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The Shining Path

An Analysis of a Terrorist Organization's Power

Bachelor Thesis within Politics

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The internal conflict in Peru during the 1980s and '90s was characteristic of the trend in Latin American sentiment towards left-wing politics and socialist revolution. From the colonial revolts against Spain and Portugal, to the Cuban Revolution, to the socialist alliances of today, Latin America represents a region that has attempted throughout its history to find justice for its oppressed peoples (Avritzer, 2002). This thesis focuses on a Peruvian attempt at revolution in the name of equality and freedom.

Between the years 1980 and 2000, more than thirty-five thousand acts of crimes against humanity were reported to the Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Peru by people from all sides of the Peruvian Civil War, over twenty-three thousand of which represent cases of murder and disappearances. This paper will analyze the driving force behind these numbers – the terrorist group Sendero Luminoso¹ (TRC, 2003), and identify the factors which enabled the group to become such a formidable authority. The conflict likewise brought about approximately \$22 billion USD in damages to Peru's infrastructure during its peak years from 1980 to 1992 (Fits-Simons, 1993).

Sendero Luminoso instigated a war that came to involve all sections of Peruvian society in the late 20th century – from the governmental sector to the country's most poor and neglected populations. The terrorist organization functioned as an insurgent guerilla group, whose operations were principally conducted and organized in isolated provinces in the highlands and jungles of the Peruvian countryside (TRC, 2003).

The Shining Path's avowed objective was to destroy all of the existing institutions of Peruvian government and society in the hopes of rebuilding a new and completely equal state along the lines of Mao Zedong's communist China (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990). Sendero Luminoso sought to achieve this goal by waging a war against the national and local governments of Peru. In order to achieve this the group came to mobilize an army of Peruvian civilians who fought as soldiers for the organization, ruthlessly killing and torturing their neighbors and fellow Peruvians in the name of what SL termed "progress" (Smith, 2010).

¹ The group's official name is *El Partido Comunista de Peru por el Sendero Luminoso de Mariategui*, meaning the Communist Party of Peru on the Shining Path of Mariategui. It will be referred to throughout the paper by several other names: the abbreviations PCP-SL, SL, and most often as *Sendero Luminoso*, or the English equivalent, the Shining Path.

1.2 Definition

This thesis bases itself on the assumption that the group written about within its pages should be classified as a terrorist organization. The author therefore wishes to briefly analyze the meaning of the word *terrorism* and the implications behind it before commencing with this study.

At the heart of terrorism lies the word *terror*. It can be deduced from this, and from almost every genre of dictionary available, that a terrorist organization is defined as a group of people who impose terror on others. However, this definition is somewhat vague. The dilemma remains as to where one can draw the line between terrorism and other forms of violence.

According to Professor Bruce Hoffman (2006), former Scholar-in-Residence of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, the key words needed to further clarify terrorism are *power* and *politics*. Hoffman contends that terrorism is a notion whose primary purpose is to acquire power in order to achieve political changes. Professor Hoffman (page 2) quotes the Oxford English Dictionary in his book *Inside Terrorism* to define a terrorist as: *Anyone who attempts to further his [political] views by a system of coercive intimidation*, a definition which, Hoffman asserts, most terrorism scholars tend to agree with.

Professor Robert D. Hanser (2007), head of the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, attests that terrorism is an inherently political concept characterized by acts or threats of violence whose underlying purpose is to obtain the attention of a target audience. Hanser (2007), adds that the terrorist seeks to gain sway over his audience in the hopes of imposing political change.

The group described in this paper is a communist Peruvian organization which operated primarily in the late 20th century, called Sendero Luminoso. SL is a group that the United States, Peru, Canada and the European Union all label as being a terrorist organization (TRC, 2003), and in the opinion of the author, can be characterized by all of the aforementioned definitions. In its most active years, the group used violence and the threat of violence as weapons to encourage revolt and change in a target audience – the entire population of Peru. The group can also most assuredly be labeled as political, as its ultimate objective was to achieve drastic political change by attempting to erase the last 500 years of outside influences in Peru (Fitz-Simmons, 1993). Finally, the intrinsic agenda of Sendero Luminoso was to gain power over the Peruvian population, a concept which was accomplished through multiple factors (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

1.3 Problem Discussion

The Shining Path effectively terrorized and controlled a large portion of Peruvian society in the 80s and 90s, causing devastation to the infrastructure and people of Peru (TRC, 2003). The circumstances surrounding the organization's ability to achieve such power are the primary focus of this paper. The author's objective in this bachelor thesis is to supply the reader with an understanding of these circumstances, and in the process, identify the factors which enabled them.

The author regards the Maoist ideology and extreme objectives of the Shining Path as outlandish concepts. It is difficult to imagine how the terrorist group was able to mobilize and keep thousands of ordinary citizens as their followers, armed with the intention of committing atrocious acts of violence against their fellow countrymen and women (Theidon, 2000). The author wishes to illuminate these seemingly inexplicable phenomena that occurred during the Peruvian Internal Crisis through the manipulations of the Shining Path, and is certain of the importance of understanding how the mass manipulation of a society was effectively maneuvered.

1.4 Purpose

The purpose of this bachelor's thesis is to identify how, and in which ways, the terrorist organization Sendero Luminoso was able to gain and maintain power over the people and country of Peru during the internal crisis of the late 20th century.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to illustrate the above purpose more effectively, the following questions are proposed for the reader to consider throughout this paper. These three research questions will be presented again in the Analysis of the thesis and related to the Paving the Path chapter.

- **Research Question 1:** What influence did Sendero Luminoso hold over the people and country of Peru during the internal conflict in the late 20th century?

- **Research Question 2:** What circumstances contributed to the group's rise in power from its initiation of the war in 1980 until its decline in 1992? (See *Figure 1* timeline below)
- **Research Question 3:** What techniques did Sendero Luminoso use to gain and maintain its authority?

1.6 Thesis Outline

The author has structured this bachelor thesis keeping its purpose in mind in order to create a paper that is most understandable to the reader. It is divided into four chapters: Introduction, Method, Paving the Path and Concluding Analysis. Contained within these chapters are sub-chapters, respectively relating to their main chapters.

The Introduction covers the background information of the thesis in order for the reader to become generally familiarized with the nature and content of the paper.

The second chapter of this thesis briefly touches upon the methodology with which the author has chosen to create her paper with. This chapter explains why she has chosen to incorporate her chosen authors into her thesis, and how she sculpted her work with them.

The third chapter, entitled Paving the Path, presents the thesis' empirical data and details the paper's studies to the reader. The data and studies within this chapter seeks to answer the thesis' research questions and acquaint the reader with the terrorist organization Sendero Luminoso and the environment in which it came to exist and grow in strength.

The Concluding Analysis refers back to the information presented in Chapter Three, and contains two sub-chapters: Discussion and Conclusion. The Discussion examines the research questions detailed in the Introduction, and associates them back to the data introduced in Paving the Path. The Conclusion summarizes the author's conjectures of the study in relation to the purpose presented in the Introduction.

2 Method

2.1 Research approach

In order to answer the three research questions outlined in the Introduction of this thesis, the author has chosen to perform a study based on scientific research in the fields of terrorist, cultural, historical, narcotic and ethnic studies. The use of official documents gathered from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru was also incorporated into this paper.

The author chose to adopt the content analysis method of researching in her writing. She did this by analyzing and summarizing accounts from multiple sources which she then related to her study.

The sources incorporated into this paper were found by the author from the internet search engine Google Scholar, as well as from books at the Jonkoping University Library and the official website of the Truth and Reconciliation of Peru – <http://www.cverdad.org.pe/>. All sources were scrutinized by the author and only those which she deemed written by reliable and knowledgeable persons, due to their various qualifications and respected research, were incorporated into this thesis.

Furthermore, this study can be characterized as an explanatory case study, which is described by Saunders (2007) as an examination strategy involving the investigation of the empirical research of a particular and contemporary problem within its real life context by using sources of scientific evidence. In this case study, the author duly analyzed and identified the factors which lead to the Shining Path's rise to power from her sources, and structured her paper based on this accumulated information.

Moreover, the author has chosen to incorporate the method of maintaining a chain of evidence from the well-known case study as described by Robert K. Yin (2003, page 101) who defines it by the following: "*The principle is that the reader of the case study should be able to follow the derivation of any evidence, ranging from initial research questions to ultimate case study conclusion.*" This method helped the author to organize her thoughts and develop the content of her writing in a relevant and logical manner for the benefit of the reader.

2.2 Validity and reliability

In order to create a credible thesis, the author has incorporated the use of scientific studies while conducting her research in order to maintain a level of high reliability. Almost all of the sources chosen for this thesis come from either scientific journals or published books. The author also chose to use Yin's theory of multiple sources in an attempt to draw reliable conclusions throughout her writing (Yin, 2003).

It is important for the reader to keep in mind that as this paper is concerned with a civil conflict the writing described in the Paving the Path chapter of this thesis, as it is a section which is influenced exclusively by outside sources, may be subject to observer biases. In the hopes of diminishing such a possibility the author attempted to remain objectively critical while collecting her data, choosing a wide variety of different sources which she deemed to be reliable material for her thesis.

3 Paving the Path

3.1 Peruvian Civil War

The Peruvian Civil War was centered not in the capital city of Lima, where roughly twenty-five percent of Peru's people live, but in the small province of Ayacucho. The province is located in the Andes Mountains in the south of Peru, isolated from the large cities on the coast by its mountainous terrain. Not only is Ayacucho physically isolated from the rest of Peru, but it has typically been economically excluded as well, as can be seen by the fact that almost all of Ayacucho's citizens earn below minimum wage. Many Ayacuchans are indigenous in heritage and speak Quechua², the principle language of the late Incan Empire, as their mother tongue (Paredes, 2007).

The Shining Path was conceived in this setting in the mid-1970s by a university professor of psychology and self-professed communist named Abimael Guzman. Guzman dreamed of revolution in Peru and preached to his students at the National University of San Cristobal of Huamanga that the Peruvian government must be overthrown if justice is to be achieved for the people of Peru (McClintock, 1989).

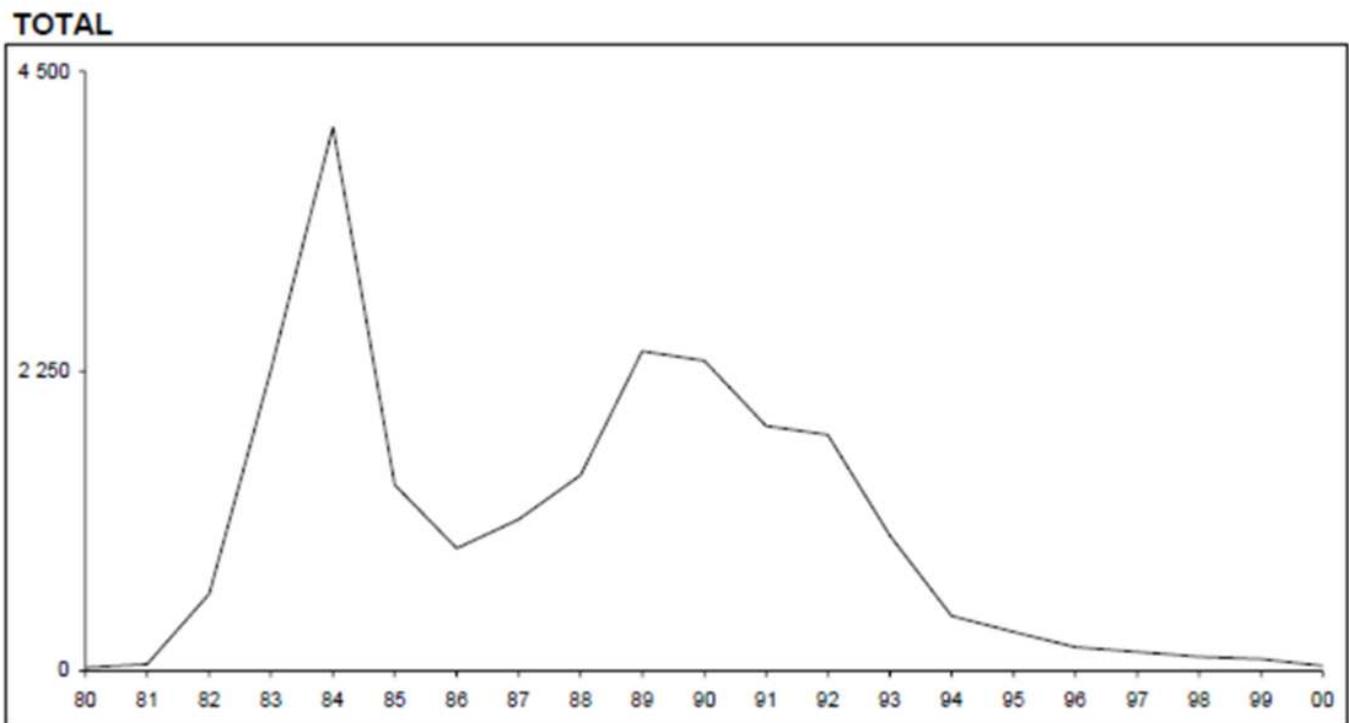
Guzman not only spread his philosophical ideas of revolution to his students, but was, in addition, a prominent figure in Ayacucho's regional committee of the Communist Party of Peru. Together, Guzman and the committee began to inspire a revolution among the people of Ayacucho, preparing an uprising modeled on the ideas of Mao Zedong's communist China (Smith, 2010).

On May 17th 1980, Peru held its first presidential elections since its government had been overtaken by a military coup in 1968. Without being provoked, Sendero Luminoso launched its earliest public attack on the Peruvian government in Ayacucho by burning voting stands and hanging dead dogs from street lights, methods of terrorizing citizens that the organization continued to use throughout its insurgency. This first attack showed the true colors of the group, as voting in Peru is compulsory, and SL thereby threatened the entire country through this single act. For the first time in over a decade, the national government had been attempting to reinstall democracy into the country, and what had been intended to signal the beginning of a new democratic turnover for Peru instead came to

² Aside from Quechua, Peru is home to many other pre-Colombian languages which include various Amazonian languages and Aymara – the primary indigenous language of Bolivia and a few areas in South-western Peru.

mark the dawn of the bloodiest war in the country since the conquest of the Incas in the 16th century.

However, due to Ayacucho's remote location in the mountains, the Peruvian government virtually ignored the first phases of the Shining Path's growth, allowing for its expansion into neighboring regions into the northern and western provinces of the Andes before establishing a counterinsurgency campaign to combat the guerilla forces. The province of Ayacucho served as the group's base from which it recruited the majority of its soldiers. The conflict was to be characterized by guerilla militants organizing and concealing themselves in isolated locations in the mountains and jungles of Peru in the hopes of destroying the Peruvian government and its institutions from the outside-in (Switzer, 2007).



'80-00" (TRC, 2003)

Despite its prominent role in the guerilla war, Sendero Luminoso wasn't the only group hoping to create a Marxist insurgency against the Peruvian government. In 1984 a group called the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) began its own campaign against the government, leading to the formation of a few smaller guerilla insurgency groups throughout the country as well. Both the MRTA and SL, as well as the Peruvian military, were in a full-out war by 1984 and, as can be seen above in *Figure 1*, the conflict reached its peak. Peru began to experience heavy guerilla warfare throughout the countryside from all parties, their loyalties and motivations unclear to civilians (Smith, 2010).

However, despite their common revolutionary agenda and claimed adherence to Marxist ideology, Sendero Luminoso remained stubbornly independent throughout its insurgency, refusing to cooperate with the MRTA, let alone any other group. In fact, unlike most terrorist organizations, the Shining Path did not purchase its arms from international black markets, but rather, chose to assassinate Peruvian soldiers and policemen and raid military bases in order to gather weapons for its militants (Fitz-Simmons, 1993). The Shining Path was just as likely to kill a fellow insurgent from another terrorist organization as a government official (Smith, 2010), and the MRTA in turn disapproved of SL's methods, believing that the group was too careless and eager to kill. The MRTA was more "careful" than Sendero Luminoso in the targets they chose to attack, sometimes even attempting to negotiate their objectives without violence. When the MRTA accidentally killed a village policeman in a raid, the group sent a tape to the media in order to publicly apologize for the man's death. The group's most famous stint, however, was known as the "Japanese Embassy Hostage Crisis" of 1996. Fourteen MRTA rebels took hundreds of international diplomats and Peruvian officials, including President Fujimori and his family, hostage in the Japanese ambassador's home in order to barter for the release of MRTA prisoners. Nevertheless, the rebels soon released almost all of their hostages and, in the end, only one of the remaining hostages was killed (Theidon, 2006).

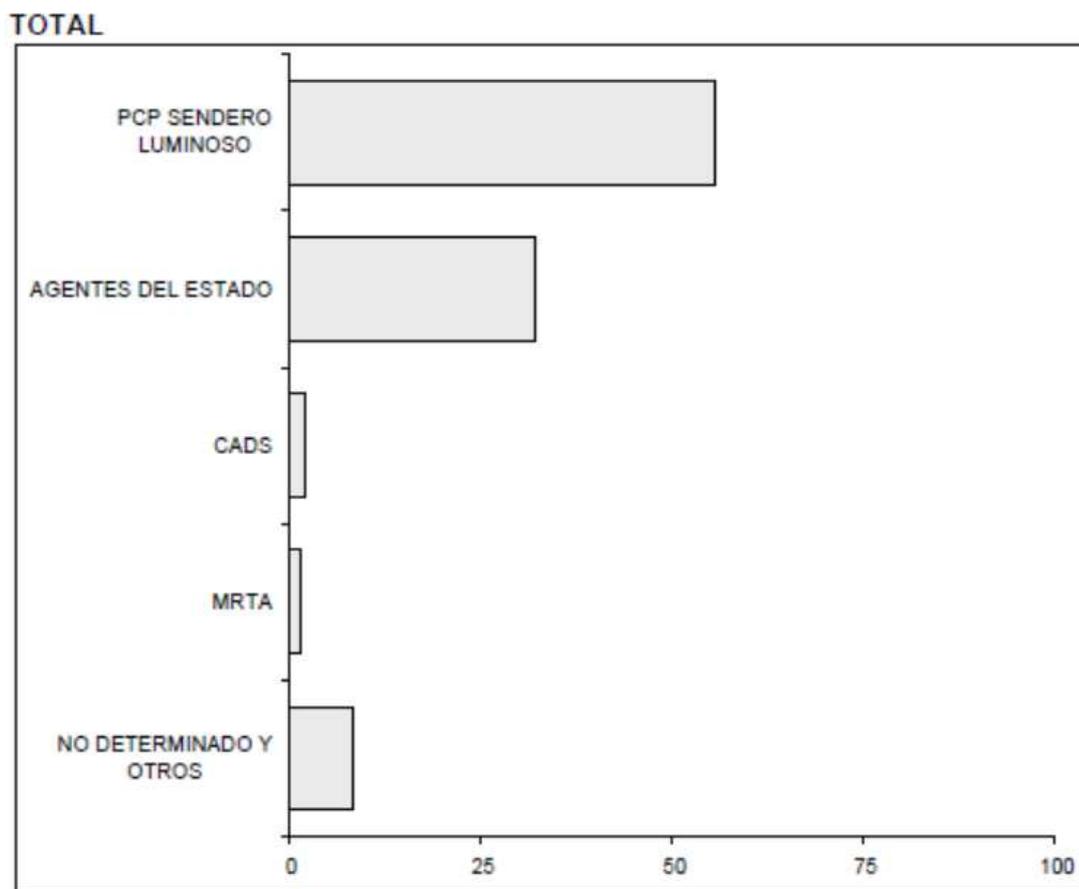
Despite SL's refusal to cooperate with the MRTA or any other left-wing or insurgent group in Peru, the organization maintained political connections throughout the country. Before its creation in the mid 70s, the Shining Path already had deep political roots, the origins of which went as far back as 1928, with the founding of the Socialist Party of Peru (PSP) by Jose Carlos Mariategui (Smith, 2010).

The PSP gained considerable popularity in the country and in 1930, merged its forces with the Communist International Movement (Comintern) and changed its name to the Communist Party of Peru (PCP). The PCP remained the only communist organization in Peru until the early 1960s. In 1964 the PCP experienced a schism and eventually splintered into two dissenting groups, the pro-Maoist and the pro-Soviet approaches to communism. The pro-Maoists renamed themselves the PCP – Bandera Roja (the Communist Party of Peru – Red Flag) of which Abimael Guzman became the central committee president. Guzman soon took the group one step further, creating yet another and final faction in 1970 –the Shining Path.

Even though the Shining Path had only existed for a few years by the time the group rose to violence in Ayacucho in 1980, it already had connections in communist circles, especially in Lima and Ayacucho's PCP (Smith, 2010). This association allowed for a flow of information between some within those groups.

SL forces were more reckless than the MRTA in their path of violence, detonating car bombs in busy streets, torturing anyone who was even remotely connected to the national or local governments, painting propaganda messages in cities, “liberating” towns by burning city halls, and executing government and local officials and those around them (Smith, 2010).

It is evident from *Figure 2* (seen below, *Agentes del estado* translating to “agents of the governmental”; *CADS* meaning “other paramilitary”; and *no determinados y otros* meaning “undetermined and others”) that the Shining Path caused more casualties in Peru from 1980 to 2000 than any other group in the country, in fact, more than all other groups combined.



Sendero Luminoso continued to wreak havoc on Peru even after the arrest of its leader Abimael Guzman in 1992, along with most of his senior officials. However, as can be seen in *Figure 1* (above), the terrorist group never completely recovered from the loss of their central leadership, and from 1992 the number of the over-all casualties of war were significantly reduced.

Today the insurgency still exists underground in rural areas of Peru's jungles and mountains, but as all leaders of the Shining Path were eventually arrested by the Peruvian government, it appears that the group retains almost no significant power in the country besides its floundering connections to the cocaine trade. The numbers of modern-day victims of the insurgency are likewise incalculable, as there is no more public guerilla warfare in Peru (Portugal, 2008).

3.1.1 Shining Ideology

Marxism will provide a shining path to victory.

-Jose Carlos Mariategui (Cited in Fitz-Simons, 1993)

Jose Carlos Mariategui is popularly considered to be the Father of the Peruvian Left, and almost all of the insurgent groups during the time of the internal conflict in Peru professed him to be the inspiration behind their formations. As the founder of the PSP Mariategui was the first Peruvian to work towards a future of Marxist reform for the country. Aside from his founding of the Socialist Party of Peru in 1928, Mariategui's main contribution to the people of Peru was his magnum opus, *Seven Interpretative Essays on Peruvian Society* (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

Sendero Luminoso bases much of its ideology on the ideas presented in Mariategui's writing, as can be seen by the fact that the full name of the organization honors him: *El Partido Comunista de Peru por el Sendero Luminoso de Mariátegui* (PCP-SL), or the Communist Party of Peru on the Shining Path of Mariátegui.

When creating the doctrine of the Shining Path, Guzman drew inspiration not only from Mariategui, but from some of the foremost communist thinkers throughout history: Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong. Sendero Luminoso can thus be classified as a Marxist, Leninist and/or Maoist, as all three categorizations have been used by the group to describe itself (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

Guzman perceived Peru to be an ugly mirror-image of its colonial and feudalistic past, and created SL's ideology under the assumption that the largest sector of Peruvian society, the urban and rural underclasses, were being exploited by the smallest societal sector, the bourgeoisie (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990). The underclasses referred to by Guzman are largely represented by the indigenous, *cholo* (urban Peruvians of indigenous decent) and *mestizo* (people of mixed indigenous and European heritage) people of Peru, who he believed to be "true"

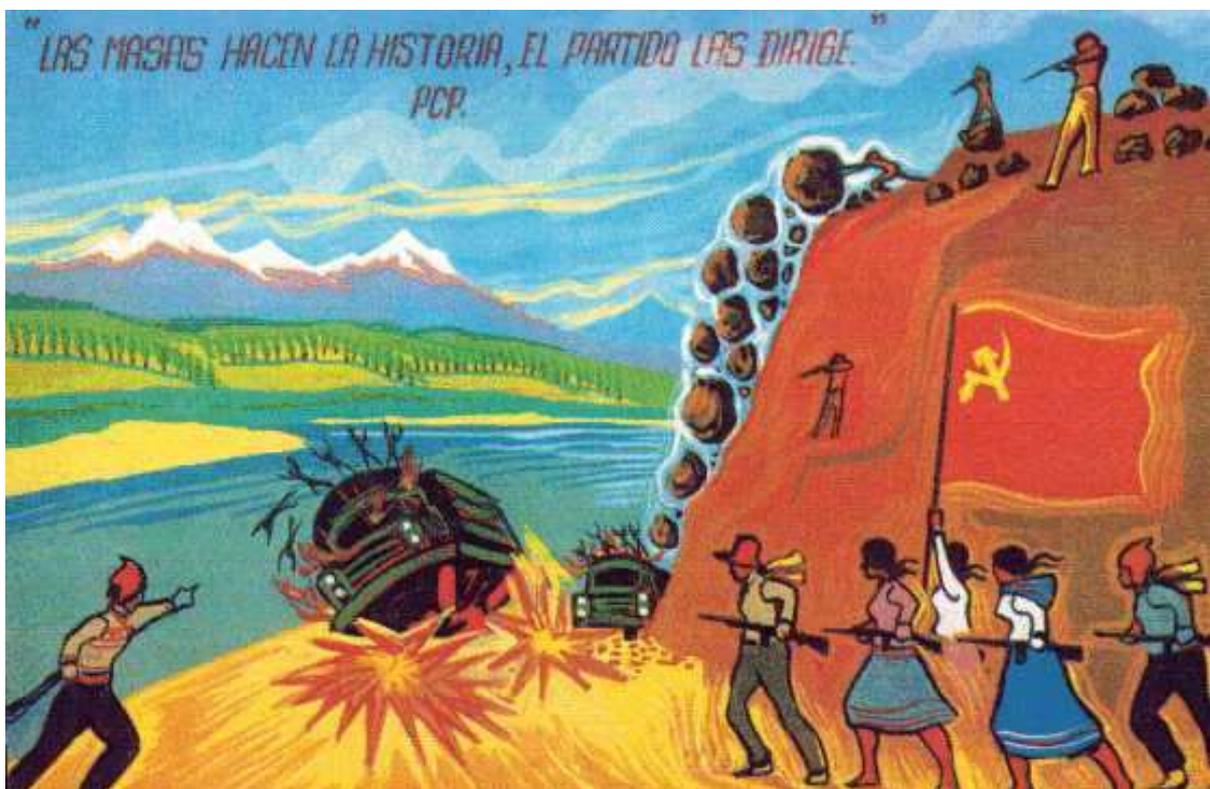
Peruvians, whereas the aforementioned bourgeoisie are classified as the wealthy Peruvians of European descent, who control the country and its people through capitalistic slavery (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

Inspired by Marx, Guzman created Sendero Luminoso under the assumption that the time had arrived for the mistreated populations to rise-up en masse, and take control of Peru through a revolution. Declaring all governments of Peru throughout its history to have been fascist, Guzman envisioned a utopian state achieved through the destruction of all existing Peruvian societal institutions and all individuals who held-back the indigenous culture of the “real” Peru (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

Guzman, like Mao, believed that the people’s revolution could only be obtained through the will of the masses, and operated Sendero Luminoso by recruiting ordinary Peruvians and turning them into soldiers for Sendero Luminoso’s cause (Switzer, 2007).

Figure 3 (below) represents a common propaganda message of the Shining Path, and depicts Peruvian civilians rising-up in arms against the national military. One of the peasant women in the picture is seen holding SL’s hammer and sickle flag in the midst of what appears to be a massacre of Peruvian soldiers by the organization. The caption reads: *the masses make history, the Party guides them.*

Figure 3 Sendero Propaganda -Duke University



Guzman imagined late 20th century Peru to have been similar to pre-revolutionary China – feudalistic and semi-colonial with a large rural population. Guzman drew hope from Mao's Communist Revolution, and vowed that his impending Peruvian revolution would succeed where Mao's had failed (Smith, 2010). Fueled ever further by his adherence to Maoist philosophy, Guzman even adopted a pseudo-name for himself, *Chairman Gonzalo*, an affectionate title which came to be used by his followers (McClintock, 1989).

The Shining Path emphasizes national pride and indigenous culture, rejecting all foreign dependency, Western values and even modern Latin American society (Switzer, 2007). The professed end-goal of the organization is a socialist society, politically controlled by the underclass people of the country, called the New Democratic Republic.

3.2 Targets of the Shining Path

Sendero Luminoso believed that the New Democratic Republic could only be achieved by a military and political struggle it termed the "Popular War", characterized by a military of citizen soldiers fighting to destroy current society. The group, therefore, concentrated heavily on the recruitment of its guerilla army, as the group believed it to be its greatest weapon in the creation of its future utopian state (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

The brunt of these recruitment efforts was concentrated on the underclasses of Peruvian society, targeting in particular the historically marginalized indigenous and Quechua speaking people of Peru, who are primarily categorized alongside the *campesinos* (translating to "peasants" or "poor farmers") as most *campesinos* are also indigenous in heritage. The *campesino* and indigenous populations mostly live in rural communities in the highlands and jungles of the country, more often than not making less money than their city-dwelling fellow compatriots, primarily through agricultural work.

Sendero Luminoso enforced its ideology of *campesino* and Indian empowerment throughout these rural communities so as to better enlist those populations to its cause (Schmid, 2005). To add fuel to the fire, the over-all standards of living throughout Peru plummeted in the in the early 1980's, hitting especially hard in the rural areas of the country which only proved to add further to the attractiveness of SL for the peasant communities of those regions (McClintock, 1989).

Other Indian populations that the Shining Path targeted were the mestizo and especially the *cholo* people of urban Peru. Bolstered by the promise of a better

life and pride in their heritage, many cholos and mestizos eagerly joined the ranks of Sendero Luminoso's army (Portugal, 2008).

However, Andrea Portugal (2008), an Oxford researcher with considerable field experience in Peru, maintains that these peasants and people of indigenous heritage, although the primary target audience, were not the only groups targeted by the Shining Path. Portugal (2008), attests that young, educated university students were also strategically sought-after by the terrorist organization due to the idealistic nature of the young and educated.

Both urban and rural Peruvian students were attracted to the idea of social justice for the people of Peru and tended to be recruited into the middle ranks of the SL army. Even the Indian and peasant communities targeted by the Shining Path, which represented the lower echelons of the SL army, seem to have been younger (Portugal, 2008). This is depicted in *Figure 4* (below), which shows the ages of Sendero Luminoso militants at the time of their capture by the government as noted by Hoffman (2006). Portugal (2008) attributes this to his assumption that the young are more idealistic and energetic in general, traits which the group seems to have used to its advantage.

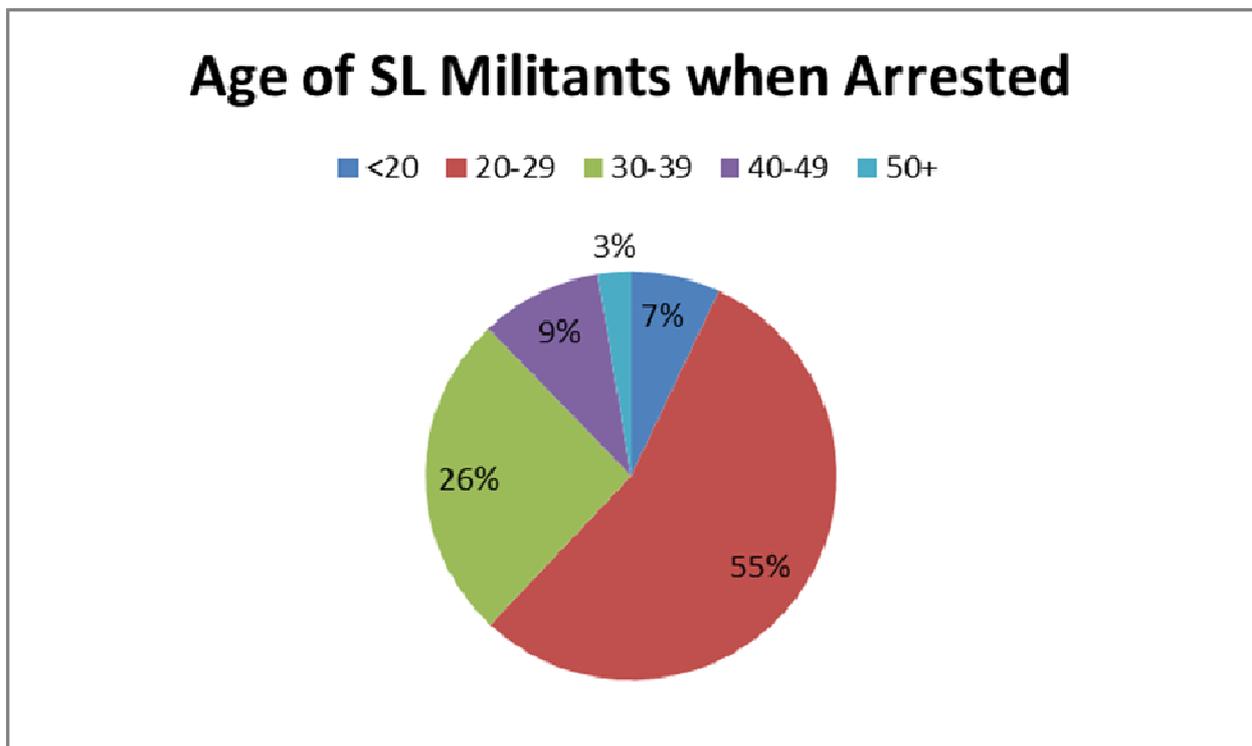


Figure 4 Age of SL Militants (Hoffman, 2006)

Like Guzman himself, many mestizo and white university professors and staff were also drawn to the Shining Path, attaining high positions within the guerilla army and directing the predominantly peasant masses (Portugal, 2008).

It is ironic that the more educated and typically “whiter” Peruvians were systematically chosen in this way to lead Sendero Luminoso, as the organization professed to be working for the good of the “true” Peru, one which was characterized by the indigenous origins of the country (Portugal, 2008). The peasant and Indian populations of Peru accounted for the masses and front-line fighters of SL’s armies throughout the war.

Furthermore, in the late 80s and early 90s, many remote Peruvian villages rose-up to defend their communities against the growing forces of Sendero militants, whose strategy of countryside warfare brought to the heaviest load of attacks to rural Peru and its people. These civilian peasants formed crude militias whose arms were actually provided by the Peruvian government (Fitz-Simons, 1993). Due to these untrained militias and SL’s outside-in strategy of war, indigenous and peasant populations accounted for the largest number of casualties from the war (TRC, 2003).

3.2.1 A History of Discrimination

In the year 1531, a conquistador named Francisco Pizarro set sail from Spain and journeyed to South America with the purpose of conquering the largest and wealthiest empire of pre-Columbian America, the Incan Empire, which at its height covered almost the entire Andes mountain range from modern-day Colombia to Southern Chile. The Spanish had had their hearts set on the abundance of the Inca’s land, natural resources and control over the surrounding tribes of the area since they first learned the existence of the civilization at beginning of the 16th century. After the successful conquests of de Balboa and Cortez in modern-day Mexico and Colombia, the Spanish crown sent Pizarro further south to continue their overthrow of the Americas into the lands of the Inca (Todorov, 2003).

Soon after landing in what is now Ecuador, Pizarro headed south with approximately 200 conquistadors and, along the way, fortuitously learned that the Incan Empire was caught in the midst of a civil war, a situation which Pizarro decided to use to his advantage. The *Sapa Inca* (Inca king) had recently passed away, leaving behind a vast and prosperous empire and two ambitious sons fighting for the power to rule it, Huascar and Atahualpa (Prescott, 2007). Pizarro

chose to settle in modern-day Northern Peru, and from there began to plan his next move.

By the time Pizarro met with the Incas in 1532, the civil war had significantly depleted the empire's cohesiveness, military and economy, and Atahualpa had killed his brother Huascar and become the Sapa Inca. Pizarro met with Atahualpa and invited him back to his army camp with the apparent purpose of negotiating a peace treaty. When the leader of the Incas arrived with his foot soldiers the conquistador's army and cavalry ambushed them from all sides, forcing them to submit to Spanish dominion. When Atahualpa refused, his men were massacred and he was imprisoned and used as a marionette to control the Inca people. Pizarro told the Incan ruler that if he agreed to his demands his life would be spared, however, once the Spanish succeeded in taking control of most of the empire through these ministrations, Atahualpa was duly executed (Prescott, 2007). Spain colonized all of the Incan Empire in this merciless way, forcing the Incas to acquiesce to the regimentation of the Spanish Empire and convert to Catholicism (Prescott, 2007).

After their conquest the Spanish made the Incas into slaves, stole all of their possessions and land, and regarded them as sub-human and heathens. This subjugation of the indigenous people of the Americas by the European powers of Portugal and Spain led to a trend of discrimination which can still be felt in the 21st century and is an unfortunate factor of everyday life for many people throughout Latin America (Paredes, 2007).

3.2.2 Modern Diversity

Indian peasants live in such a primitive way that communication is practically impossible. It is only when they move to the cities that they have the opportunity to mingle with the Other Peru. The price they must pay for integration is high –renunciation of their culture, their language, their beliefs, their traditions and customs, and the adoption of the culture of their ancient masters. After one generation they become mestizos. They are no longer Indians.

– Mario Vargas Llosa (Cited in De la Cadena, 2000)

Since the time of the Incas the ethnic dynamics of Peru have changed drastically. Like most Latin American countries, Peru is now an ethnic melting pot of complex mixes and cultures, but one in which discrimination is a very present

reality. The Peruvian population living in the Andes, which is predominantly indigenous, has been subject to prejudice by other ethnic groups and the urban populations of Peru since the time Pizarro. For these and other, more practical reasons, indigenous people from rural areas have immigrated to the larger Peruvian cities over the decades, their descendants called cholos and mestizos (Paredes, 2007).

Maritza Paredes, an Oxford researcher, conducted a series of studies on the ethnic identities of Peruvian people in August 2005 and again in June 2006. As most modern-day Peruvians are of mixed heritage, Paredes organized her research by asking people in three different communities (one urban, two rural) throughout the country what ethnicity and race they *perceived* themselves to be and why this was. Through this information Paredes (2007) analyzed how and if geographical locations, language, and skin color affect prejudice in current Peruvian society. In her surveys, Paredes (2007) categorizes four types of Peruvian ethnic identities: cholo, white, mestizo and indigenous.³

In her research, Paredes, concludes that language, skin color, and geography all affect people's perceptions of themselves and others in Peru. She believes her studies to identify complicated prejudices associated with these factors.

According to Paredes, all three salient factors (skin color, language, geography) help to categorize a person's ethnicity. The degree of skin darkness seems to determine the amount of *mestizaje* (the degree of inter-mixing between the European and Native American races) – darker skinned people considered more indigenous, whereas lighter-skinned people are deemed more European in heritage (Paredes, 2007). Due to the fact that indigenous people have typically been marginalized in Peru, earning lower incomes and working in less affluent environments, Peruvians seem to associate a darker skinned person as being less wealthy and educated than a lighter-skinned people.

Conceded by Paredes, geography and language likewise color Peruvian people's perceptions of each other. The more rural and isolated a community, the more indigenous its inhabitants are perceived to be. However, people whose families have moved from rural communities to larger cities (cholos) are still marked as more indigenous. In the same way, people who speak Indian languages, such as Quechua, are considered more indigenous. These people have a much greater representation in rural communities than in larger urban centers (Paredes, 2007).

³ The Peruvians who categorized themselves as belonging to an ethnicity outside of these four categories (black, Amazon Indian, or Chinese/Japanese) accounted for only about 1% of the people in the areas where Paredes conducted her research and were therefore excluded from the surveys.

Peru is a country surprisingly rich in diversity, both because of its people and its nature. Peru is divided into three main livable geographic regions: the coast, comprised of deserts, dry valleys and plains where Peru’s five biggest cities are located; the jungle, which is made up of the Amazon; and the highlands, which are the Andes Mountains and foothills (Switzer, 2007).



Figure 5 Map of Peruvian Regions –Delperu.es

The map above (*Figure 5*) depicts the three geographic regions of Peru: the coast to the West, along the Pacific Ocean and shown on the map in beige; the

highlands (sierra), in the center of the country, shown here in brown; and the Amazon Jungle to the East, shown as dark green on the map. Ayacucho, the epicenter of the Shining Path insurgency, is located in the heart of the Andean highlands to the South, whereas the capital city of Lima, along with most major cities, is located along the coast of Peru.

The urban populations, such as those from Lima, appear to possess a greater awareness of ethnicity due to the influx of immigrants throughout history moving to the larger cities in search of better jobs and opportunities. Rural people, such as those from Ayacucho, live in communities where Andean traditions have always been an influence in their everyday lives. These populations, therefore, remain relatively unaware that their way of life is considered more indigenous by urban populations, whether or not they are indigenous in heritage (Paredes, 2007).

3.2.3 Sendero's Appeal and the Senderistas

The neglected economic conditions of the people in the sierra region of Peru advanced Sendero Luminoso's objective of insurgency. By exploiting these conditions through the use of their ideological propaganda, SL was able to effectively convince the vulnerable and traditionally marginalized Indian populations of the region to join the group's cause.

The Shining Path recruited the Indians and peasants of the sierra by emphasizing the government's neglect of their communities, mobilizing them with the organization's promise of a better life under the future New Democratic Republic conceived by the party. These people constituted the bulk of the Shining Path's guerilla army, and were the organization's most valuable asset throughout the internal conflict of Peru (Switzer, 2007).

The native speakers of Quechua and the rural communities in the sierra of Peru were affected the most by the internal conflict, as can be seen by *Figure 6* (seen below –*idioma materno*, meaning “native language”; *Castellano*, meaning “Spanish”; *otros* meaning “others” and *numero de victimas* translating to “the number of victims”). Most of these victims were indigenous in ancestry, and as mentioned by the Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Peru, approximately three out of every four casualties during the internal conflict were peasants or people of indigenous origin (TRC, 2003). These numbers can be attributed to their representing the primary fighters of the Shining Path, and a demographic which largely inhabits the regions where the organization showed the majority of its violence (TRC, 2003).

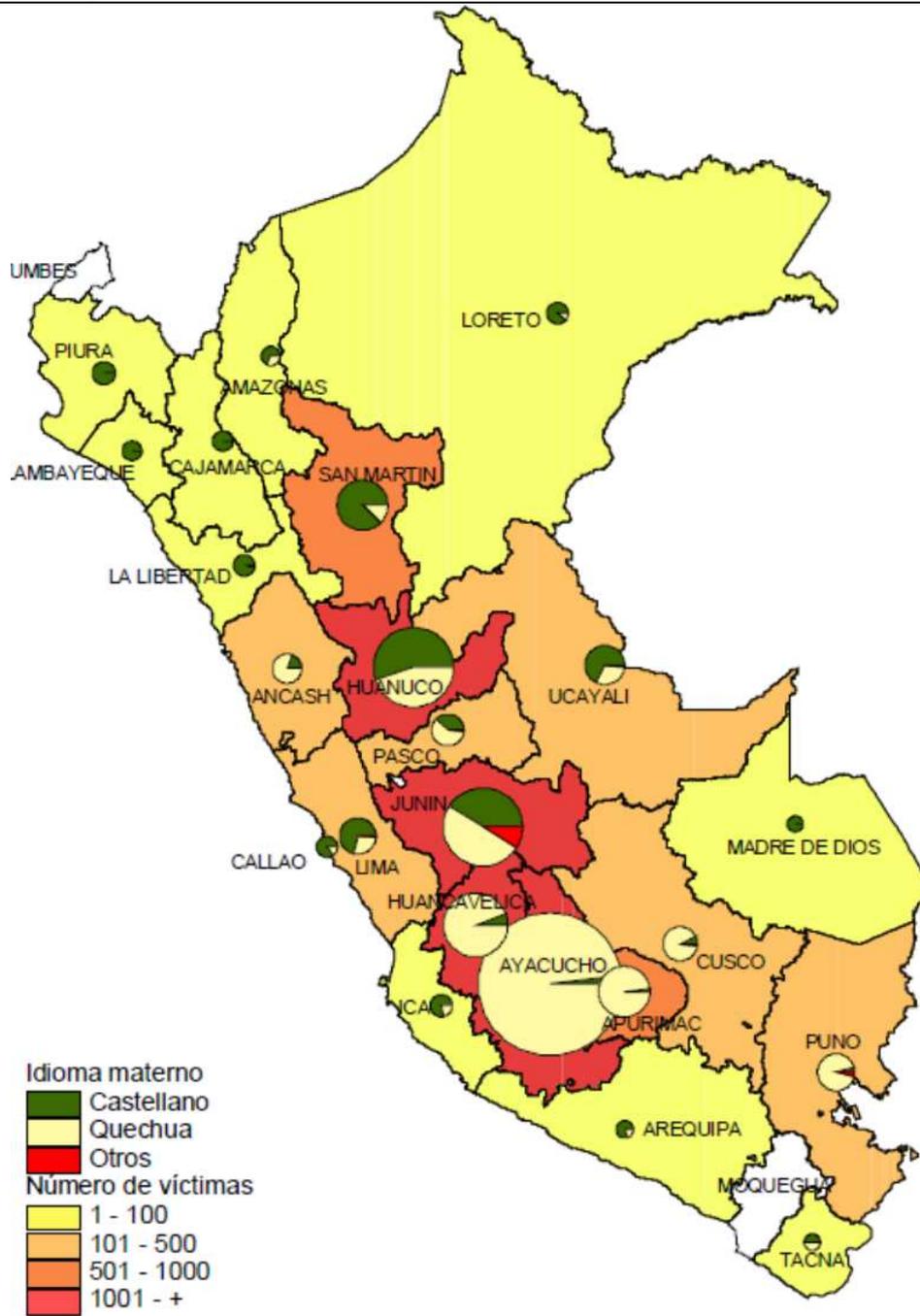
No matter the race or origin of Sendero Luminoso's target audiences, however, all followers that the group was able to bring to their cause were called *Senderistas*. Comparable to the communist term *comrade*, this name unified the Shining Path's followers and provided them with a false sense of equality despite the inequalities of rank and ethnicity within the organization itself (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

The group grew increasingly violent, beginning with acts of simple protest, such as the burning of ballot boxes and the painting of propaganda slogans on buildings (see *Figure 3* above). These acts of protest soon escalated into physical violence in the early 1980s and continued to be a steady practice of the SL insurgency throughout the war (Theidon, 2010).

Perhaps the cruelest forms of violence committed by the Senderistas in the name of Sendero Luminoso's agenda were mock trials, which they conducted predominantly in the countryside. During these trials, anyone believed to be at all connected to the local or national government, bourgeoisie, schools, or even local trade unions might be judged by their "peers" – meaning Sendero Luminoso militants. These victims were typically executed or tortured mercilessly

An example of one such callous act performed by the group occurred in May of 1991 in the mountainous sierra region of Peru. The Shining Path seized the small village of Huasahuasi and arrested two nuns and five priests, condemning them all to death because of the fact that they were helping the poor instead of encouraging them to join the SL's revolution (Fitz-Simons, 1993). One of the nuns, an Australian woman named Irene McCormack, was charged with the extra offense of spreading "American ideas" and food products throughout the region. Despite the villagers' protests that she was not American nor spreading Western ideas, the Senderistas took no notice, and Sister McCormack was the first to be executed.

Such brutal acts were common in the insurgency of Sendero Luminoso, and as the group gained its momentum, it began conducting ever larger military assaults through guerilla warfare. The strategy of the insurgency enabled the group to gain control of Peru one village at a time (Switzer, 2007).



33)

3.3 Tactics and Psychology of Popular Warfare

The tactics employed by Sendero Luminoso were numerous, well-crafted and effectively used for mass manipulation purposes. The intended target audience was the entire country of Peru, and the group, therefore, chose maneuvers

which would have the greatest effect on the largest number of people in order to intimidate them into behavioral changes (Stern, 1998).

Sendero Luminoso called its mission *La Guerra Popular*, or the Popular War, its term for the internal conflict in Peru which they themselves had incited, and consisted of both physical and psychological tactics (Stern, 1998).

Arguably, the most pivotal tactic employed in Sendero Luminoso's Popular War can be directly traced to Maoism: the notion that the "people's revolution" must begin in the countryside. This idea proved to be a particularly effective strategy for the organization, as attacking from rural areas succeeded in the building of a platform for conquering urban Peru. This method disrupted and weeded out other organizations, thereby disabling them from taking root, even within the local setting. SL in this way began from the inside-out, "liberating" rural communities one by one with the end goal of taking control of the major cities, and eventually all of Peru. What the Shining Path called liberation in reality had more to do with power. These liberations were, in fact, more like massive fear-instilling operations through the use of violence and threats, which SL used to gain dominion over many rural villages (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).



7 Popular War Propaganda –Duke University

A simple and classically communist tactic employed by the Shining Path was the distribution of propaganda to promote the Popular War. As can be seen in *Figure 7* (above), SL propaganda sought to gain the sympathy of ordinary Peruvians by directly targeting the Indian and peasant populations (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990). *Figure 7* clearly depicts peasant and/or Indian people, which can be deduced from the women's flowing skirts and plaited hair, and the man's wide-brimmed hat (De la Cadena, 2000). The message reads: *Peruvian village, don't vote! Long live the Popular War!*", clearly encouraging Peruvians to join the Popular War and refrain from participating in the current societal norms of Peru, such as voting (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

Every guerilla operation deemed to be a success by the Shining Path was duly followed by propaganda production, which had the effect of encouraging the Senderistas and demoralizing their opposition, namely the Peruvian governmental forces and rival guerilla organizations (Switzer, 2007).

The Shining Path also effectively employed the use of psychological tactics to wage its Popular War. One such approach was the use of Incan mysticism. The motivation behind Sendero Luminoso's killing and hanging of dogs on posts, for instance, can be attributed to the Andean superstition that dogs, as man's companions, leads him to the grave. SL cleverly used such legends as a means of intimidating large populations. People therefore began to associate dogs killed and hanged in such a manner as a direct threat to the life of the person living closest by (Ash, 1985).

Hoffman writes that a modern trend in terrorism is for organizations to select names and mottoes for their groups which denote images of such positive qualities as liberation and freedom, as well as righteous self-defense and justifiable vengeance. Likewise, the Shining Path carefully chose positive, inspiring words for their propaganda purposes, such as: *shining, glorious, popular, and the people* (Switzer, 2007). In addition, the slogans chosen by the group often insinuated the righteousness of the Popular War. One such slogan often utilized by SL was one which Mao Zedong used in Communist China: *It is right to rebel* (Terril, 1999, page. 21).

3.3.1 Manipulation through Terror

Professor Alex P. Schmid is an internationally acclaimed scholar of terrorism who served as Officer-in-Charge of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations. According to Schmid (2005), terrorist organizations tend to use violence indiscriminately against a target group so as to enhance the fear gen-

erated by single acts to be received by a larger audience. One-time violent acts can in this way seem disproportionately larger than the actual harm caused (De la Cadena, 2000).

While working at the United Nations, Schmid (2005) published a paper on the psychological aspect of terrorism, which identifies the extent to which people are affected by terror.

Professor Schmid maintains that this extent is dependent upon five factors:

1. The origin of the terror
2. The possibility of a terror-causing event happening again in the future
3. The main target of victimization and one's relation to the target
4. The phasing of the event/s which produced the terror
5. The person's ability to prevent, avoid and/or fight against a future terror-inducing situation

When relating Schmid's five factors to the fear that Sendero Luminoso incited on its target audience in the 80s and 90s, it can be deduced that:

1. The originating source of terror would have been the violence or threat of violence made by the insurgent guerilla group. The people used by this organization to incite the violence being made up of civilian Peruvian citizens (De la Cadena, 2000).
2. The possibility of terror-causing events happening again was most probable, as the group frequently attacked without hesitation (Theidon, 2006).
3. The main targets of the Shining Path could be anyone even remotely connected to an existing or newly-forming aspect of current society, particularly in relation to the government (Stern, 1998).
4. The phasing of terror-causing events was seemingly incalculable to the general public and attacks were difficult to foresee due to the guerilla movements of SL (Smith, 2010).
5. The only conceivable way for an ordinary citizen to defend themselves against the aggressions of the group depended on their ability to stay

outside of the Shining Path's notice all together, as virtually anyone could become its victim (Mealy & Austad, 2010).

Based on these factors, it can be deduced from Schmid's writing that Sendero Luminoso constituted a group with an extremely large terror-provoking capacity. As Peruvians did not know where, when, how, or if, the Shining Path would attack them next, the fear instilled by this unknowing caused the entire population of Peru to be immobilized by terror (Mealy & Austad, 2010).

3.3.2 Narcoterrorism

Sendero Luminoso not only relied on the support from the Peruvian people and politics but, like any other organization, depended upon financial support as well. This kind of support can be credited almost entirely to the group's involvement and manipulation of the demanding cocaine trade of South America during the 80s and 90s in Peru (Steinitz, 2002).

The term *narcoterrorism* was first termed by Peruvian President Fernando Belaunde Terry in 1983, at the height of the internal conflict in Peru, and concerns the type of terrorist organization Sendero Luminoso represented during that time. Narcoterrorism is understood as the terror-inducing machinations of narcotics traffickers to affect governmental policies or society through the use of violence or intimidation (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990). The term coined in connection to the Peruvian internal crisis is increasingly being used to describe modern terrorist organizations who become involved in drug trafficking as a means for funding their operations, like the Shining Path. Some well-known narcoterrorist organizations include such groups as the AUC of Colombia, the Taliban, and Hamas (Cuba & Pallet, 2004).

Merely a few years after the 1980 commencement of its operations, the Shining Path began to involve itself in the cocaine trade in the Upper Huallaga Valley (Switzer, 2007), one of the three most intense places of coca plant (raw plant ingredient used to chemically produce cocaine) cultivation in the world, along with the Llanos of Colombia and the Bolivian Chapare region, and constitutes Peru's largest coca region (Cuba & Pallet, 2004).

By the late 80s the group began to lag in its economic resources and put considerable efforts into controlling the entire Upper Huallaga Valley of Peru (Cuba and Pallet, 2004). The Shining Path thus began to operate in earnest to control the Valley, and thereby, almost the entire cocaine trade of Peru.

This was done through the group's ability to provide protection for the coca farmers, or *cocaleros*, against the oftentimes violent drug cartels which represented their usual customers, and offer favorable compensation for the coca plants. The *cocaleros* therefore willingly paid taxes to the organization for their services. The group also enabled the *cocaleros* to farm coca outside of the law and thereby produce and sell more of their crops (Steinitz, 2002).

By the late 80s and early 90s, both the cocaine industry and Sendero Luminoso's operations were booming, and Peru boasted the title of the world's largest producer of the coca plant. The coca leaves were processed in Peru, and then flown by traffickers approved by SL, primarily to Colombia, where the plants were chemically converted into cocaine and shipped-out internationally (McClinck, 1998). Some researchers even attest that in the late 80s, the Shining Path had managed to reach a virtual financial equilibrium with the Peruvian military during that time due to their operations in the cocaine trade (Kay, 2008). Sendero Luminoso was making anywhere from \$15 to \$100 million USD a year on coca during those years (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

Many of the *cocaleros* were originally from Ayacucho and primarily peasant and/or Indians, a factor which enabled Sendero Luminoso to recruit a great many of the farmers as *senderistas*. With the added forces of the many *cocaleros* of the mountainous Andes, the group amounted to approximately ten thousand *senderistas* throughout Peru during its peak years in the late 80s and early 90s (Mealy & Austad, 2010).

Despite enormous successes in the cocaine trade, the Shining Path's small-time rival, the MRTA, likewise involved itself in narcoterrorism. The MRTA also operated in the Huallaga Valley and the southern coca regions of the country where SL came to lay claim to in the mid-1990s. As in regards to other areas of control the Shining Path was unwilling to cooperate or tolerate the presence of the MRTA on its turf, as was therefore continuously struggling to eliminate the group from the cocaine scene (Mealy & Austad, 2010).

Nevertheless, the MRTA presented no real threat or consequence for the Shining Path as the drug traffickers in both the southern coca regions and the Huallaga Valley generally maintained a practical outlook on the situation. Sendero Luminoso, which represented an altogether more powerful organization than the MRTA, was usually able to make the *cocaleros* feel better protected, and thereby managed to effectively maintain the sway of the *cocaleros'* loyalties throughout the insurgency (Tarazona-Sevillano, 1990).

4 Concluding Analysis

This chapter brings together first the thesis' research questions and lastly its purpose. This will be done by analyzing the content of the Paving the Path chapter, allowing for the reader to be presented with all of the most significant points of this bachelor thesis.

4.1 Discussion

Research Question 1

What influence did Sendero Luminoso hold over the people and country of Peru during the internal conflict in the late 20th century?

As can be seen throughout the Paving the Path chapter, the terrorist organization Sendero Luminoso was able to wield enormous influence on both the nation and people of Peru throughout the country's internal conflict.

The group harnessed the financial control of almost all of the Peruvian coca producing regions during the late 1980s and 1990s in Peru, representing a sizeable portion of the GDP of the Peruvian economy as a whole. This connection was so productive that the group's domination of the Peruvian coca cultivation made the country of Peru the largest producer of coca and cocaine in the world during that time.

SL likewise changed the structure of the Peruvian military and society by creating an insurgent army which eventually came to operate throughout all of the provinces of Peru. Due to the formation of the Shining Path's army and its violent attacks in the countryside and beyond, Peru metamorphosed from a normally-functioning third world country into a war zone for over a decade. This affected the way that the country and society of Peru functioned in general as well leading to heavy suffering to the nation's economy, causing as much as twenty-two billion dollars in damages to Peru's infrastructure.

By carrying out its insurgency movements of violence and psychological manipulation against the population of Peru, Sendero Luminoso fortuitously gained power through the fear it provoked. Through the use of terror-inducing techniques, intimidation, and seemingly random and incredibly cruel attacks, the group came to wield a terrifying reputation. By effectively causing panic among the people of Peru, the organization came to harness more control simply through the carrying-out of small acts than those specific situations would have otherwise demanded.

Lastly, Sendero Luminoso was responsible for the destruction of vast amounts of human life, an influence which in no way can be measured. The group caused enormous casualties during the Internal Conflict of Peru, murdering and bringing about the disappearance of over ten thousand people singlehandedly. The SL is likewise culpable for all of the deaths and disappearances incited by the government, the MRTA, and all other groups combined throughout two entire decades, from the year 1980 to 2000 as it instigated the war single handedly.

Research Question 2

What circumstances contributed to the group's rise in power from its initiation of the war in 1980 until its decline in 1992?

From this study it can be concluded that there were a number of circumstances which aided the Shining Path in achieving power during the internal conflict of Peru, each enabling the methods which the group used throughout its guerilla insurgency.

The circumstance which received the most focus in this thesis was the case of the indigenous and peasant people of Peru. These people have been typically marginalized and over-looked by Peruvian society due to their ethnicity, blue collar occupations and the remoteness of the places they call home. The history of Peru itself mimics, although to a lesser extent, the conditions in which these people found themselves during the time of the internal conflict – in a classist society controlled primarily by the posterity of the people who original enslaved the native Americans of Peru and the Incan Empire.

Many indigenous people remained in the Andean provinces of the country, holding steadfastly to their culture in small and isolated communities. Throughout the years these villages have been financially excluded from the opportunities afforded in the larger cities along the coast of Peru, leading to a constant exodus from the countryside to the more prosperous cost. These people are called cholos, and although they have been afforded better fortunes than their rural brethren, they have still been subject to prejudice because of their background and ethnicity.

The country's neglect of these populations, mixed with the current economic crisis of the time, aided tremendously in Sendero Luminoso's insurgency, allowing for the group to capitalize on these people's misfortunes. The terrorist organization successfully attracted them to its cause with messages of equality and justifiable vengeance against the upper classes of Peruvian society, despite the obvious racial and educational discrepancies within the hierarchy of the

group itself. These indigenous and peasant people came to provide for the vast majority of Sendero Luminoso's guerilla army, joining the cause with enthusiasm, and perhaps remaining out of fear.

Due to the geographic isolation of the sierra provinces and their distance from the central cities of Peru, the government committed a grievous mistake in the beginning of SL's insurgency by refraining from combating the militants until circumstances spiraled out of control. This oversight enabled the group to spread itself throughout the countryside, developing a platform of control, especially in its native Ayacucho province. The Peruvian government also provided arms for civilian militias in remote provinces, encouraging them to fight against the SL, an act which only increased the number of peasant casualties.

The political connections Sendero Luminoso maintained with its mother organization, the Communist Party of Peru, likewise provided support for the group. This connection to a legitimate political party with departments throughout Peru aided in spreading SL's message among some of the politically active of the country.

The needs of the coccaleros in the coca farming regions of Peru also enabled the Shining Path to venture into the cocaine trade and thereby into financial prosperity. As these farmers required protection against the dangers of the narcotics dealers who represented their main buyers, selling to SL, who likewise protected them from outside dangers, seemed the better option. As the coccaleros wished to produce and sell coca for the best possible profit they mostly sold coca used in the cocaine trade. Sendero Luminoso also enabled them to produce and sell more coca, without the fear of repercussions from the government. As the group was able to curry the favor of the coccaleros, the majority of whom were Ayacucho peasants of Indian decent, many chose to become senderistas themselves and added to the force of the insurgency.

Research Question 3

What techniques did Sendero Luminoso use to gain and maintain its authority?

Sendero Luminoso was a guerilla insurgency group that used well-reasoned tactics specific to the environment of Peru in the late 20th century to achieve its objectives.

The author believes that one of the most important techniques used by Sendero Luminoso throughout the internal conflict was the group's convincing promotion of itself and the Popular War, which attracted its target groups to the organization. These people were namely the young and educated, and the peasant and

indigenous populations Peru – the latter representing the group that was most targeted by the Shining Path’s propaganda.

According to SL, the objective of the war was to attain equality for all, a message which stirred hope into the hearts of the socially and economically marginalized people of the country, as well as the idealistic and the young. The organization’s dogma appealed directly to the people of indigenous decent, many of whom were also peasants, as its ideology celebrated the rural Andean culture of Peru. The country’s history of discrimination against indigenous and peasant people lead to their distrust of Peruvian society and government, a vulnerability which the organization systematically took advantage of. Not only were the peasant and Indian people the main target group of the Shining Path, but also constitute its principle source of power as they aided in the formation of the insurgent army and constituted the vast majority of its militants.

This Popular War propaganda was advocated through various approaches such as the use of art, inspiring words and mottoes, and public demonstrations. SL’s specific appeal and self-promotion managed to successfully magnetize Sendero Luminoso’s target populations, rallying a force of ten thousand strong at the group’s peak. The Shining Path systematically attracted these target populations, indoctrinating them with SL ideology and mobilizing them into its ranks, and thereby controlling them.

One of the key strategies of the Shining Path which aided immensely in its Popular War was the group’s focus on the countryside, a concept inspired by Communist China. Through concentrating most of its activities in rural areas, SL facilitated both a safer environment in which to expand and keep hidden and gain momentum. By focusing their attacks on small and isolated communities, the militants ensured realistic victories for themselves, thus establishing a base to grow from with the end goal of controlling the largest Peruvian cities. The far-sightedness of this plan warranted a gradual domination of Peru, one which eventually allowed for Sendero Luminoso’s expansion into every province of the country.

Another strategy used by the organization was the physical and psychological manipulation of all sectors of Peruvian society through terror-inducing techniques. The Shining Path used fear to control the people of Peru through such violent methods as executions and torture.

The SL militants were merciless in their physical attacks, but the most terrifying factor was their apparent indiscriminate use of violence. Sendero Luminoso seemed to draw the line at no one, attacking school teachers and priests as readily as the Peruvian military. Although SL concentrated the brunt of these ac-

tivities in the countryside, the city dwellers likewise remained anxious as the group also operated underground in cities. The group kept the people of Peru on edge, as there seemed to be no method of deciphering where Sendero Luminoso would attack, who it would strike next or what methods of aggressions it would use.

The militants could also use psychological methods of intimidating citizens such as painting SL propaganda on public and private property, burning ballot boxes and using phantasmagoric superstitions to their advantage, such as hanging dead dogs on lamp posts. The messages resonated much louder than their actual size demanded due to the fact that they produced terror, every new activity adding to the group's intimidation factor. The Shining Path used these attacks to instill terror into Peru, which allowed it to remain virtually unchallenged by all groups but the Peruvian military.

Aside from these physical and mental manipulations through the use of violence and terror, the Shining Path used the funding it made from its control of the Peruvian cocaine trade to gain resources, finance its operations, and remain a threat to Peru for many years.

The group also managed to engage the favor of the cacoleros through the protection it offered them, and thereby controlled the production flow of coca. SL controlled virtually the entire coca production of Peru during its peak years, shipping the plants internationally for cocaine production and thus allowing for the finance of the Popular War through their symbiotic relationship with the cocoleros.

4.2 Conclusion

The purpose mentioned in this bachelor's thesis was to identify how, and in which ways, the Shining Path was able to gain and maintain power over the people and country of Peru during the Peruvian Civil War.

Four factors which the author believes to have been of central importance to the Shining Path's influence over Peru are, namely, the group's ability to manipulate the nation and society of Peru through the use of psychological tactics inducing terror, the campaign strategies of its Popular War, its virtual control of the entire cocaine trade in Peru at that time, and most importantly, the group's mobilization of its main target group to its cause. Due to these factors, SL remained predominantly unchallenged by all groups, aside of the military of Peru, for over a decade.

The tactics employed by Sendero Luminoso were numerous, well-crafted and effectively used for mass manipulation purposes. SL was well-organized and

concentrated on realistic goals instead of attempting to attack in foolhardy or wasteful maneuvers. The main strategy behind the group's Popular War was the organization's tactful plan to first control the countryside, building a base from which they had hoped to eventually destroy all modern Peruvian society. This strategy largely succeeded, and SL militants came to largely dominate the Andean countryside by taking over one village at a time.

As the intended target audience of SL's psychological warfare was the entire country of Peru, the group therefore chose maneuvers which would have the greatest effect on the largest number of people. By instilling terror into the Peruvian populace, the Shining Path managed to possess more and more power. This was achieved through such techniques as the use of symbolism, propaganda, unpredictable maneuvers and unusually cruel acts of violence. As Peru came to fear the group, SL gained its momentum and maintained this respect to easily dominate its targets and discourage rebellions.

The vast majority of the Shining Path's maneuvers were enabled by the group's involvement in narcoterrorism. By taking over the coca regions of Peru, gaining the favor of the coca farmers, and thereby controlling the cocaine trade of the country, the group managed to successfully finance its guerilla insurgency. Not only did the cocacero and SL activities grow from this connection, but the overall coca cultivation and cocaine production of Peru managed to flourish under the control of the group.

The author believes the main asset which the guerilla group possessed to have been its primary target group, which it managed to mobilize for its purposes. By preying upon the vulnerabilities specific to the indigenous and peasant people of Peru, Sendero Luminoso came to wield control over a vast army of thousands of such people. The Shining Path concentrated much of its recruitment efforts on this target group, inspiring them with anger and the hope of achieving equality and economic stability in the group's proposed New Democratic Republic. These people were turned into militants capable of violent physical, as well as mental, abuse. These people were an asset which the general public feared due to their size, cruelty, and anger.

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Further Research

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Truth and reconciliation commissions are sometimes set up by states after times of internal conflicts. They stage public hearings and testimonies, and are commissioned in the hopes of improving transparency and understanding.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru was established in order to investigate the civil war in Peru from the years 1980 to 2000. The final report was released by the Commission in August 2003 and details all of the information that the commission obtained from the testimonies of approximately 17,000 Peruvians who experienced the conflict from all walks of life.

The entire final report can be read and downloaded at the Commission's website at: <http://www.cverdad.org.pe/>

De Soto, Hernando (1989). *The Other Path: The Economic Answer to Terrorism*. New York: Basic Books

De Soto's book is the economic answer to the situation in Peru in particular, and to third-world countries in general. It directly counters the arguments used by Sendero Luminoso to gain the support of the Peruvian poor.

The Other Path is based on research conducted by the Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD) over the course of five years during the time of the internal conflict of Peru. De Soto offers the poor of Peru "the other path" of economic reform, one which does not require a violent takeover of the national government and economy.

In response to De Soto's publication of this book, the Shining Path added the ILD and De Soto to their assassination list. In 1992, the terrorist group detonated a car bomb outside of ILD's Lima headquarters, injuring 19 and killing 3 ILD workers.