

Causing Troubles Elsewhere: The Shining Path and Its International Networks, 1980-1993*

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ABSTRACT

Causing Troubles Elsewhere: The Shining Path and Its International Networks, 1980-1993: As a Maoist organization, the Shining Path inflicted terror and violence in Peru throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Facing strong domestic resistance and vehement international condemnation, this militant group was never able to establish a communist regime in Peru as its leader Abimael Guzmán had envisioned. With little domestic support and amid frequent international denunciations, the Shining Path looked beyond the Peruvian borders for trouble and capitalized on its transnational connections to enhance its survival. Its global networks spanned the Americas, Europe, and even reached to North African countries like Libya, which lacked connections to Peru or communist countries. While the Shining Path was unable to create a massive communist regime as it wished, it did, however, generate fear and violence within Peru and beyond. From this perspective, the organization altered its strategic political goal to the process goal of effecting chaos and fear among the global communities. Ironically, the supposed allies of Shining Path, according to the Maoist ideology, actually turned against the communist organization-peasants from rural Peru resented the disruption of their lives caused by Shining Path, while China, the cradle of Maoism, along with the Soviet Union and Cuba, condemned the guerrillas as terrorists. By examining the expansive transnational sources generated by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the official newspaper of the Chinese government,

* This paper originates from a seminar class called The Inter-American Cold War taught by Dr. Jonathan Brown. I would like to thank Dr. Brown for his comments and critique of the earlier versions of this paper. I would also like to thank classmates Jon Buchleiter and Ilan Palacios Avineri for their inputs. The Donald D. Harrington Doctoral Fellowship enabled me to revise this paper over the summer.

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Renmin Ribao, this paper contributes to the recent and growing historiography that has analyzed diverse political movements in Latin America beyond their immediate geographical origins.

Keywords: Shining Path, Radical Maoism, Sino-Latin American relationship, Transnational political movements, International terrorism

INTRODUCTION

Since its founding, the Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) of Peru pledged its allegiance to the radical Maoist communist ideologies. Its founder, Abimael Guzmán, ambitiously envisioned a new communist Peru created by large-scale rural rebellions and guerrilla warfare. Since 1980, Shining Path initiated myriad insurgent activities throughout the countryside and at times in major cities, engendering profound political chaos, violence, and economic disruptions (e.g., Hazleton and Sandra Woy-Hazleton 1992; Reategui 2012; Acuña Villavicencio 2018). Ultimately, Shining Path failed to establish a strong domestic movement, and its influence has largely ceased to exist since 1993. The irony here is that the supposed allies of Shining Path, according to the Maoist ideology, actually turned against the communist organization—peasants from rural Peru resented the disruption of their lives caused by Shining Path, while China, the cradle of Maoism, along with Communist Soviet Union and Cuba condemned the guerrillas as terrorists.

With little domestic support and encountering frequent international denuncements, how did Shining Path survive for more than one decade? This paper argues that Shining Path looked beyond the Peruvian borders for troubles and capitalized on its transnational connections to prolong its existence and expand its influence. Its global networks spanned across the Americas, Europe, and even to Middle Eastern countries like Libya, which none originated in Peru or in communist countries. While Shining Path was unable to create a massive communist regime as it wished, it did, however, generate fear and violence within Peru and beyond. From this perspective, the organization transformed its strategic political goal of establishing a revolutionary government to the process goal of effecting chaos and fear within the global community.¹ Such transformation of

¹ I would like to thank Jon Buchleiter for pointing this out.

objectives enabled the members to cope with their sense of loss after failing to confront the more powerful Peruvian government directly (Hamden 2018; Silk 2003). By altering its outlook from domestic to international and shifting its strategies from confronting to harassing the Peruvian government, Shining Path shows how organizational malleability may facilitate and continue to fulfill, albeit partially, the original missions of political groups. It also demonstrates how people and institutions may transgress the national borders to evade control and restrictions from the state and in turn broaden the resources available to them.

Organized chronologically, this essay is divided into three sections with each exploring the intentions and activities of Shining Path at different stages of its development. Altogether, it shows how Shining Path gradually shifted its focus and actions from within Peru first to its neighboring countries in South America and then to the broader international community. During this process, Shining Path morphed from a domestic guerrilla group to a transnational terrorist organization. The first section explores the origin of Shining Path. It shows that Abimael Guzmán derived his inspiration to establish the militant group from the Cultural Revolution in China. However, while Guzmán tried to create a communist stronghold in Peru, he ultimately failed to achieve his goals. Meanwhile, China, the Soviet Union, and Cuba vehemently condemned the organization to protect their trade and economic interests in South America. The second section explores how with little room to maneuver domestically, Shining Path established intra-America networks to survive. By participating in intra-America drug trade, the organization gained crucial funding for its activities. These include purchasing weapons from and forming alliances with other insurgent groups in South America. The last part examines the broader international connections of Shining Path outside of the Americas. During the first years of the 1980s, some Shining Path leaders began to establish a foothold in Europe. A few even led members to train in Libya. Towards the late 1980s and early 1990s, as Shining Path began to seriously decline in the Americas, many members flocked to Europe. There, these Maoists caused episodes of social disruptions such as threatening the Peruvian embassies abroad. They also recruited immigrants from other countries and appealed to many college students who staged protests to voice their support for Shining Path.

The major source for this paper draws from the Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS). Founded in 1941, FBIS was a part of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Stationed at twenty locations worldwide, the service department collected and translated newspaper articles from

abroad to keep the United States government informed of important world events. With their vast geographical span, source materials from FBIS can perspicuously illuminate international dynamics and movements that more localized archival documents cannot provide. More importantly, they are also less susceptible to the whims and biases of the CIA agents who tended to exaggerate or even fabricate facts to denigrate leftist organizations during the twentieth century. Unlike many other sources produced by the CIA and the U.S. government, those from FBIS were originally written by local journalists and therefore had less input from the agents themselves (besides the process of collection). Of course, like any historical materials, the news reports gathered by the CIA can be questionable at times. Wherever possible, this paper corroborates the facts claimed in FBIS with other sources, chiefly the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación del Perú)*. Secondly, this paper incorporates sources from the official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party, *Renmin Ribao*, to discern the attitude and stance of the Chinese government on Shining Path. Employing these transnational records, this paper contributes to the current historiography by shedding light onto the little-known activities of Shining Path outside of Peru.²

This paper thus builds on and contributes to the recent historiography on the Peruvian Maoist organization, which has extended the analytical temporal framework by examining the antecedents and the aftermath of the activities of Shining Path but has largely overlooked the broader geographical impact of the organization beyond Peru or South America (La Serna 2012; Heilman 2010a; Soifer and Vergara 2019). More broadly, this essay joins the recent scholarship on the international dimensions of various political movements in Latin America (Brown 2017; McPherson 2019; Keller 2015). It demonstrates how purported regional or national activities generated profound impact far beyond their immediate political boundaries.

2 This paper does not incorporate sources from the Peruvian archives for a few reasons. First, given the transnational focus of the paper's argument, archival materials from Peru may not illuminate the international connections of the organization as vividly as those from outside the country. Second, the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru* with its ten volumes already contains ample credible information on the domestic activities of Shining Path. Third, the recent travel restrictions due to the global pandemic has made traveling to Peruvian archives challenging. Lastly, the word and length limits have made incorporating other materials impossible.

EARLY RELATIONS ABROAD

As a Maoist organization, Shining Path had a strong connection with Communist China since its founding. Inspired by Mao Zedong's passionate devotion to the communist revolution and his staunch anti-western stance, Abimael Guzmán adopted his hero's vision for the global proletariat world and envisioned Shining Path as the true communist party of Peru. In 1965, Guzmán visited China for the first time as the Chinese Communist Party began to project its influence abroad. Split from the "revisionist path" of the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communist Party invited fledgling communist leaders in many Third World countries to carry out Mao's global revolutionary vision during the 1960s. As one of the invitees, Guzmán admired the revolutionary accomplishments presented by the Chinese officials, which further confirmed his resolve to create a communist regime in Peru.³ Two lessons in China left a significant impact that guided Guzmán's later philosophy for realizing his political dreams. The first was the belief that only the radical Maoist version of communism could fundamentally alter the social, economic, and political structures of Peru. Strictly adhering to Mao's philosophy was therefore paramount for effecting real change. The second was the importance of armed conflicts in delivering these changes. Receiving training on making explosives and weapons, Guzmán developed and crystallized his idea that violence was the best way to create a communist regime in Peru. He especially learned that even with scarce military resources, he could improvise and create his own weaponry and thereby bolstering his chance for success (La Serna and Starn 2019, 41-43; Lovell 2019, 367-372; Rothwell 2020).

Guzmán's wife Augusta de la Torre was likewise enamored with the communist revolution in China. Also a fervent Marxist-Leninist, de la Torre visited China and received revolutionary training in 1967 when Mao Zedong had just initiated the Cultural Revolution. There, she admired the communist progress of eradicating the remnants of capitalism in the country. After returning home, de la Torre became the de facto second-in-command of Shining Path. The Cultural Revolution in China further reinforced the couple's desire to create a comparable communist movement in Peru. Both believed that rural Peru such as the village of Ayacucho had the potential of becoming the beacon of a true Maoist

³ These alleged successes, however, was deceptive as the Chinese Communist Party deliberately hid the disastrous effects of the erroneous policies of the party.

communist paradise in Latin America. To bolster their purity and fundamentalist belief in true communism, the comrades often read newspapers and watched propaganda movies from China (La Serna and Starn 2019, 53-56; Degregori and Stern 2012, 106; Degregori 1996; Chiaramonti 2018; Taylor 2006).

Absorbing and applying the lessons that they learned from Mao, Guzmán and his wife directed Shining Path to train Peruvians for guerrilla combats.⁴ Throughout the early 1980s, Shining Path constantly inflicted gory incidents on Peru, which deeply hurt the country's economy. (Arena and Arrigo 2020; Soto, Sánchez, and Ríos 2019; Degregori and Stern 2012). These attacks obstructed the Peruvian economic growth as tourism shrank by around eighty percent, with traditional tourist cities such as Cuzco suffering the most financial losses.⁵ Later, with the increasing challenges to confront the Peruvian government directly, Shining Path resorted to more covert activities to subvert the Peruvian society.⁶ For instance, the organization often recruited children to take advantage of the fact that police usually did not suspect minors as criminals. These children often approached the unsuspecting law enforcement officers and then killed them with firearms (Asencios Lindo 2016; Kirk 1993).⁷

Despite Shining Path's keen effort to inflict terror on the Peruvian society, it largely failed to do so. Because terrorism caused by the Maoist militants constantly disrupted their lives, most Peruvians, including the leftists and peasants, began to harbor resentment against the organization. In 1983, labor Minister Joaquín Leguía observed that the Peruvian working class and even communist-leaning leftist labor unions did not support Shining Path as they apparently detested Shining Path's violent acts.⁸ Even peasants, whom Shining Path supposed to recruit and benefit according to the Maoist ideology, rose against the organization (Koc-Menard 2007). In Ayacucho, Shining Path's terror to locals was so immense that reports of peasants killing members of the guerrilla group emerged. What further enervated Guzmán's political vision was that the Peruvian government

4 "Police Discover Guerrilla Training Camps," June 14, 1981, Foreign Broadcast Information Service (hereafter FBIS).

5 "Percovich, Leguia Comment on Shining Path," September 10, 1984, FBIS.

6 "Using Peddlers, Beggars as Spies," January 3, 1983, FBIS. "Police Discover Guerrilla Training Camps," June 14, 1981, FBIS. President Belaúnde was same president who endured the Cuban supported insurrection of 1965. He came back to power in the 1980s once the military government crumpled.

7 "Shining Path Recruiting, Training Children," January 2, 1983, FBIS.

8 Ibid.

enhanced its military presence throughout the country, leaving very little room for the guerrillas to operate.⁹ As scholars have shown, Shining Path remained a relatively small militant organization with members between five to eight thousand at its zenith (e.g., Dreyfus 1999, 379).

Not only did Shining Path lose much of its domestic support, but the international community, including even Cuba and Soviet Union, also overwhelmingly condemned the group as terroristic. As early as 1982, barely two years after the founding of Shining Path, Castro denied any connection with the guerrilla group. Deeming the organization as terroristic, Castro condemned the senseless atrocities and violence carried out by Shining Path. The Soviet Union also feared that the presence of a strong Maoist-Marxist group in Peru might jeopardize its prospective connections with South America. “The Soviet Union has a lot to win from a good relationship with us and a lot to lose if it is stained by the suspicion that Cuba supports Shining path,” a columnist of a Peruvian newspaper *Expreso* explained, “The sale of arms and trade exchange, fishing within our 200 mile territorial sea and Aeroflot’s flights to Peru could all go down the drain if a hint of connection between Shining Path and Havana, which in the end would imply an indirect connection with Moscow, is found.” The columnist further asserted that Shining Path received no foreign support, “Everything indicates that Shining Path is essentially home grown with few or no connections abroad.”¹⁰

Even China, the birthplace of Maoist ideology to which Shining Path vowed to follow, condemned the group. The Chinese government’s response to the organization was partly due to Shining Path’s hostile stance against its new generation of leadership. After Mao died, The Chinese Communist Party, under the direction of Deng Xiaoping, resolved to depart from the radical Maoism that killed millions of people and left China economically, socially, and culturally damaged. Instead, it reconciled with its former enemies in the west and adopted capitalism. Seeing that the Chinese government had disavowed Maoism, Guzmán was indignant. He felt that China had betrayed the country’s founder and his vision. Fueled by Mao’s ideology of perpetual revolution, Guzmán and his comrades revenged. In 1980, Shining Path members hung dead dogs on lamp posts and traffic lights with signs that read “Deng Xiaoping, Son of a Bitch” (Degregori and Stern 2012, 4).

Unsurprisingly, embittered by Shining Path’s blatant insolence, the

9 “Peasants Kill Terrorists,” January 28, 1983, FBIS.

10 “Columnist Discounts Cuban Ties to Shining Path,” December 11, 1982, FBIS.

Chinese government frequently condemned the organization. For instance, on March 3, 1983, Su Huang, the ambassador of People's Republic of China (PRC) to Peru denounced the terrorist attacks carried out by Shining Path. In his formal talk with Valentín Paniagua Corazao, president of the Chamber of Deputies of Peru, Huang stated that “we oppose terrorist acts as well as interventionism.”¹¹ Besides retaliating against the impudence from Shining Path, boosting its reputation on the global stage provided another incentive for the Chinese government to censure the Peruvian Maoist militants. Having just opened its economy to the world, the new leadership of the Chinese Communist Party was careful to present China as a responsible modern nation. It knew well that condemning Shining Path would enhance its image and garner more trade opportunities with South America and beyond.

Infuriated by China, Shining Path launched another cycle of vengeance. Months later, on December 26, 1983, a group of five men threw home-made bombs towards the PRC embassy building in Lima. Both ambassador Huang and his wife were inside at the time of the attack. Fortunately for the Huangs, the bomb only landed and exploded in the front garden of the embassy, causing no injuries. Although no organization claimed responsibility, the Peruvian authorities believed that Shining Path was likely the culprit.¹² Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, Shining Path orchestrated similar attacks against the Chinese embassy. For instance, on May 31, 1990, Shining Path exploded a car full of explosives in front of the Chinese embassy in Lima. Although no one was injured, the explosion caused severe damages to the embassy building. The car bomb also shattered windows and destroyed facades of nearby resident buildings along with two vehicles. Altogether, the terrorist act cost half a million dollars in damage and destroyed some valuable information that the embassy had collected over several years.¹³

Given the mutual animosity between China and Shining Path, *Renmin Ribao*, the official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party often harangued the *senderistas*. It labeled the Maoist organization as a “guerrilla group,”¹⁴ a “armed militant group,”¹⁵ a “terrorist group,”¹⁶ and an

11 “PRC Ambassador Denounces Acts of Terrorism,” March 3, 1983, FBIS.

12 “PRC Embassy, Restaurant Bombed,” December 26, 1983, FBIS. On the same day, eight men disguised as fishermen also carried out a similar attack on a coastal restaurant called La Rosa Náutica. Though the bomb damaged the building, there were no casualties.

13 “Car Bomb Explodes in Front of PRC Embassy,” May 31, 1990, FBIS.

14 “Bilu yi youjidui zaici xiji Lima” 秘鲁一游击队再次袭击利马 [A guerilla group in Peru attacks Lima again], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, October 19, 1983, 7.

15 “Bilu zhengfu xuanbu zaici yanhang jinji zhuangtai” 秘鲁政府宣布再次延长紧急状态

“anti-government armed group.”¹⁷ To further distance the Chinese Communist Party from the Peruvian guerilla group, none of the news articles by *Renmin Ribao* mentioned about Shining Path’s purported connections to and support for Maoism. Perhaps to inflict moral revenge on the organization, the newspaper reported many gory incidents perpetrated by Shining Path members between 1983 and 1985, especially during 1983. In July 1983, *Renmin Ribao* reported that Shining Path attacked Lima, causing several districts to lose electric power for around twenty minutes. The militants destroyed several high voltage transmission towers and assaulted several police in the district of Chorrillos. The newspaper also recalled a previous attack perpetrated by the guerrillas in the same month. As a result of the assault, the entire city of Lima lost power for one day. Several districts were without power for three or four more days.¹⁸ In August of the same year, *Renmin Ribao* described that more than two hundred Shining Path militants had ambushed at the village of San José De Secce and attacked a small group of patrol officers of the Peruvian marine, resulting in a vehement fight that lasted for two hours. The marines killed forty militants while sustaining three deaths and five injuries.¹⁹

Likely to further position the Chinese government as a responsible and peace-loving institution, *Renmin Ribao* detailed and condemned the ways in which Shining Path damaged the democratic elections of Peru and the tranquil livelihoods of the Peruvian people. For example, in November 1983, the newspaper described that while Peru was suffering from high rates of unemployment and exorbitant inflation, it was also facing increasing violent attacks from Shining Path. Fourteen out of the twenty-four states of Peru were suffering from frequent militant assaults. The guerrillas had also increased its presence in Lima. The explosion detonated by the organization on November 10 was especially gruesome. Mass panic among the residents of Lima ensued. Shining Path also destroyed power facilities in other states including Ayacucho. *Renmin Ribao* lamented

[The Peruvian government declares extension to the state of emergency again], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, October 10, 1985, 6.

- 16 “Bilu kongbu huodong changjue” 秘鲁恐怖活动猖獗 [Terrorism is rampant in Peru], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, January 30, 1993, 6.
- 17 “Bi yipi fanzhengfu wuzhuang fenzi bei zhuhuo” 秘一批反政府武装分子被抓获 [A group of anti-government militants in Peru were captured], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, November 3, 1992, 6.
- 18 “Bilu yi youjidui zaici xiji Lima” 秘鲁一游击队再次袭击利马 [A guerilla group in Peru attacks Lima again], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, October 19, 1983, 7.
- 19 “Bilu zhengfujun tong youjidui jizhan” 秘鲁政府军同游击队激战 [The military of the Peruvian government fought vehemently with the guerilla group], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, August 11, 1983, 7.

that after finally having its own elected civil government in 1980, Peru still faced considerable instability, casting doubt on its road to democracy (See also Sanders 1984).²⁰ In 1984, *Renmin Ribao* broadcasted that “the terrorist group Shining Path” had attacked the power supply system in Lima and Huancayo. This was the second time the capital city experienced power outage due to guerrilla violence since December 1983.²¹ In 1985, the newspaper reported that because of the recent guerrilla attacks, the Peruvian government declared state of emergency for sixty days in twenty-five of the 145 counties in Peru, including those in the states of San Martín, Huánuco, Pasco, Ayacucho, Huancavelica, and Apurímac.²²

The Chinese newspaper was silent about Shining Path from 1986 until the early 1990s when the Peruvian government captured Guzmán. Two reasons might explain this silence. First, Shining Path’s domestic influence diminished significantly after the mid-1980s, to which the Chinese media became less attuned. Second, the Chinese government was quite ambivalent about its position towards the organization. Considering that Shining Path brandished the Maoist ideologies on which the Chinese Communist Party was founded, lambasting the organization would indirectly tarnish the party’s own image.

With diminished domestic support and rising international condemnations, Shining Path became increasingly desperate especially after the Peruvian government implemented more draconian measures against the group. “Shining Path will not succeed, because all it can show for itself is some destruction and murders here and there,” Peruvian War Minister General Luis Cisneros confidently claimed. “The extremist group has survived so far because the police did not know how to handle the problem. These depressed areas must be pulled out of their current situation because they are the breeding ground for terrorism.” The Peruvian army further suffocated the organization by increasing its presence throughout the country. “Shining Path will make sure not to provoke a confrontation with the armed forces because it is not suitable for them,” declared General Cisneros.²³ It is clear that by 1984, Shining Path had lost its traction for large-scale domestic terrorist activities and only relied

20 “Bilu you xuanbu liangge diqu chuyu jinji zhuangtai” 秘鲁又宣布两个地区处于紧急状态 [Peru declared state of emergency in two regions again], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, December 10, 1983, 7.

21 “Bilu shoudu gongdian xitong zao xiji” 秘鲁首都供电系统遭袭击 [The attack on power supply system in Peru's capital], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, July 22, 1984, 6.

22 “Bilu dui yixie xian shixing jinji zhuangtai” 秘鲁对一些县实行紧急状态 [Peru imposes state of emergency on some counties], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, August 11, 1985, 6.

23 “War Minister against Military Fighting Terrorists,” December 23, 1982, FBIS.

upon scattered incidents of violence to carry out its mission. According to Minister of Interior Luís Percovich, Shining Path members seemingly “have lost their direction.”²⁴

INTRA-AMERICA CONNECTIONS

With very little room to survive domestically, the leaders of Shining Path were cognizant that extending the organization’s influence beyond the Peruvian border might enhance its survival. Already in 1983, the Peruvian government detected traces of foreigners in the guerrilla troops of Shining Path. Supported by foreign allies, Shining Path at times paralyzed and blackmailed the city of Ayacucho, prompting President Belaúnde to denounce foreign interventions. Although the president could not pinpoint the specific foreign organizations that aided Shining Path at the time, he condemned these external involvements. “Peru categorically rejects the imposition of any foreign ideas or programs on the country,” declared Belaúnde, “If such an intervention is confirmed, strong action will be taken.” Belaúnde pledged to fortify existing police stations, enhance communication networks, and improve the standard of living for the locals so they would be less enticed to join Shining Path.²⁵

While Shining Path faced significant constraints on its funding as the Peruvian government gradually contained the organization’s influence, the *senderistas* supplemented its dwindling operation revenues from drug trade. As a newcomer to the already established illicit business in South America, Shining Path often collaborated with more experienced drug trafficking groups and personnel from other nations, especially Colombia, in carrying out transactions. In 1984, Peruvian Interior Minister Luís Percovich and Labor Minister Joaquín Leguía stated that they had clear evidence that Shining Path was linked to international drug traffickers. “It is obvious that [Shining Path] is receiving foreign support,” observed Percovich, “because it has been proven that Peruvian bills have been printed in Colombia with paper brought from Germany, which is where the Peruvian state has its legal currency bills printed.”²⁶ Subsequent incidents proved that Percovich’s observation was correct. Throughout the mid and late 1980s, Peruvian police found that Shining Path were often involved in

24 “Percovich, Leguia Comment on Shining Path,” September 10, 1984, FBIS.

25 “President Belaúnde on Fight against Terrorism,” January 9, 1983, FBIS.

26 “Percovich, Leguia Comment on Shining Path,” September 10, 1984, FBIS.

cocaine trafficking in South America (Masterson 2010; Tarazona-Sevillano 1990).²⁷ Because the drug trade was so lucrative, Shining Path at times tried to release captured drug traders by attacking these prisons and unleashing raids in cities where the jails were located.²⁸

Although some scholars might contend that the news articles collected by the CIA perhaps exaggerated the accounts of Shining Path's involvement in transnational drug trade to denigrate the Maoist organization as it did to many leftist groups in Latin America, more credible reports from the *Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación* suggest that the militants did in fact cooperate with many foreign drug traffickers in northern Peru to fund its activities. Unlike the other guerrilla groups who directly engaged with transnational drug trading, however, Shining Path contributed to such business by acting as a broker between the drug-producing peasants and the narcotraffickers. It also provided security details for drug trading activities and protected the narcotraffickers from the government forces of Peru. Through its symbiotic relationship with other militant groups and extracting dues from the drug-producing peasants and the drug-trading traffickers, Shining Path effectively enriched itself, which significantly improved its ability to fund its anti-establishment activities.

The most prominent drug-producing area that fell under the control of Shining Path was Upper Huallaga Valley (UHV) in the departments of Huánuco, San Martín, and Loreto. Before the *senderistas* came to the valley, narcotraffickers already had dominated the drug trade in the area and were especially active in the districts of Uchiza, Paraíso, and Tocache. Comprised of Peruvians and foreign nationals from countries like Colombia, Mexico, and Bolivia, these narcotraffickers often fought for control over drug production and market in the UHV beginning in the mid-1970s, routinely terrorizing the residents. With little presence of the Peruvian government, the disorders in the UHV left a power vacuum which Shining Path quickly filled after its arrival in the early 1980s. With a considerably stronger force, the Maoists, declaring their alleged purpose of restoring peace and justice in the region, gradually established control over the drug-producing rural and the drug-distributing urban areas in the UHV. It balanced the competing interests between different narco-trading groups and protected the local peasants who cultivated coca leaves from unfair

27 "Military to Strengthen Border Against Traffickers," March 30, 1987, FBIS; "Drug Traffickers Arrest; Cocaine Seized," January 3, 1991, FBIS.

28 "Percovich, Leguia Comment on Shining Path," September 10, 1984, FBIS. See also "2.11. La violencia y el narcotráfico en las provincias de padre abad y coronel portillo," *Comisión de Verdad y Reconciliación* (hereafter *CVR*), 351.

extortions. Most importantly, Shining Path guarded the clandestine airstrips that narcotraffickers used to conduct transnational cocaine trade. It generated handsome revenues by charging thousands of dollars of fees each time the drug traders used the facilities. Reportedly, around 41 narcotrafficking groups across UHV signed contracts with Shining Path for the use of the airstrips. As such, Shining Path became an important, yet indirect, player of the intracontinental drug trade in the Americas by the mid-1980s (Dreyfus 1999, 379-389; Gonzalez 1992, 125-130; Degregori 2012, 151; Masterson 2010, 56).²⁹

Not only did Shining Path profit handsomely from the transnational drug trade, but it also leveraged its dominant position in the UHV and its intracontinental networks to upgrade its arsenal. Prior to developing its connections with the narcotraffickers, Shining Path often obtained weapons by murdering law enforcement officers.³⁰ It is unclear how much longer did Shining Path continue its killing of police officers to gain firearms. But by the mid-1980s, its need for guns and ammunition became increasingly satisfied. Given its crucial role in ensuring the integrity of the airstrips, Shining Path successfully persuaded various drug-trafficking factions to donate advanced weaponry including AKM, FAL, and RPG, mostly from Colombia. It promised that with more powerful firearms, it could better guard the lifeline of these drug traders—a convincing argument that swayed these militant groups who viewed their weapon donations as an investment to their drug-trading business.³¹

When foreign guerrilla groups could not satiate the needs of Shining Path for weapons, the organization purchased firearms from abroad, likely using the dues paid by the drug traffickers. In 1986, the Panamanian authorities detained a Danish ship called *Pia Vesta* which had already unloaded weapons in Peru and was in the process of delivering another batch of weaponry. The ship captain confessed that Shining Path ordered the firearms for its next major guerrilla combat. On board the ship, the Panamanian police found various Soviet weapons, including bazookas, rocket launchers, mortars, AK-47 assault rifles, and thirty vehicles. Some of these shipments were also destined for El Salvador for unknown purposes.

29 “2.11. La violencia y el narcotráfico en las provincias de padre abad y coronel portillo,” *CVR*, 358; “2.23. Narcotráfico, conflicto armado interno y corrupción,” *CVR*, 747-764; “2.9. El PCP-SL durante el auge de la droga en el alto huallaga,” *CVR*, 282-303; “International Narcotics Trade: An Overview of its Dimensions, Production Sources, and Organizations 10/3/88 [report],” U.S. National Archives WJC-DPC-120357806. “Sendero Luminoso Vive de la Coca,” *El Tiempo*, February 9, 1993.

30 “Policeman Guarding Bolivian Embassy Killed,” October 16, 1982, FBIS.

31 “2.23. Narcotráfico, conflicto armado interno y corrupción,” *CVR*, 751.

From both the quantity and the quality of these firearms, the Peruvian government believed that Shining Path intended to use these weapons for their “Great Attack.”³² Unsurprisingly, with frequent weapon purchases, the Maoists became a quite formidable force. Starting from 1987, during its military engagements with Shining Path, the Peruvian government forces noticed that the firearms of the militants were becoming increasingly advanced (See also Masterson, 2010: 54).³³

Later investigations suggest that Shining Path and other guerrilla groups in Colombia used Panama as an intermediary hub for weapon trafficking. Hiring local Panamanians and other foreigners in Panama to transport various firearms, these organizations distributed weaponry to their members in South America. According to the Colombian intelligence community, these weapons included rocket launchers, rifles, and infrared sights. It was unclear where these weapons originated. Some speculated that the Nicaraguan “recontras” were the original sellers. However, the Nicaraguan government subsequently dismissed the allegation. Others believed that the Panama Defense Forces of General Manuel Noriega were making secret deals with the anti-establishment organizations.³⁴ Either way, it is apparent that by the mid-1980s, Shining Path was able to utilize its intra-America connections to facilitate its terrorist activities.

Meanwhile, Shining Path also expanded its networks with guerrilla groups in other countries. In 1985, according to an Ecuadorian news agency, high-ranking leaders of various terrorist groups in South America held a meeting in Peru convened by José Tapia Arroyo, a known liaison among South American terrorists. These groups included Shining Path, Alfaro Lives of Ecuador, the M-19 of Colombia, the Liberation Party of Argentina, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left of Chile, and the People’s Committee of Bolivia. The meeting’s alleged agenda was to plan a new round of terrorist attacks in South America, destabilize the region, and achieve “the unity of the people’s movements of the Southern Cone.”³⁵ Meanwhile, Shining Path began to form alliances with groups in Ecuador, Mexico, and the United States. The Peruvian intelligence community was particularly concerned that Mexico was becoming the next popular rendezvous for Shining Path and other South American groups (Rubio

32 “Ship Apparently Unloaded Arms for Guerrillas,” June 21, 1986, FBIS; “Un extraño barco cargado de armas alerta al gobierno peruano,” *El País*, June 21, 1986.

33 “2.23. Narcotráfico, conflicto armado interno y corrupción,” *CVR*, 751.

34 “‘Official Source’ Alleges Weapons Trafficking,” December 23, 1991, FBIS.

35 “South American Terrorists Reportedly meet,” June 13, 1985, FBIS; “Report Links Shining Path [to] International Terrorism,” June 1, 1985, FBIS.

Pardo 2004, 4).³⁶ Although it is likely that Shining Path ultimately failed to develop a strong relationship with other guerrilla groups and could not effect mass violence to destabilize the continent as it hoped, the intracontinental meeting reflects how the Maoists tried to project its influence abroad.

Yet, despite its relative success at forming alliances, attaining funds, and obtaining weapons, Shining Path failed to gain support from rural areas outside of Peru. Just like the Peruvian peasants who resented Shining Path for its violence and terror, rural dwellers elsewhere tried to mitigate the influence of the guerrillas. For example, in 1988, in Orurillo, Camaco Province of the La Paz Department in Bolivia, four Shining Path members entered the Bolivian side of Lake Titicaca, carrying machineguns, walkie-talkies among other military equipment. Unfortunately for these four individuals, local military guards along with peasants quickly detected and detained these troublemakers and turned them over to the Port Acosta Military Garrison of Achacachi. According to the peasants, Shining Path members often came to Bolivian border regions to terrorize the locals. A few weeks prior to the incident, Bolivian peasants spotted Shining Path members in Cantón de San José de Pacolla and Ulla Ulla, Fran Tamayo Province. Given the frequency of Shining Path's intrusion, these peasants petitioned the Bolivian Foreign and Interior Ministries to ask the Peruvian government to strengthen surveillance and increase security measures along the Bolivia-Peru borders.³⁷

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Besides cultivating its networks within the Americas, Shining Path also established transnational networks in other continents. Its "expansion" into Europe first began within the nuclear family of Augustas de la Torre, the wife of Abimael Guzmán. During the early 1980s, multiple members of the de la Torre family fled to Sweden as they feared arrests for their connections with Shining Path. In 1982, after briefly severing his ties with the Maoist organization, Javier Esparza Márquez, de la Torre's brother-in-law, traveled to France en route for Sweden. Once in Sweden, after rejoining Shining Path through a phone call with Guzmán, Esparza proposed to extend the *senderistas'* influence in Europe by spreading the

36 "Report Links Shining Path [to] International Terrorism," June 1, 1985, FBIS.

37 "Armed Peruvian Arrested in La Paz Department," May 23, 1988, FBIS.

organization's propaganda on the continent and establish strong relations with other Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organizations within his vicinities. Unsurprisingly, Guzmán supported the idea and positioned Esparza as the leading figure in Europe. Since then, "Comrade Enrique" enhanced the influence of "International Revolutionary Movement" (MRI) across the Atlantic by constantly recruiting Shining Path militants (Heilman 2010b, 163).³⁸ Around the same time, Shining Path sent an engineer and a professor named Maximiliano Durand Araújo to Paris to study nuclear engineering. Araújo then worked as a consultant for the French government for some months before embarking on his revolutionary missions in Europe.³⁹ Later, in 1984, Araújo and Esparza Márquez established the first "Sol Peru Committee" in Paris.⁴⁰

Shining Path was keen to establishing its publicist machine in Europe. For example, in Sweden, Shining Path, also known as "Peru People's Movement" there, founded the "Peruvian Revolution Support Committee," the "Mariategui Literary Circle," and the "Ayacucho Literary Circle." Among them, the latter was the earliest, mostly comprised of de la Torre's relatives at first. These groups frequently distributed flyers on the militants' grand revolutionary visions throughout the country and founded a propaganda newspaper in Europe called *El Diario* with Laura Zambrano Padilla and Luis Arce Borjoa as its directors. With a robust team of propagandists, Shining Path often distributed flyers and brochures to the locals, advertising its vision for a "glorious Andean Revolution." It disseminated "subversive ideology, promotes the recruiting of followers, and seeks logistic and financial support for the 'armed struggle' in [Peru]," a report said.⁴¹ Shining Path members in Sweden also organized public demonstrations on holidays such as the Labor Day to enhance its presence in the country (Heilman 2010b, 163). Similarly, in the United States, supporters of Shining Path created the "Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru" and sold pro-Guzmán propaganda at a bookstore in Berkeley, California. One of its flyers reads, "Defend the Life of Abimael Guzmán."⁴²

38 "Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed," August 16, 1992, FBIS.

39 "Senator Views Shining Path Activities in Europe," April 6, 1989, FBIS.

40 "Shining Path Figure in Europe Profiled," November 2, 1991, FBIS; "Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed," August 16, 1992, FBIS.

41 "Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed," August 16, 1992, FBIS.

42 "Peru Condemns Groups Who Back Maoist Rebels," *The Baltimore Sun*, December 29, 1991; "Group of 7 different items in support of the Shining Path guerrillas in Peru," Abebooks.com, n.d., accessed January 29, 2021, https://www.abebooks.com/servlet/BookDetailsPL?bi=12794044639&searchurl=an%3Dcommittee%2Bto%2Bsupport%2Bthe%2Brevolution%2Bin%2Bperu%26sortby%3D17&cm_sp=snippet-_srp1_-image2. See

After gaining foothold in Europe, Shining Path quickly expanded its networks through its linkages with militants in South America. In 1985, a Bolivian named Oscar Crespo helped connect Shining Path with “Revolutionary Coordinating Board” of the Internationalist Revolutionary Movement (MRI) based in London.⁴³ Since then, Shining Path had constantly leveraged its relationship with guerrilla groups in Bolivia, even viewing the country as a “bridge” to Europe.⁴⁴ By 1985, the Peruvian Secret Service found that “Shining Path’s connections span from Argentina to the United Kingdom.”⁴⁵

With links to wealthier nations, Shining Path utilized these relations to raise more funds for its activities. Adolfo Olaechea, the leader of Shining Path in the United Kingdom, financed most of the organization’s activities in Europe through its alliance with the International Revolutionary Movement whose headquarter was based in London.⁴⁶ In 1989, the Peruvian government discovered that Shining Path had been receiving support from Italy for over seven years. Donors, often expat members, of the organization raised funds through staging theatre plays. These people also had connections with unidentified criminal associations based in Europe. Some members also performed theatre plays in New York for money.⁴⁷ Subsequent evidence also suggests that throughout the late 1980s to early 1990s, Shining Path constantly received funding from criminal groups in wealthy European countries such as Denmark, Spain, France, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.⁴⁸

While Shining Path was busy extending its networks in Europe, it also received training and support from North Africa. Comrade “Vicuna,” a key figure for establishing Shining Path’s international connections, traveled to Libya in 1983 before he went to Paris. Although his activities in Libya were unknown, it was likely that he received some training and money from the extremist groups there.⁴⁹ These initial interactions did not generate much attention from the Peruvian government. Because the activities

also “Maoist Group Sees Bright Days with Shining Path,” *Chicago Tribune*, January 22, 1993.

43 “Report Links Shining Path [to] International Terrorism,” June 1, 1985, FBIS.

44 “Country Reportedly Shining Path Route to Europe,” June 18, 1990, FBIS.

45 “Report Links Shining Path [to] International Terrorism,” June 1, 1985, FBIS.

46 “Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed,” August 16, 1992, FBIS. Olaechea was defiant of the Peruvian government, regularly signing and sending news to Peruvian news media.

47 “Deputy says Shining Path Gets Foreign Support,” March 29, 1989, FBIS.

48 “Report Links Shining Path [to] International Terrorism,” June 1, 1985, FBIS.

49 Ibid.

were so quiet, a columnist of *Expresso* could not confirm Shining Path's connection with Libya. "Of course, if it does receive any support from the Middle East terrorist groups," claimed the columnist, "it is probably only insignificant and received on rare occasions"⁵⁰ However, by 1985, the Counterterrorist Department of the Peruvian police reported that there was credible evidence showing that twelve Shining Path members were undergoing training in Libya. These members learned new ways to carry out terrorism and guerrilla fights. Originally based in Paris, the militants embarked on their trip to Tripoli via Brussels on either December 6 or 7 of 1985. Professor Araújo and Hildebrando Pérez Huarancca, also known as Camandante Casselli, organized this trip. However, the identities of the rest of the ten members were unknown. The police believed that these members all carried false passports and other forms of identification with them.⁵¹

By the mid-1980s, both the Peruvian intelligence service and the CIA became very worried about Shining Path's broad international connections. In 1985, the CIA and its partner intelligence officers in other countries furnished a report to the Peruvian government. Entitled "Shining Path Connections and the Possible Financial Support It Receives from Foreign Financial Organizations," the document detailed information about Shining Path's global networks for the previous five years. It traced Shining Path's linkages with various subversive organizations in Latin America, Europe, and Asia. The report concluded by stating that the improvement of the guerrilla groups' ability to branch out and form international cooperation may pose serious security challenges to both Peru and around the world.⁵²

The CIA's predictions and worries were correct. Towards the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the prospect of Shining Path was dimming drastically in both Peru and the Americas, Europe saw an influx of Shining Path members seeking to rekindle the revolution. Thanks to the immigration system of these countries, many Shining Path members were able to claim "refugee" or "political asylum" status for indefinite stays. Sweden was one of the countries to which Shining Path members flocked. It was also where the organization operated its European propaganda office.⁵³ To the great dismay of the Peruvian government, "The Swedish government even has the satisfaction of maintaining Shining Path political refugees, who receive financial support from the Swedish government. This is nothing

50 "Columnist Discounts Cuban Ties to Shining Path," December 11, 1982, FBIS.

51 "Terrorists Reportedly Receive Training in Libya," December 16, 1985, FBIS.

52 "Report Links Shining Path [to] International Terrorism," June 1, 1985, FBIS.

53 "Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed," August 16, 1992, FBIS.

new, we are perfectly well aware of it,” complained Deputy José Barba Caballero of the Peruvian police.⁵⁴

In Europe, Shining Path also recruited members from local communist or terrorist groups for its revolutionary aims. With the largest Peruvian population in Europe, Spain had the most Shining Path members on the continent with branches in Madrid, Vigo, Santiago de la Coruna, Barcelona, and Laguna. This is unsurprising considering that both Peru and Spain share the same language. However, most Shining Path leaders in Spain were not Peruvians but local Spaniards who were members of the Spanish Communist Party. The organization might have also maintained some connections with Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA), a Basque separatist organization. In Germany, the Turkish-Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (TK-ML), a member of the Internationalist Revolutionary Movement, at times also interacted with Shining Path members.⁵⁵

Shining Path also actively recruited immigrants and attracted college students across Europe. In Spain, Walter Malca Carbajal was in charge of recruiting Spanish, Peruvian, and Moroccan students. Under Carbajal’s leadership, the organization frequently enticed the 300,000 undocumented immigrants in Spain by promising them legal help to prevent their deportation. In Germany, the police reported that Shining Path actively recruited Turks, Kurds, and southern European immigrants. At times, these immigrant communities staged demonstrations to voice their support for the Maoist organization. Shining Path also had some appeal to university students across the United Kingdom. These youngsters often organized protests at various cities to threaten the Peruvian government. Their demonstrations clearly disconcerted the Peruvian officials as its *chargé d’affaire* Gilbert Channy sometimes petitioned the British government to end such disturbances.⁵⁶

By the early 1990s, Shining Path became so well-known that traces of foreign support from East Asia began to emerge. In 1990, it was rumored that the Japanese Red Army allegedly wanted to support Shining Path. Peruvian Foreign Minister Luis Marchand Stens responded that although no substantial evidence could back this claim, “It should be noted, however, that any alliance or agreement that seeks to promote

54 “Deputy says Shining Path Gets Foreign Support,” March 29, 1989, FBIS. See also “Sendero Luminoso lucha para no pasar desapercibido en Suecia,” *El Comercio*, November 26, 2006.

55 “Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed,” August 16, 1992, FBIS. See also “El pasado terrorista que se escondía en un bar latino de Ventas,” *El País*, February 25, 2018.

56 Ibid.

subversion would be very worrisome for all of us.”⁵⁷

Ironically, the Chinese Communist Party continued its condemnation of Shining Path throughout the early 1990s like it did during the 1980s. To express the Chinese government’s support for a politically stable Peru and denounce the disruptive activities of Shining Path, *Renmin Ribao* detailed how the terrorism caused by the Maoist organization hampered the democratic process of Peru. For example, in 1993, *Renmin Ribao* reported that Peru was filled with the milieu of anxiety due to the potential terrorist activities of Shining Path, causing uncertainties to Lima’s upcoming municipal election. It then detailed how the guerrilla group orchestrated multiple violent attacks in Lima to obstruct the election, including its bombing of the police stations, government buildings, and public transportation as well as its senseless killings of law enforcement officers.⁵⁸ The paper noted that out of fear, few Peruvians were present at the ballot box.⁵⁹ Over the next few years, *Renmin Ribao* continued to distance China from the Maoist organization by depicting more of its gruesome acts.⁶⁰

To present Shining Path as a feeble and moribund organization, *Renmin Ribao* reported extensively on the captivity and surrendering of the leaders of the Maoist group. In 1992, when the Peruvian government apprehended four leaders of Shining Path in the northern state of Ancash, *Renmin Ribao* celebrated such arrest as “another heavy blow” to the group.⁶¹ In the following year, the newspaper broadcasted the disintegration of Shining Path and how Guzmán admitted his defeat to President Alberto Fujimori and requested for a peace talk with the Peruvian government, a proposal that Fujimori staunchly rejected.⁶² Throughout the mid-1990s, *Renmin Ribao* continued to report how waves of Shining Path members surrendered to the Peruvian government.⁶³

57 “Japanese Link with Shining Path ‘Worrisome,’” December 14, 1990, FBIS.

58 “Bilu kongbu huodong changjue” 秘鲁恐怖活动猖獗 [Terrorism is rampant in Peru], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, January 30, 1993, 6.

59 “Bilu juxing shizheng xuanju” 秘鲁举行市政选举 [Peru holds municipal elections], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, January 31, 1993, 6.

60 For a few examples see “Bilu tuzhuren zao qiangsha” 秘鲁土著人遭枪杀 [Peruvian indigenous people shot dead], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, August 22, 1993, 6; “Bi zhengfujun yu fanzhengfu wuzhuang jiaohuo” 秘政府军与反政府武装交火 [The Peruvian military forces exchange fire with rebels], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, December 20, 1995, 6.

61 “Bi ‘Guanghui Daolu’ youyou lingdaoren beibu” 秘 “光辉道路” 又有领导人被捕 [Another leader of Peru’s “Shining Path” arrested], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, November 2, 1992, 6.

62 “Bi ‘Guanghui Daolu’ lingdaoren yaoqiu hetan” 秘 “光辉道路” 领导人要求和谈 [Leaders of Peru’s “Shining Path” requests peace talk], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, October 12, 1993, 6.

63 “‘Guanghui Daolu’ lingdaoren yaoqiu chengyuan tingzhi baoli” “光辉道路” 领导人要求成员停止暴力 [Leaders of “Shining Path” demand members to stop violence], *Renmin Ribao* 人民日报, November 1, 1993, 6; “Guoji jianxun” 国际简讯 [International news],

Notwithstanding its arrant fiasco within Peru, Shining Path gained memberships, resources, and influence abroad, frequently threatening and vandalizing Peruvian embassies in other countries with revolutionary propaganda. In Sweden, Shining Path members smeared a façade of the Peruvian embassy in Stockholm with pro-communist slogans and painted it with “aggressive red color.” Intending to assassinate the Peruvian ambassador to Sweden, these activists fired six gunshots at the main door. Fortunately for the Peruvian ambassador Gustavo Adolfo Silva Aranda, these activists failed to carry out their mission due to the arrival of local police force. In London, Shining Path members painted the organization’s symbols on the front sidewalk of the Peruvian embassy. They also fired two shots at the building while threatening to murder the officials inside via phone calls. By the early 1990s, Peruvian embassies in Spain, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Denmark were apparently “accustomed to periodically receiving threats from pro-Shining Path ‘Support Committees for the Peruvian Revolution (CARP).’”⁶⁴ Shining Path’s terror threats cost Peruvian embassies across Europe and elsewhere lots of money to strengthen their security. Depending on the countries in which they locate, Peruvian embassies spent around 200,000 to 400,000 U.S. dollars per year on their own defense.⁶⁵

Shining Path members employed similar tactics to terrorize the Peruvian embassy in Mexico City with one distinction—they hanged a dead dog on top of the building. Serapio Mellma, coordinator for CARP in Mexico, was most likely the culprit behind the gruesome scene. Shining Path also left a threatening message that reads, “You must not request the expulsion of, nor give any information on, any Peruvian who works with us. Do not forget that here the party also has thousands of eyes and ears.”⁶⁶ Shining Path’s terrorizing strategies were so influential that other terrorist groups in Latin America also followed suit.⁶⁷

With increased disturbances caused by Shining Path’s international activities, the Peruvian government tried to curb the organization’s global influence through inter-governmental cooperation. “We should pressure the Peruvian Foreign Ministry to demand stricter treatment and greater cooperation from these countries with the Peruvian struggle against violence and subversive crime,” declared Deputy José Barba Caballero of the Peruvian

Renmin Ribao 人民日报, June 6, 1994, 6.

64 “Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed,” August 16, 1992, FBIS.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 “Shining Path Strategy Seen,” October 24, 1988, FBIS.

police force.⁶⁸ Yet, no credible evidence seems to indicate that the Peruvian government was able to curb Shining Path's influence abroad.

Even though the Peruvian government could not contain Shining Path's international activities, the European countries began to toughen their positions against the militants in the early 1990s. Several gruesome incidents caused by Shining Path and major demonstrations against the violence in Peru caught the attention of Europe and the rest of the world. For instance, the Tarata Street bomb incident in 1992 that killed 25 people and wounded 155 drew profuse international condemnations.⁶⁹ The protest from the Miraflores and Villa El Salvador neighborhoods in Peru brought more European attention to the heinous crimes committed by Shining Path.⁷⁰ Since these incidents and protests, the German government implemented new immigration regulations that aimed to criminalize and expel foreigners in connection with and contributed financially to terrorist groups. It identified and decided to apply this new rule to twenty Shining Path members and fifty Turkish collaborators. The German government also dispatched more police force around the Turkish neighborhoods and restricted the number of Peruvians who could enter the country. Germany even at one point considered sending troops to Peru to help the Peruvian government combat the subversive group. Ultimately, however, the German government decided against it in accordance with arm reduction policy implemented after the German reunification.⁷¹

Around the same time, the Swedish government expelled four Peruvians linked to the Shining Path. *La República* believes that the Swedish government was ready to deport twenty more Shining Path members. These included family members of Abimael Guzmán and other important expat leaders. In Spain, after Shining Path had threatened the Catholic Church because some priests supported the Spanish government's decision to expel the militants, the Spanish authority increased its vigilance on both the Peruvian community in Spain and the Basque Fatherland and Liberty.⁷²

However, some Shining Path members found loopholes and avoided punishments even amid the strengthening regulations and toughening security measures implemented by the European governments. For instance,

68 "Deputy says Shining Path Gets Foreign Support," March 29, 1989, FBIS. See also "Shining Path Supporters Abroad Anger Peru," *New York Times*, December 18, 1991, A11.

69 "Police Seize Documents Linking Guzmán to Attacks," August 16, 1992, FBIS.

70 On the activities of Shining Path in these neighborhoods see: "Shining Path's Urban Activities Studied," September 1, 1991, FBIS.

71 "Shining Path Activities in Europe Reviewed," August 16, 1992, FBIS.

72 Ibid.

even as the British government increased its vigilance on the Peruvian community, some members were shrewd enough to avoid breaching the law and successfully dodged deportation. The organization even formed the Musical Guerrilla Army Group composing songs that praised terrorism. “It was horrible,” the Peruvian embassy in London remarked, “but no measures can be taken against them if they simply paint slogans and do not violate the law.”⁷³ Apparently, the British laws for regulating graffiti were quite loose.

While its fortunes in both Peru and the Americas were shrinking, Shining Path broadened the geographical scope of its international connections to garner more resources. After Shining Path leaders first established a foothold in Europe during the early 1980s, a throng of militants arrived during the mid-1980s to early 1990s. By recruiting locals, taking advantage of legal loopholes, and leveraging their connections with wealthy countries, Shining Path enhanced its survival and garnered limited levels of success vis-à-vis their revolutionary goals. Even though the organization was no match to the Peruvian government domestically, it found alternative ways to threaten the government abroad. By painting slogans and firing shots at Peruvian embassies worldwide, not only did Shining Path generate fear among Peruvian officials, but it also cost the Peruvian government substantial money for security. These subversive activities ultimately ensured the organization to continue exert its influence in both Peru and beyond even whilst its members were scattered across the world.

CONCLUSION

Even though Abimael Guzmán initially envisioned a major domestic Maoist movement that would completely remake Peru into a radical communist nation, his vision completely crumbled after multiple failed attempts to establish both domestic support and international approval from even the communist countries. While the peasants resented the guerrilla’s violent attacks and disruptions of their lives, Soviet Union, Cuba, and China denounced the organization as terroristic to boost their trade opportunities with Latin America. Meanwhile, the Peruvian government strengthened its military presence and continuously hunted the militants. With little room to survive domestically and under incessant condemnations from the governments worldwide, Shining Path looked

73 Ibid.

elsewhere for resources and gradually established its own international networks for survival. It achieved considerable success, which partially explains why and how the organization was able to survive for more than a decade. By tracing the diverse intracontinental and international contacts of Shining Path, this paper demonstrates the ways in which the *senderistas* actively sought underground transnational avenues for financial support and firearms. While unable to confront the Peruvian government directly, Shining Path members sought alternative ways to terrorize the officials abroad by defacing Peruvian embassies, threatening consular officials, and rallying support from the Europeans and migrants. By causing troubles elsewhere, not only did Shining Path prolong its existence, but it also projected its influence onto a much wider audience than Guzmán had initially envisioned.

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Article Received: 2021. 01. 30
Revised: 2021. 03. 17
Accepted: 2021. 03. 21

