collective action (Abrahamsson et al. 2001:83). One of the earlier researchers approaching the relative deprivation theory was W.G Runcinman. He explored the feeling of relative deprivation in cases of fraternal deprivation to understand why people either choose to turn toward or away from violence (Walker & Smith 2002:13,14). Runcinman’s observation of a general pattern when it comes to fraternal deprivation and the expectation to ascend in the social hierarchy is then relevant to this paper in understanding how the feeling of relative deprivation occurs:

“A is relative deprived of X when (i) he does not have X, (ii) he see some other
persons or person, which may include himself at some previous or expected time, as having X (whether or not this in fact is or will be the case), (iii) he wants X, and (iv) he sees it as feasible that he should have X “(Walker and Smith 2002:14).

Gurr points out that the severity of deprivation affects the magnitude, time and intensity of the violence. Depending on the feeling of deprivation, the violence is more participative (Gurr 1971:9,10). However what is of substantial importance when a collective group is feeling frustrated due to deprivation, and manages to turn into a mass of resistance, is either a leader on the top organizing them, or a strong collective ideology (Gurr 1991:68,69).
3 Method

The first part of this chapter provides the method used in this research. I will do a “process-tracing”, which will describe how people are motivated to join the Maoists in India and turn to violence (Esaiasson et al. 2007:327-329; Teorell & Svensson et al. 2007:80,249). The second part of this chapter explains the collection and relevance of the material being used in this paper.

3.1 Process-Tracing

Within the field of social science, research is often carried out by looking at implications and causes lying hidden in the society, behind structures and actions. By using the method of “process-tracing” it might be possible to clarify the chain beginning with actors motivation and their final agitations. Focusing on the historical correlation within land acquisition and the Maoists violence in India, it will be possible to describe and trace the mechanisms between my two variables, x (land acquisition) and y (violence) (Esaiasson et al. 2007:327; Teorell & Svensson 2007:80,249,250). Important while doing a “process-tracing”, of actors motivation is to find different implications in my theory, to sustain the relation between x and y (Esaiasson et al. 2007:334; Teorell & Svensson et al. 2007:247). Criticism have been raised against the co-variation of x and y since there will be implications for the causal relationship between x and y. This is due to the fact that more than one factor will be affecting the dependent variable. However the purpose of the process tracing is not necessarily to “demonstrate the causal status”, but rather to strengthen the argument of the relationship between x and y (Teorell & Svensson 2007:226,227,241, 249).

Esaiasson et al. argues that to conduct a complete mapping of the motivations of the actor’s agitation, four aspects need to be covered. Primarily the motivation that is the most outstanding of turning towards violence needs to be understood. The Maoists argue that they are fighting for an equal distribution of land trough a revolting of the political system, claiming to representing the most marginalized and poor people within the society (HRW 2008:20; Prasad 2010:15). This can thus be seen as their strategic goal. Furthermore, the cognitive perception of the situation needs to be understood, looking at the subjective feelings of the reality. Esaiasson et al. continues to explain that the understanding of the decision to carry out the action of the motivation is essential to trace the motivations. Last it is crucial to acknowledge the author’s decision of which indicators and determinations selected when doing the “process-tracing” in the research (Esaiasson et al. 2007:333).
Of importance due to the previous section, Esaiasson pose the argument that it is highly possible to look at an actor’s motivation through relationships in the society (Esaiasson et al. 2007:327,328). The actor’s subjective statement of motivation is of central importance (Teorell & Svensson 2007:334). A “process-tracing” will thereby be carried out through two different theories catching the subjective feeling of deprivation and the societal relationship motivating the Maoists. By doing this I argue that a wider understanding of the causes that motivates violence could be mapped. There will also be a possibility to see if faults are present within any of the theories, and thereby find different implications within the variables (Teorell & Svensson 2007:249-252). Tracing the mechanism has the possibility to answer the question; what causes what. By defining the different actors it is also possible to see who causes what. What are the motivations for actors agitation into violence? Why do the Maoists turn towards violence? By looking into different indicators the intention of the x and the action in y can be better understood. The indicators when tracing the causes in my analytical case are found in the theories (Teorell & Svensson 2007:247-250).

3.1.1 Indicators of Civilization Theory

Johan Galtung find three sources were violence emerge from. Using those as indicators when investigating the external relations, the motivation in the society could be found, and a correlation can be observed and strengthen the relationship between land acquisition and the motivation of turning into direct violence (Galtung 1996:72; Teorell & Svensson 2007:249).

Through Galtung’s conflict triangle, different patterns of conflict can occur, spreading from all different corners, creating different approaches to conflict (1996:200). Within the Civilization Theory following indicators will map the roles of the different actors within the conflict. It will also show the motivations behind the conflict. The cultural violence will focus on how the collective subconscious affects the collective behavior towards the groups being analyzed. I will not look at the cultural differences as a source of the conflict, rather how the collective attitude toward groups is formed and reinforced by a cultural acceptance (Baumann 1999:24,25,52; Galtung 2007:20). The structural violence
will focus on where the Maoists and the government find major contradictions within the society (Webel & Galtung 2007:16). If certain groups are excluded in order to achieve goals, then contradictions are present within the society (Webel & Galtung 2007:16). Structural violence can be seen as social injustice in which groups of lower status are deprived by groups of higher status (Galtung 1990:292-295). Galtung sees the direct violence as behavior that directly causes harms to somebody else (Galtung 1996:197). In this paper the direct violence will be seen as the neglecting of basic needs as well as violence based on identity. The neglecting of basic needs can occur through structural violence and can be justified through cultural violence. A reaction to the deprivation of needs can be frustration and violence, or even apathy and hopelessness (Galtung 1990:292-295; Galtung 1996:200).

3.1.2 Indicators of Relative Deprivation Theory

Looking into the subjective perception of the actors, I will use Gurr’s Relative Deprivation Theory to map the feelings of deprivation, and to examine the motivations of turning to violence. Using secondary sources such as interviews and observation I will analyze the personal perception of deprivation. What do the Maoists themselves state as their motivation to choose violence? Have their demands been met? And how do they feel they have been treated compared to other groups? By using the subjective perception as an indicator, a better understanding of the actors aim can be found. Since Relative Deprivation Theory builds on the subjective perception of a situation, this indicator of the situation is crucial to understanding the motivation behind the process (Teorell & Svensson et al. 2007:252).

When carrying out a complete process-tracing, the motivation of the actors should be studied with a critical eye. An easy mistake that can take place when investigating the motivation of actors’ actions is to simplify what the real motivation is, and take the action itself as the motivation (Esaiasson et al. 2007:329). For example looking at the Maoists, the action of violence itself might not be the motivation, but rather subjective or external causes lying deeper in the human subconscious and relationships within society (Esaiasson et al. 2001:329). The collection of the data is therefore substantial to cover the relevant aspects.
3.2 Material

I have done a strategic selection of my material, which is composed of secondary sources, due to a limited possibility to collect primary sources (Esaiasson et al. 2007:330,331; Teorell & Svensson 2007:84; Walliman 2009:50-55). Teorell & Svensson highlights the relevance of using personal documents when looking at the motivations by the actors in the process tracing. Even though a conclusion cannot be drawn from the actor’s motivation, due to a lack of the contextual influence, it still is of major importance when gaining the motivational reasons in my method (Teorell & Svensson 2007:251,252).

3.2.1 Collecting and Analyzing of the Material

My empirical material will be analyzed using a historical method (by some called a source critical method\(^5\)) that will enable me to give a clear description of the historical process that takes place in the case to be analyzed (Teorell & Svensson et al. 2007:98). Due to this, my material will consist of different types of sources such as interviews from different journals, books focusing on the different groups through interviews and observations, as well as scientific articles and different reports published by human rights organizations, the Indian government and international institutions. (Teorell & Svensson 2007:84,104; Walliman 2009:50-55). When using a historical method to abstract my data, it is crucial to have critical gone through the sources being used. The authenticity of the sources needs to be considered. Using historical sources, the gap in time creates a larger uncertainty about the validity of the sources (Teorell & Svensson 2007:104). Teorell & Svensson urges the importance of evaluate the relation between the sources and the case to be studied. By investigating the approximation in time and space, the source can be defined as more valid, when reported closer in time to the case studied, as well as closer in physical distance to the case (Teorell & Svensson 2007:105,106).

As for my researches, journalists have been present in both time and space, when doing personal interviews and observation of the group studied in this paper. Citations and information used from newspapers is also valid in the sense that it is expressed close in time. Even though some of the research papers and scholar articles there is a wider gap within the timeframe, it is still essential building on earlier material collected and systematically analyzed (Teorell & Svensson 2007:105,106). However there should be an awareness raised with what is called the tendency, which highlight the subjective perception of the information collected. Since interviews and observation is carried out by other researchers, the study of human is always subjective, something that should be kept in mind (Teorell & Svensson 2007:106).

4 Analysis

This chapter highlights the central findings of the research. The first part gives a brief background of the situation in the region. It will also highlight the strategic motivations of the Maoists to understand what they aim to change within the society. The second and third part is based on my historical method of empirical data. To get a valid perception of the motivation of the Maoists the second part of this chapter will go through the societal relationships present in India regarding land acquisition and the landlessness. Doing this, implications motivating the Maoists can be exposed. The third part will go deeper into the subjective perception of the Maoists, which will clarify the cognitive situation.

4.1 Land Acquisition in India

There has been a historical disadvantage of land-ownership towards Adivasis (tribal people) and Dalits (casteless) in India (Bakshi 2008:2; Thorat 2002). Ten percent of the Indian rural population is landless (IFAD:1) and often benefit from wasteland in some way, either by inhabiting it, or by cultivating traditional Indian crops on it (Committee Report 2009:14; Mearns 1999:27). The acquiring of land in the purpose of an economic development has retained the gaps between the growing economic elite and people depending on access to land to sustain their livelihoods (Desai & Dubay 2011:45-47; Mearns 1999:16,17). Without having the benefit of land there is a loss of household, agriculture production and fundamental assets such as security, religious, social and economically possibilities (Mearns 1999:1,16,19).

The struggle for land has gone on for centuries, concerning agriculture land, livelihood land, and forestland. The landless people that don’t have access to common land depend heavily on the state. The state government of Chhattisgarh is unable to provide an equal and just share among the people depending on land, something leading to conflict over land and encroachment (Guha 2007:3308; Swain 1997:19-22; Pai 2007:10; Ramanathan 2002:3).

In their party program the Maoists state four contradictions found in the Indian society, which they strategically aim to change through an armed revolution. Those contradictions are;

“i) contradiction between imperialism and the Indian people, ii) contradiction between feudalism and the broad masses of the people, iii) contradiction between capitalism and labor and iii) contradictions among the ruling classes” (Prasad 2010:15).
The strategically goal of the Maoists is to revolt the Indian political system to contain an equal share of resources. It could thereby be relevant to map the major sources regarding landlessness. Within those aspects the motivations of the Maoists violence could be found in different layers within the society (Esaiasson et al. 2007:332; Prasad 2010:15).

4.2 Motivations within the Societal Context

4.2.1 Cultural Violence

According to different scholars (Oommen 1986; Desai & Dubay 2011; Torath 2002) a cultural reinforcement of political and economic positions has affected the marginalized people the most. The rights of the “less” developed groups are pushed out of the sphere of accepted norms through an ideology mainstreamed by the state (Galtung 1996:205-207). For Dalits in rural areas a general acceptance of exclusion exists in the society regarding access to land based on the caste-system (Desai & Dubay 2011). In relation to Galtung’s aspect of cultural violence, the religion is in this case a substantial factor legitimizing the position in the social hierarchy and deprivation of land (Galtung 1996:201-203). Concerning the Adivasis their culture in the forest is often at odds with the mainstream, which legitimize the “modern” development of their living, causing a demographic stress and deprivation of their basic needs (MHDR 2002:9).

According to Galtung the cultural violence is also present when the ideology of the nation-state is creating a gap between themselves and the “other”. The “other” can in this case be seen as the Adivasis and Dalits, constantly categorized and reinforced as homogenous groups in society (Galtung 1996:203,204).

It is important to acknowledge the ongoing debate about the role of the caste-system. Criticism of its basis on hierarchical structures in the Indian society is well discussed (Desai and Dubay 2011:40-45; Oommen 1986). The caste-system determines the social status and opportunities of the individual before birth, and therefore plays a huge part for the rural population when it comes to opportunities in the society (Desai & Dubay 2011; Thorat 2002). Oommen argue that the Hindu religion has been an important element in the building of the Indian nation after independence. This has led to a dominant norm-system based on religious participation (Oommen 1986). The caste-system has created a hierarchy, in which the upper castes can be seen as the dominant group, or the elite. They have the possibility of accessing social, political and cultural assets (Desai & Dubay 2011). As an outcome of the social hierarchy a majority of Dalits are disadvantaged and exposed to more poverty than other groups. Due to this they have been excluded from the capital market, which have led to a lower possibility to buy land (Thorat 2002:575,576).

Dominant groups, as for example in Chhattisgarh the central government, landlords and industries, have the possibility to decide what should be seen as legitimate and illegitimate (HDRC 2005:39; Oommen 1986). They can
mainstream their own culture while pushing minorities to the periphery of right and wrong when it comes to accepted norms. As Galtung argues, the way we today find the economic development as the logical way of expanding societal goods, it is easy to classify tribal people as backward communities, and by doing this there is a possibility that the dominant group can continue to promote industrial development without being held responsible (Galtung 1996:205,206; Padel 2010:229).

The construction of the “self” and the “other” might then be stronger among the rural marginalized groups, where Oommen urge that the feeling of collectiveness is a way to respond to a core group driving a mainstream culture, excluding and exploiting those groups identities and political and economic demand (Oommen 1986:55,56). Even though laws have been established aimed at preventing atrocities against Adivasis, Dalits and other minorities, the atrocities directed against those groups still occur (NCRB 2011; Mearns 1999:10-12). The personal feeling of being displaced from one’s home, deprived of one’s honor, and unable to live in an environment with a safety net and social contact has, in the case of a large amount of the landless people, been perpetrated by industrial expansion (Guha 2007:3306). As Galtung so clearly shows, the personal and direct behavior within the society, is accepted and normalized by the cultural perception (Galtung 1996:196,197). This can be a valid explanation to the failure of abolishing caste-based discrimination as well as suppressing the identity of tribal people.

Trying to mainstream the different cultures in India into a national ideology will lead to an undermining of the political and economic right of a huge part of the tribal population who see their culture as a part of living in harmony with the forest and their land (HDRC 2005; Oommen 1985:71; Padel & Das 2010:336). Going deeper into my analysis and looking at what Galtung defines as structural violence, it is possible to get a notion of the legitimization of those structures.

4.2.2 Structural Violence

An argument highlighted by both Galtung and Gurr is that political and economic discrimination creates a contradiction within a person and can lead to the feeling of deprivation (Galtung & Webel 2007:15-17; Gurr 1993:42,47). What differs in their argument is that Gurr defines this as disadvantaged groups, or political and economic discrimination, while Galtung explain this as structural violence (Galtung 1969:171; Gurr 1993:36,37). In this paper Galtungs concept of structural injustice as structural violence will be used. The Maoists view of contradictions reflects the deprivation of many forest-dependent and landless people who are not being cared for by their state government (Guha 2007:3309).

Disadvantaged groups throughout the Indian history, especially during and after the colonial time, have had less access to land. Galtung’s four conditions of how structural violence is enacted, penetration, segmentation, marginalization and fragmentation (Galtung 1996:198,199), can be applicable on the situation of landlessness and structural exclusion in India. I find mainly three problematic
structural contradictions when looking at the circumstances urged by Galtung, that make it difficult for the landless and forest-dependent people to achieve better access to land, and that keep the situation unchanged. The issues concern: Common Property Resources, failure to implement comprehensive legal framework for land-distribution, and industrial exploitation (Mearns 1999; Jodha 1989; Padel 2010; Visvanatha & Parvan 2005).

Common Property Resources contains community forest, wasteland, riverbanks, riverbeds, ponds and tanks. These areas are common land that provides the marginalized and rural population with products, employment and income. The ability to acquire the land has been due to the fact that the state government has the right to decide what should be done with all land within the state. Generally, the state governments in India have acquired land used as CPR, creating major obstacles for tribal and landless people to obtain their livelihood resources. When these assets are taken away from the marginalized people the consequences are long-term affects (HDRC 2005:34,35; Jodha 1989:264-267; Mearns 1999:27,28; Ramanathan 2002:1,3).

Another major issue is the default of the state to implement laws that were established after the independency to better the situation of the marginalized and landless people. Three major land reform legislations (Mearns 1999:46,47) were established after independence from colonial rule trying to better the access to land for the Adivasis and Dalits. The expansion of the industrial and agrarian sector has led to exposure to erosion of land due to industrial zones, encroachment on common land, protected forest areas, and the lack of including the local demand in the process of reforming the agriculture (Basu 2007:1281; HDRC 2005:24; Committee Report 2009:7; Mearns 1999:10,11; Prasad 2010:6).

A third obstacle found within the Indian society affecting landless and marginalized people is the establishment of Special Economic Zones (SEZ). The central governments decide whether they want to lease land to private corporations and on what conditions (Basu 2007:1281; Mearns 1999:4; Prasad 2010:7; SEZ 2005). Since corporations do not necessarily prioritize meeting people’s needs, due to lack of Corporate Social Responsibility and default resettlement packages, the land acquired for “public purpose” has not always benefited the public group intended. As well as the socio-economic impact, the psychological effects are of importance in the matters of religion and identity that often goes hand in hand with having a land and a home (Committee Report 2009:16; Mearns 1999:1,16,19, Padel 2010:229,337).

According to Galtung structural violence is present when people with higher social status hamper people with lower social status from obtaining their basic needs, concluding that, “Violence is being present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realization are below their potential realization” (Galtung 1969:168).
4.2.3 Direct Violence

In Chhattisgarh the expression jal jangal jammam (water, forest, land) is intertwined with the philosophy of a large part of the people and their way of living (HDCR 2005:13; Pai 2007). I will base this part on analyzing how structural violence enables direct violence to affect the Dalits and Adivasis in their quest for land acquisition. Focusing on the possibility of accessing goods in the society I would argue that Adivasis and Dalits have not had their basic needs fulfilled because of historical exclusion of land reinforced by cultural dominance.

According to the Chhattisgarh Human Development Report published in 2005, the Adivasis and other forest-dependent people’s identities are closely linked to the forest, land and water. Tribal people live in a symbiotic relationship with the forest, using it in a positive and sustainable way (HDRC 2005:21). People living in the forest depend on its resources to sustain their livelihood. They use the forest to feed their cattle, to make medicine, to provide timber and for its socio-psychological aspects such as ritual and religion (HDRC 2005:20-25).

Galtung urge how manifesting violence often overlooks the deeper contradictions within the structures of the society (Galtung 1996:70-73). Looking at the National Crime Record Bureau report from 2011 it is possible to capture the magnitude of direct violence committed against Scheduled Caste (Dalits) and Scheduled Tribes (Adivasis). Atrocities committed against Adivasis within the state of Chhattisgarh are of the highest amount in India. With almost six thousand cases reported in the whole India during 2010, more than five hundred of those were reported in Chhattisgarh. Atrocities against Dalits are less, were three hundred forty crimes out of circa thirty two thousand cases was reported within Chhattisgarh. There has not been any substantial decrease of violence directed against these groups during the last ten years (NCRB 2011:106,110,112,115).

Furthermore the physical violence of being deprived from ones home has a much wider expansion within Chhattisgarh. Different numbers of the total displaced population due to land acquiring since the 1950s is presented in the literature (Babree 2010:83; Roy 2011:43,44; Padel 2010:223). Though with more than sixty thousand people being displaced by government forces during 2005, for the implementation of industrial project, direct violence is present (Galtung 1996:70-73). One local village reports, “Our life is wretched without the forests, as we are dependent on them for flowers and fruits, for wood, for leaves, for ropes and for fuel (HDRC 2005:26).

Since two hundred thousand tribal families depend on the forest of Chhattisgarh today, the importance of a sustainable lifestyle for all is essential. Being displaced is erupting their traditional way of living and creates insecurity (HDRC 2005:21-25; Ramanathan 2002:2). In Chhattisgarh, Adivasis, Dalits and non-ST/SC depend heavily on the system of nistaar to maintain a sustainable lifestyle (HDRC 2005:23; Ramanathan 2002:1). As shown in the previous

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6 Nistaar is the common depots that is essential for the everyday life when it comes to fodder, fuel, grazing, and the obtaining of minerals (HDRC 2005:23).
chapters, due to less access and opportunities it could be argued that the well-being of the Adivasis and Dalits historically has been determined by their group membership, education, landholding status, access to renewable resources and social networks (Desai & Dubay 2011).

Concrete consequences of the degradation of forest include changing rainfall patterns, decreased forest resources, reduced biodiversity, and fewer grazing fields for cattle (HDRC 2005:14,23,25). Chhattisgarh have rich natural resources, such as minerals and forests that the people live in harmony with. “Over centuries, they have evolved a way of life, which while dependent on these resources uses them in a sustainable way” (HDRC 2005:10). The demographic and ecological stresses will, according to Gurr, create a deprived feeling among people who live in harmony with the forest and see it as their home and community (Gurr 1993:49-51).

I would argue that there are motivations to be found within the societal relationship in India. The structural, cultural and direct contexts imply that violence is present. Galtung argues that violence creates violence (Galtung 1996:200), and therefore the next section will highlight what the Maoists themselves find as the major motivations when turning towards violence.

4.3 Motivations within the Subjective Context

4.3.1 Collective Action as a Response to Land Acquisition

Not being able to access and keep goods that people feel they are entitled to create the feeling of relative deprivation (Gurr 1993:90). To strengthen the argument I will use Runcinman’s model will be used to place the relative deprivation in the frame of landlessness.

“Landless people are relative deprived of land when (i) they do not have land, (ii) they see some other persons or person, which may include themselves at some previous or expected time, as having land (whether or not this in fact is or will be the case), (iii) they wants land, and (iv) they sees it as feasible that they should have land “(Walker and Smith 2002:14).

The lack of care taken with the basic rights of Adivasis, as well as their strong connection to nature has created frustration among the people. Their feeling is that the government only takes the land for industrial purposes, while their lives in the forest are neglected and filled with harassment (Babree 2010:85). The salience of the group has grown stronger were their identity is collectively exploited (Gurr 1993:126). The people living in the forest recently criticized the issue concerning lack of education, which make their children unable to go to school. They further complain about there being no government-provided healthcare. These factors show how the tribal people feel about the responsibility not taken towards them. The Maoists have tried to provide children with basic education, by using their
own system (Roy 2011:88,125). The Maoists have supported the villages in Chhattisgarh in many ways that the government has not. For example during the 1980s, they organized people to demand higher prices for tobacco leaves they sell. This has led to a better income for the agrarian tribal people (Gautam 2010:43: Roy 2011:70). Between 1986 and 2000 the party managed to distribute more than three hundred thousand acres of forestland within Dandakaranya region (Roy 2011:74,75).

In examining landlessness, when there is a goal that people are striving toward to maintain, they will feel frustrated not being able to obtain the goal. If there is an obstacle that stops people from getting the goal, frustration can be channeled into nonviolent protest, violent protest or rebellion. It is important to take note of, how the state acts towards communal identity groups. As scholar within the Relative Deprivation highlights, the state’s response against groups is crucial to shaping the outcome of the group’s feelings of deprivation. A greater oppression and dominance against the disadvantaged group creates more frustration within the group (Gurr 1993:90,91; Abrahamsson et al. 2001:82,83). Where the state seeks space to develop through expansion of industries, in Chhattisgarh, the landless people seek only to possess their own land (Gautam 2010:39). The acquisition of land for development through industrial expansion clashes with the landless people’s need for land. The different intentions push the identity of the marginalized people out to the peripheral sphere of their demands and needs. There is clearly a link and contradiction between the Indian government promotion of a new economic growth and the tribal people not being heard in their demand for land. During one of the Maoists attack against a train in 2009 an apologizing letter from the Special Zonal Committee of the Maoists was sent out to civilians being affected;

“You can then ask us, why do we attack police and paramilitary forces? Why do we put landmines? Or why do we have to use “violence”? In reality the system is responsible for this… You know very well that every peaceful agitation and struggle faces lathi\(^7\) charge and bullets. We are neither extremist or terrorist as is being propagated by this government of exploiting classes. We are children of worker peasant and middle classes… We are organized People in the backward tribal areas against their exploitation and oppression so that they can fight for their rights” (Gautam 2010:40)

\(^7\) Lathi is explained as a long heavy wood or bamboo stick, often used by the military or police (Dictionary 2012; IndianLathi 2007).
4.3.2 Turning Towards Violence

Due to the historical negligence of the tribal people and their access to own land, conflicts intensified in 2005 when the government signed agreements with two major steel plants industries and more tribal land had to be acquired within Chhattisgarh. At the same time, the government launched their new way to oppose the Maoists in Chhattisgarh, which was the emergence of an armed force named Salwa Judum (Roy 2011:81,82). To enable the government to acquire the land for the new industries, sixty thousand Adivasis had to be displaced from their villages. People refusing to leave their villages were targeted as Maoists and thereby also a target of the Salwa Judum forces. Due to violent fights between the Maoists and Salwa Judum, the people trapped in the crossfire are the Adivasis. This has thus created a vicious cycle of violence, where the tribal people found themselves forced to choose side. The Salwa Judum forces have harassed and exploited the tribal people, which again has created frustration with the government and has contributed to people joining the armed Maoists movement. The destruction of villages has also forced many villagers to flee into the forest, where they can find the support of the Maoists (HRW 2008; Guha 2007:3010,3011; Gupta 2007:178,179; Gurr 1993:90; Roy 2011:82,83). During 2006, more than six hundred villages were destroyed in Chhattisgarh by the Salwa Judum forces (Roy 2011:82). The tribal people become victims of sexual exploitation and other atrocities by being labeled a Maoist. According to the several women interviewed by Roy, the exploitation of Salwa Judum makes them realize that they have no option other than participating with the Maoists to protect themselves. The Salwa Judum forces receive legitimacy by fighting in the name of the government and this has created distrust among many tribal people (Roy 2011:103-108).

The journalist Navlakha Gautam channels the voices of the Adivasis in his article “Days and Nights in the Maoists Heartland” (2010). When discussing with the Adivasis he meets in the guerilla zones, three frequents argument are represented as why more people are joining the Maoists and escalating the conflict. Firstly arguing “the war launched by the government was waged on the behalf of large corporation to grab Adivasis land” (Gautam 2010:39). If people refused to leave their land, they were threatened to not receive any compensation at all. Secondly, the Adivasis argued that, how could land that had sustained them their whole life and suppose to sustain the next generation ever be compensated in money? Especially when land is being their income and nutrition sources. Thirdly, the development promoted by the government was just talking, seeing what happened in district nearby, the Adivasis meant that the government acquired land for the corporation (Gautam 2010:39).

Gurr argues that the possibility to sense grievance, and act politically due to it, builds on political and social processes, which have taken place in the society over a long period of time (Gurr 1993:124). The Maoists have been present in Chhattisgarh since 1980, which has enabled them to become a movement with
organized structures that are present in some of the most remote areas of India. The history of opposing the state through an armed revolution is well-established within the societal structures. Their ability to protect and help the most marginalized people has made it possible for the Maoists to capture the frustration among the people most exposed to governmental land acquisition (Gautam 2010:39; Roy 2011:100). With the ability to mobilize and support the tribal people in attaining land as well as functional organizational structures within their communities, the relationship between the tribal people and the Maoists has grown stronger during the last 20 years. As Gurr argues, the more a dominant group oppresses the people, the stronger their group identity will become (Gurr 1993:136). This is something that can be found when tribal people are motivated to join the Maoist in the struggle to gain land. It is crucial to examine the structures when mobilizing a group to turn to collective action. The more the India government oppresses the tribal people, the stronger the linkage within the Maoist group will be.

The Relative Deprivation theory urge how the feeling of being treated unfair compared to other groups concerning political, economic and social rights can create a feeling of distrust and frustration within a group. In addition of these elements being present with a strong group identity it also an essential base for mobilization of political action. Gautam interviews some local villagers participating in the Maoist movement in Chhattisgarh. In an interview with a man named Sonu, he point out that due to the tradition of collective action, when the Adivasis decide to take action and join the Maoists, the whole village will participate and not individuals (Gautam 2010:43). Gautam asked villages in the Dandakaranya region of Chhattisgarh if they were not afraid of being hurt by the governmental troops spreading out everywhere. A common answer to this question was that a public power needed to be established, if not, the government would try to scare the tribal people even more (Gautam 2010:40).
5  Conclusion

Concluding this paper a discussion will be carried out, on the basis of what could be found as the most significant relationships in society as well as subjective feelings when tracing the motivations of the Maoists when turning toward violence.

5.1  Motivations

As the analysis shows there are strategic motives concerning changes in land-distribution that would be beneficial for the landless people to better their situation. However motivations to join the Maoists and use violence as a mean go further than just holding land in itself. As seen within the subjective feelings among the Adivasis, land is their future in the aspects of social network, livelihood and where an economic income can be assured.

Furthermore the reinforcement of a mainstream ideology where land should be used for industrial and commercial production is creating a deprived feeling among the tribal people. With their identity based in relationship to their land, a feeling of unfair treatment is present. The government in Chhattisgarh’s promotion of industrial expansion within forest land has strengthened the dominance of the state even more.

Finally, the use of forces of the government to dispossess the people from the land has according to the tribal people been the heaviest argument for joining the Maoists. The motivations mentioned here are all expressed as a collective deprived feeling.

Due to the fact that disadvantage of land holding is present all over India I would argue that the motivations themselves could not determine the decision by the tribal people to choose violence. However, as the Relative Deprivation Theory has been used in this paper, the transforming of feeling deprived to actually act out of this feeling can be understood.

Essential in the quest of motivations of using violence is thereby how to canalize the feeling of deprivation and frustration. As showed in the analysis, the government has in many ways not listened to people’s frustration, escalating their motivations and giving them a meaning of opposing the state.
5.2 Reinforcing Violence

This paper has urged that global patterns and trends have contradiction affects, since it aims to mainstream a way of living, which will be opposed. As within India the opposing has increased. However the government chooses to continue their ideological mainstreaming, demanding more land, and displacing more people. Violence is reinforced frequently by the cultural acceptance of development through industrial expanding and structural by denying people their rights to home.

Galtung highlights that latent violence is present when manifesting violence occur and a mistake is often to think that the direct violence is the source of a conflict (Galtung 1996:200). Defining the Maoist as a “security threat”, the implications present in the society are not captured. There should therefore be question if the government will manage to reduce the increasing amount of people joining the Maoists movement everyday. Violence has the possibility to take place in all layers of society, and should therefore be confronted with an intention to understand the relationships behind the manifesting actor. This paper has clarified the motivations of why people are joining the Maoists in their rebellion, and it should be obvious that meeting violence with violence will not abolish constrains deeply rooted within the people.

Further research could be carried out through a more fulfilled mapping of the different aspects of Galtung’s Civilization Theory with the importance of highlighting how to encounter groups when they have chosen to oppose the state through violent means.
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