2015

Imagined Communities, Tangible Limits: Sendero Luminoso and the Incongruity of Marxism and Nationalism

Dylan Maynard
New York University

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/issr

Part of the Economics Commons, Intellectual History Commons, International and Area Studies Commons, Latin American History Commons, Latin American Languages and Societies Commons, Political Science Commons, and the Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons

Imagined Communities, Tangible Limits: Sendero Luminoso and the Incongruity of Marxism and Nationalism

Cover Page Footnote
Dylan Maynard is a M.A. candidate in World History at NYU.

Imagined Communities, Tangible Limits: *Sendero Luminoso* and the Incongruity of

Marxism and Nationalism

To wax poetic, the divide between Marxist and nationalist movements can be characterized as a set of limits in which groups can either shoot or starve. In answering the question *what does one stand for?* these limits can be crucial in determining the political consciousness of a movement and its success in creating a shared revolutionary identity for a nation during a violent struggle or even a democratic transition. The proliferation of Marxist insurgencies in Latin America throughout the twentieth century highlights an ongoing reassessment of Marxist ideology and its connection to nationalism. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels proposed nationalism not as a historical identity, but as a product of an economic "base." The base, or means of production, influences the superstructure, which is largely a collection of all things not related to production in society. To Marx, nationalism and identity were derivatives of a society's means and shape of production, which were controlled by the ruling class. Marx's proletariat was working towards an eventual recognition and rejection of exploitation employed by the economic base and superstructure.[1] This understanding failed to acknowledge the emotional and political nuance of nationalism and ultimately was dismissed by most scholars as an inadequate explanation of nationalism and nationalist movements.[2] However, the emergence of such groups as *Sendero Luminoso*, or Shining Path, has raised further questions with regard to the use of Marxism as a means to achieve a national unified consciousness.

Shining Path is a Marxist-Maoist guerrilla insurgency, mainly active for much of the 1980s and early 1990s, whose aim is to create a dictatorship of the proletariat by inducing a cultural revolution. At the heart of Shining Path's campaign and, for that matter, Peru's history,

rests a desire to balance the country's traditional indigenous past with the possibility of modernity.[3] With this in mind, a question arises regarding Shining Path's connection with an indigenous Peruvian identity and its ultimate goal. Like the Chechen conflict's adoption of Islam, can Marxism be seen as a reactionary vehicle because of past failings of national assertion, or did the Shining Path vision co-opt an indigenous identity to facilitate a macro-revisionist framework? In other words, does the underlying theory of Marxism exclude the limitations that an inherently nationalist movement implies? In his famous exegesis, Benedict Anderson describes nationalism as a social construction moving through time and prompted by the emergence of print technology, capitalism, and the diversity of human language.[4] Unlike the ideology of Marxism, Anderson explains nationalism in strictly constrained terms: "The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind."[5]

Anderson describes the fundamental problem with classifying Marxist groups, such as Shining Path, in nationalist terms. The underlying framework of Marxism and, as this paper will later demonstrate, the networks constructed by groups like Shining Path, promote a goal that transcends the limits that nationalism possesses. Although Shining Path began its Marxist epoch in the hopes of assuming an inherently Peruvian version of socialism through an indigenous identity, the ultimate goal of the movement was to inspire a worldwide revision of order and to disrupt a capitalist agenda by awakening various underclasses.[6] Anderson's elements of print technology and language, and their fundamental role in establishing a coherently unified understanding of nation can be applied as well. Cultural signifiers, such as language, Marxist literature, and indigenous cultural symbols (e.g. dress, historical actors, and language) can be

seen as restricted from alternating national narratives. Cultural symbols, like those used by indigenous movements in neighboring Bolivia, where groups had obtained more success in the political system, were appropriated by the state and *mestizo* elites in Peru, causing the latter movements to reject the usage of such symbols.[7] Moreover, neoliberal economic conditions accompanying the end of the Cold War and the election of Alberto Fujimori, who embraced indigenism as a platform, in the early 1990s, weakened the appeal of a community-based consciousness in favor of discourse grounded in an individualist work ethic.[8] However, this is not to say that ethnic indigenous mobilization was successful after the Cold War. The 1990s saw the recentralization of Peruvian politics wherein Fujimori was able to stifle any sort of collective action, labeling it "terrorism" in light of Peru's continued struggle against Shining Path.[9] This recentralization, along with the continued conflict between Shining Path and the State, caused an increased suppression of indigenous movements mainly because they were subject to harsher treatment from both sides of the conflict. Thus, Peru's indigenous communities were unable to form a coherent national consciousness and Shining Path's attempt to culturally erase an Indian identity from Peru's peasant community failed to take root.[10] Before analyzing the *Sendero* framework and its attempt to instill an indigenous, albeit Marxist narrative, however, Peru's history must be explained in order to understand the factors that shaped nationalism and gave rise to an insurgency of such magnitude.

Modern Missteps: Setting the Stage for Sendero

Shining Path can be seen as one of the most successful insurgencies in the Western Hemisphere during the late twentieth century. What is more, the group experienced remarkable success at a time when most Marxist-based movements throughout the world were dissolving.[11] Although the group's framework relied primarily on Marxist philosophy stemming from José

Carlos Mariátegui, an early 20th century Peruvian socialist thinker and founder of the Peruvian Communist Party (PCP), Shining Path also employed a Maoist theory. Its general vision was to "destroy the old foreign-dominated political system in Peru, to take power, and to create a 'nationalistic,' 'Indian,' and 'popular' democracy."[12] This vision could best be understood by an initial examination of Peru's political history.

The legacy of Peru's conflict can be seen in the country's extreme diversity and its inability to democratize.[13] With the former, the colonial founding of the country constructed a divide between indigenous and ethnically European Peruvians. Moreover, the geographic layout of the country, consisting of the Sierra, Costa, and Montaña regions, contained unequal concentrations of ethnic groups, which exacerbated this divide.[14] As Orin Starn explains, Ayacuchan society in the mid-twentieth century remained haunted by the hierarchy of race and class that was a legacy of colonialism. Landowners and clerics from old families ruled regional life, while Quechua villagers battled against political disenfranchisement and want.[15] Since Lima, the country's capital, is in the Costa, which housed wealthy landowners (usually of European descent), a large portion of the population, mainly poor Quechua-speaking Indians living elsewhere, were excluded from the political system.[16] Furthermore, the uneven geographical concentration of ethnic control gave rise to a dominant national narrative deriving from Spanish colonialism. This led to the racialization of national space and entrenched the Eurocentric narrative of "civilization" as the starting point of Peruvian nationhood.[17] This is clearly demonstrated in terms of linguistics; as we will see, a mass education program by the state maintained a Eurocentric nationalist narrative by excluding Quechua, an indigenous language, from curriculums and was only attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, by the Velasco junta's inclusion reforms.[18]

With regard to its history of unstable democracy, Peru can historically be seen as a country ruled, for the most part, by dictatorships throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[19] As Julio Carrión and David Scott Palmer point out, "Since Peru's independence in 1821, authoritarian regimes of one stripe or another have dominated the political landscape. There have been only brief interludes of elected civilian rule." After the country was able to solidify its territory, a period of limited civilian democracy took place from 1895-1919. During this period however, the first two executives, Augusto B. Leguía and Guillermo Billinghurst, controlled in personalistic ways, which involved systematic clientelism and fiscal corruption. This self-serving leadership resulted in Leguía being questionably re-elected in 1919. In order to consolidate his power, Leguía successfully led his own coup and he authoritatively ruled until a military takeover in 1930.[20]

With the advent of military rule in 1930, Peruvian politics adopted populism as a main method to establish efficiency and allocate political power to the elite classes of society. This worked up until the formation of the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA), Peru's first mass-based political party.[21] As the elites had no equivalent party to combat the non-elite presence, the military was required to fill the political vacuum through the use of veto coups to keep APRA out of power.[22] Military populism, as a means to discourage party politics, was a significant factor in Peru's inability to consolidate a stable democracy.[23] In terms of national identity, APRA supported the ideology of *mestizaje*, which sought to include Andean culture as well as *criollo*, or European origins, into the public national narrative.[24] APRA's role as the powerless opposition is significant in that it highlights the fragmentation of national identity within Peruvian society; a stable political program of inclusion was unable to form without the help of the party.

The APRA can best be seen as a precursor to the emergence of the Shining Path to the extent that it was a force of reform within Peruvian politics. Its widespread appeal disallowed the emergence of more radical movements and its favoritism towards land redistribution appealed to indigenous communities.[25] At the same time as APRA was embedding itself within the political realm however, Peru continued to face disastrous economic conditions, especially in the indigenous-populated regions of the country.[26] This factor is what ultimately facilitated the rise of Shining Path as a means to revise Peru's legacy of unstable politics.[27]

Despite Shining Path's vision of reestablishing an indigenous tradition, its formation began in middle-class universities. Most notably, the *Universidad Nacional San Cristobal De Huamanga* (UNSCH) became the nucleus of a resurgence of Marxist, and mostly Maoist, politics. With this growing sentiment of Marxism within universities, the border between scholarship and politics dissolved and campuses became sites of incessant political strikes. It was with this increasing campus action, that Abimael Guzmán, a UNSCH professor of philosophy and PCP party member, led the splinter movement that would ultimately form the Shining Path.[28]

In addition to the Marxist renaissance within the country's universities, the new military-backed president, Fernando Belaúnde Terry, and the Popular Action Party (PAP), took office in 1962.[29] Belaúnde's incompetence led to unpopular decisions, increasing inflation, and high unemployment and a military-led "revolutionary junta" replaced him in 1968.[30] Under the junta, employment opportunities, which were predicated on foreign-owned businesses, were scarce, and often only available to educated individuals of Spanish descent. Due to the foreign ownership of much of Peru's businesses, revenue from labor reforms never materialized. The economy was also centralized in the coastal urban centers, leaving the Montaña-dwelling "Indians" few options for safe work, which inspired Marxist sentiment.[31] In the beginning of the

1970s, the military junta began key reforms that, at first, seemed to curtail some of Belaúnde's blunders. The junta's reforms were also an attempt to include public national discourse into Peruvian society. From 1969 till 1980, an agrarian-reform program took place that appropriated land to about 360,000 farm families. Moreover, the new Peruvian government sought to diversify its external relationships in an attempt to decrease its economic and political dependency. In this model of corporatism, it was apparently assumed that the old party-based model would be replaced through an intense increase in the size and capacity of government and the incentives provided to popular sectors to relate to it.[32]

This, however, turned out to be false for four reasons. First and foremost, the military's actions were too ambitious. Second, the success sought by the military was premised on continued economic growth, which dissipated in 1974 as economic difficulties increased. Since locally obtained resources were no longer available (due to the expropriation of private resources, which discouraged foreign direct investment), the government utilized short-term foreign loans that produced a severe debt crisis by 1978. Third, the top-down government management failed to include the perspective of the public; members of the peripheral indigenous communities rejected the "top-down" approach to include a public national narrative into the political discourse. This institutional gap contributed to public mistrust of the junta. Last, the deteriorating health of the junta's leader, General Juan Velasco Alvarado, created further gaps within the government that contributed to confusing and ill-financed policy programs.[33]

An important detail gleaned from the attempted inclusion programs orchestrated by the junta however, is the fact that national identity and the incorporation of a narrative rooted in indigenous heritage were framed in economic terms.[34] Peruvian Indians were categorized as "peasants" instead of "ethnic Indians" and public nationalism sought to depict laborers as

genuine national heroes. This was also the case in the Shining Path's attempt to recruit Indian communities into the insurgency; the group ignored hierarchies and traditional methods of communitarian power and instead replaced them with *Sendero* ideology. Instead of resisting and risking the possibility of violent retaliation on the part of the insurgency, many communities adapted to the new ways of life, but did not fully support Shining Path's vision of Peruvian peasant nationalism.[35] Peru, by the late 1970s, was in economic shambles. With the failure of the military junta, the country returned to civilian rule by 1980, but in an act of irony only suitable for Peruvian politics, the public re-elected Belaúnde, the man responsible for much of Peru's mishaps in the past.[36] With this, the Shining Path, which was dormant for much of the 1970s, committed what is largely seen as its first act of war in May 1980, when on election night they burned ballot boxes in Chuschi. After Chuschi, the group then advanced their "People's War" through the Ayacucho region, razing government infrastructure and infiltrating indigenous villages.[37]

For the first three years of his presidency, Belaúnde ignored the threat of the group. It was not until 1982 that Ayacucho was declared an emergency zone and the administration yielded power to the military to combat the Shining Path.[38] By the end of Belaúnde's term, thousands had died in the violence, human rights abuses had skyrocketed, and property damage tallied over one billion dollars U.S.[39] With the advent of the 1985 elections, Alán García entered office and, until 1987, Peru enjoyed a brief period of economic growth. The return to decline was due to a failed bank nationalization attempt and a suspension of all foreign debt payments, which by 1990 introduced hyperinflation at a staggering 7,650 percent. Moreover, political violence, which was somewhat contained during the short period of growth, returned at an astounding rate.

Shining Path had been able to stifle many elections by assassinating candidates, or simply intimidating them into hiding.[40]

With Peru in a renewed state of unmitigated disaster, García was ousted from office in the 1990 elections. Peru suffered from drastic hyperinflation while the Shining Path numbered around 25,000 militants and controlled approximately a quarter of Peru's municipalities. Nevertheless, few were prepared for what lied ahead for the Peruvian people. In what is described as a reaction to the usual state of Peruvian politics, Alberto Fujimori was elected president. It is important to note that Fujimori's election campaign relied on a specific populist message that celebrated Peru's indigenous past and heritage. In honoring his peasant upbringing, Fujimori gained the indigenous vote. In spite of his populist campaigning however, a series of neoliberal austerity measures (colloquially known as "Fujishock") shortly followed to reign in Peru's economic ailments. These measures proved useful and can be seen as why the government, as well as the people, permitted Fujimori's *autogolpe*, or self-coup of 1992[41]; during which, he dissolved Peru's congress and judiciary in order to consolidate power and fully remove the Senderista insurgency and introduce a series of neoliberal reforms. Aside from the utility of Fujimori's neoliberal economic policy, his election can be seen as a choice for Peruvian peasants between the Marxist ideology of Shining Path and neoliberalism. The economic disaster of the late 1980s brought hyperinflation and a ballooning deficit; the fear of Shining Path's violence came second to economic survival.[42]

Before the *autogolpe*, Fujimori ignored Shining Path in order to tackle the country's economic mishaps – similar to García's government. With Fujishock, Peru enjoyed a period of economic stability thanks to Fujimori's adherence to International Monetary Fund (IMF) debt restrictions, which renewed a U.S. presence in Peru. This reemergence of a "Yankee" presence

caused *Sendero* violence to escalate.[43] Nonetheless, Fujimori's *autogolpe* responded to the

problem of Shining Path by learning from the mistakes of his predecessors. Much of the problem

with previous administrations' methods of combatting the Shining Path stemmed from the

institutional divide between the military and the government.[44] Unlike Belaúnde and García,

Fujimori gained control and dominated military leaders charged with rooting out the insurgency.

Reckless generals were asked to retire and loyalists were placed in power positions. Moreover, a

series of laws were passed that allowed suspected insurgents to be imprisoned for up to fifteen

days without charge and anonymity for judges trying cases related to the Shining Path. These

measures demonstrated the full effect of the *autogolpe* and Peru became the first Latin American

state of the 1990s to reenter authoritarianism.[45] Although there is a debate regarding the

proliferation of human rights abuses during the *autogulpe* and whether or not Fujimori was

warranted in his consolidation of executive power, it did produce results in fighting the Shining

Path. On September 12, 1992, Fujimori's National Directorate Against Terrorism (DIRCOTE)

captured Guzmán and the repercussions were monumental: Guzmán's capture was the turning

point in the fight against *Sendero Luminoso* as Guzmán *was* Shining Path. He had killed or

discredited any who had grown too strong and the cronies who remained were left in charge and

forced to take the group into the future. Due to *Sendero*'s compartmentalized structure, many of

these subordinate leaders did not even know each other. Undoubtedly, Guzmán's fall left the

Shining Power with a great power vacuum and severely limited.[46]

     After Guzmán's capture, violence significantly decreased in Peru and Fujimori's

approval rating increased to 73 percent. The influence of Guzmán speaks volumes on the cultural

identification and efficacy of the movement. The Shining Path, which controlled major portions

of Peru and nearly toppled the government, became reduced to insignificant in the span of a year.[47]

<div align="center">Why Not Nationalism?: Limits and Language</div>

The actions of Peru's government created an institutional vacuum within indigenous communities. Peru wrestled with competing national identities long before the 1980s, but the Shining Path acknowledged this struggle and capitalized from it. This fragmented vision of nationalism contributed to what Itzigsohn and vom Hau describe as a blocked transformation in Peru's trajectory of nationalism throughout the 20th century. Because of Peru's historical consolidation of power in the coastal sector of the country and the government's limited spatial capacity in the typically indigenous Montaña and Sierra, the official national ideology was rooted in a Eurocentric identity.[48] Moreover, José Itzigsohn and Matthias vom Hau explain the role of "subordinate groups" in either becoming included or restricted by state elites. Peru's contest to incorporate various national narratives in its political discourse can be seen as a competition between state elites (e.g. government and regional elites) and subordinate groups (e.g. Labor movements, APRA, and Indian communities). This competition racialized space (i.e. the Costa became identified with *criollo* heritage) and disallowed an indigenous identity to be included in the hegemonic Peruvian narrative.[49]

It is in this context that the status of Shining Path as a nationalist group can be discussed. When one considers the advent of the Shining Path in conjunction with Peru's legacy of a blocked transformation, the insurgency, although not a form of state power, cannot be categorized as a "subordinate group." Instead, Shining Path's vision of Marxism as a signifier of an indigenous Peruvian identity can be seen as an answer to the problem of nationalism that Indian communities rejected. Shining Path's nonindigenous intellectual *mestizo* class attempted

to connect itself to the subordinate indigenous groups in the countryside and facilitate its vision of a Maoist-Marxist revolution. Further, the election of Fujimori and his *autogolpe* precluded the organization of indigenous movements and the possibility for them to introduce a national narrative rooted in an Indian-peasant identity.[50] Likewise, APRA's mass-based appeal, which allowed for a national discourse grounded in an indigenous consciousness to enter the political system and Velasco's land redistribution reforms attempted to incorporate the identity of indigenous populations into the public ideology of Peruvian nationalism.[51] The legacy of Shining Path could even be seen as having a counteractive effect on the inclusion of the Indian-peasant population. Since the insurgency chose to disconnect mountain and countryside communities from their relationship to government, the state elites continued to conduct relations with the regional elites of indigenous communities.

The underlying framework of the Shining Path additionally implied that a worldwide revision is necessary after Peru succumbed to a Marxist revolution. As Benedict Anderson suggests, the imagining of a nation as limited disrupts this framework and excludes it from a nationalist agenda.[52] The *Sendero* identity of a Latin American "Indian" uprising failed to contain a strictly Peruvian identity. Instead, it disregarded nationalist sentiment and ignored the historical basis of such stratification. Indigenous identification has also sometimes been confined to participation within a Peruvian society. As María Elena García points out, Quechua instruction is discouraged by many Indian communities due to its practical limitations in regards to social mobility and career opportunity.[53] This ignorance on the part of the Shining Path is perhaps the most damning trait in regards to its connection with nationalism. As a means to fulfill its vision, the Shining Path co-opted a Peruvian indigenous identity via intimidation, murder, and extortion.

The public rejection of Guzmán's vision is evident in Fujimori's popularity during the time of his *autogulpe*.

In addition to exploring the fragmentation of Peruvian national identities and nationalism's inherent limitedness, there is also merit in discussing Anderson's elements of print technology and language as social instigators of a nationalist identity in a contemporary sense. Most notably, the emergence of Marxist inspired literature and literary movements highlight the beginnings of Peru's descent into instability due to the *Sendero* insurgency, but also convey a telling shift in the development of a public national identity. Anderson looks to print literature as a main factor in developing a coherent horizontal sense of membership in the national sense. Instead of maintaining Latin, or another elite language of antiquity, the print industry sought to incorporate mass vernacular into books (e.g. English and German) to access the largest consumer population. However, there had to be some line drawing in terms of accessible language; all spoken regional dialects were too numerous to be included. In short, print languages developed due to the industry's need for a large customer population and the restrictions that technology provided. After print languages became popularized and education reforms began to take place, allowing more people to gain access to reading and writing, Anderson argues that a sense of national community based on language formed.[54]

During the Velasco-initiated mass inclusion program, APRA and the *mestizaje* ideology gathered traction in the form of a public education initiative. From 1955 till 1968, the number of universities in Peru quintupled from six to thirty.[55] Moreover, education reforms occurred at the primary and secondary levels and attempted to incorporate large portions of Indian communities into Peruvian national life. Highland populations viewed education as a means to elevate themselves economically in a time of fiscal instability.[56] With the reforms, a mass urbanization,

also known as "choloization" period occurred during which many highland-dwelling Indian communities became mixed in with the Eurocentric city life.[57] It is perhaps important to restate that many of these reforms however, framed indigenous nationalism in economic class terms (i.e. peasant-laborer). There was no difference with the education reforms; the program contained a uniform curriculum that ignored indigenous identity and maintained a Eurocentric coastal vision.[58]

As the birthplace of the *Sendero* ideology, Peru's universities and the literature they produced can be examined alongside the geographical and ethnoracial divides that the country suffered. The contemporary discourse involving Peruvian nationalism and its attempted broadening was not only a state-backed endeavor; literary movements became a valid and thriving mechanism to instill social change at a time where Peru seemed to be undergoing a drastic shift.[59] Most notably, the poetic underground *Movimiento Hora Zero*, a group of bohemian poets from highland universities, sought to influence Peru's political, economic, and national ailments through literature. *Hora Zero* marked a deviation from Peru's Eurocentric literary roots.[60] Writers rejected classical Peruvian works and immersed themselves in "peasant" life; however this mainly took place in universities and urban centers.[61] Moreover, they "cultivated a colloquial tone and language" in their writing, attempting to depict "everyday" Peru as opposed to Eurocentric urban traditions.[62] Although *Hora Zero* included regional language and experiences in their writing, one can examine a by now familiar misstep in terms of their wish to incorporate a public national narrative into Peruvian society. Like *Sendero* ideology, APRA, and the Velasco junta, *Hora Zero*'s main focus, which was the case in Peru's universities, was to form a public narrative of national identity predicated on class-consciousness.

The public discourse offered by movements such as *Hora Zero* and similar Marxist literature, although offering a new public narrative containing indigenous inclusion, succumbed to the ethnoracial cleavages that blocked previous attempts by APRA and the state. Given that the language of inclusion became couched in Marxist terms, which originated from university settings and art movements in cities, an imagined sense of community could not develop in accordance with Anderson's theory. In a sense, the universities, APRA, and the state controlled the conversation on public national identity. Furthermore, as the political climate in Peru's universities became more radicalized, ultimately leading to the formation of Shining Path, Guzmán and his colleagues were able to develop a band of supporters and institute *Sendero* ideology by force in highland communities that otherwise would not have adopted a Marxist narrative as a signifier for an indigenous consciousness. Educated underclass members, who were able to attend universities due to education reforms, became trained as teachers in the Marxist perspective and served as an effective way for *Sendero* ideology to infiltrate Indian villages.[63] Moreover, the economic crisis of the late 1980s helps to explain the indigenous population's support for Fujimori, the antithesis of Shining Path's Marxist agenda. Prior to Fujimori taking office the center-left García administration instituted policies that focused on splintering Peru's workforce. This caused leftist unions to address labor concerns of permanent employees, largely ignoring informal labor needs. With the highland communities making up most of the informal workforce, an emphasis of individualism appeared and translated into the political support for independent economically conservative candidates outside of APRA and other center-left parties, such as Fujimori. As mentioned earlier, the election of Alberto Fujimori, along with this more individualized identification, impeded indigenous collective action to construct an expansive national consciousness.[64]

The development of public nationalism by APRA, the state, literary movements, and even the Shining Path shed light on the inability for an indigenous national identity to form. All of the activists and institutions that sought to change Peru's national narrative did so without the perspective of indigenous communities. Many of the actors involved rejected a strictly indigenous mindset and opted for a diversification of Eurocentric and indigenous history, which arose from Peru's cities and universities and were implemented by the Velasco junta.[65] Moreover, the emphasis on class structure and Indian communities as labor heroes of Peru coincide with the importance of Anderson's language contention in that it framed Spanish, as opposed to Quechua, as an economic benefit to the indigenous "peasants." As stated previously, Peruvian Quechuas liken the signifiers of Lima's citizenship to economic advancement and the elevation of one's social status.[66] Likewise, Anderson notes that dying for one's country evokes a heightened sense of dignity than it perhaps would for the labor party (or even Shining Path).[67] This poses an additional question that demonstrates the inherent shortcomings of Shining Path's nationalist framework: If Shining Path sought to empower indigenous Peruvians and the revolution was to fully realize an Indian nation, why did indigenous groups refuse to fight and die for the movement? To answer this, Anderson looks again to language in two ways. First, language's inherent "primordialness" exhibits a bond that extends any of contemporary society's roots. Language, Anderson posits, has no starting or ending point. One's spoken language is simply "there" and cannot be traced back to a particular origin. Further, language is the most effective means of connecting society to the dead via the shared understanding that certain meanings connected with death transcend space and time to evoke a similar feeling.[68]

Second, Anderson looks to what he phrases as the "unisonance" language conjures. Complete strangers have the ability to actualize the imagined community through a simultaneous

practice of a shared language. National anthems and similar poetry allow the individual to gain cognizance of the fact that he or she is singing at the precise moment of his or her national counterparts and nothing connects them but "imagined sound."[69] In this, the absence of a national "feeling" can be seen in the Peruvian state and Shining Path's categorization of indigenous ethnicity and nationality in Marxist terms. This feeling is exemplified through Anderson's writing: "What the eye is to the lover – that particular, ordinary eye he or she is born with – language – whatever language history has made his or her mother-tongue – is to the patriot."[70] Spanish, as a top-down mechanism to elevate one economically, was never seen in the same primordial sense as say, Quechua. Thus, histories and futures dreamed were never able to take root in the imagined sense and create the "nationalness" that which Anderson describes. In dealing with the case of Peruvian nationalism and the advent of the Shining Path, the question of nationalism seems to be answered in the underlying framework of the insurgency as well as its expansive agenda to unite a pan-indigenous community within Latin America. Anderson questions the anomaly that is Marx's explanation of nationalism within the Manifesto, "The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie."[71] The *Sendero* framework, like that of Marx or the case of Russified states of the Cold War, fails to answer Anderson's question to Marx's above statement: Why is this segmentation of the proletariat significant?[72] As one can see from the trajectory of *Sendero*'s actions as well as the phenomenon of Peruvian nationalism, the insurgency was confined to the limits that Marx determined in his inability to decipher the anomaly of nationalism within his theory and conceptualize national identity as a historical experience. Moreover, the primordial element of language and print in Peru exemplify the dissonance that engulfed the actors tasked with introducing a public national narrative into society. Without a coherent narrative based on ethnic

and linguistic signifiers, indigenous communities were unwilling to adhere to the imposed identity framed in labor-based political rhetoric. The imagined community rooted in language could never form within the social and physical cleavages planted in Peru's history. In addition, the economic missteps of Peru's government from the 1970s through the 1980s facilitated a political environment wherein neoliberal reforms could take place, which ultimately stifled any meaningful opportunities for collective action within Peru's indigenous communities. The reforms of Fujimori in terms of Peruvian labor for highland communities strengthened a more individualist political consciousness, which became prevalent during the country's choloization period. Thus, the Shining Path insurgency and its use of force ultimately failed like that of Velasco and APRA's endeavor to institute a *mestizaje* ideology, and with such failure, the imagined communities of indigenous Peruvians lacked the feeling to shoot or starve for Marxism. Instead, they sacrificed not by choice, but at the whim of the insurgency.

Endnotes

1. Geoff Boucher, *Understanding Marxism* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 7-9.
2. Paul Lawrence, *Nationalism: History and Theory* (Harlow, UK: Pearson, 2005), 43.
3. Julio F. Carrión and David Scott Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century: Confronting the Past, Changing the Future," in *Latin American Politics and Development,* edited by Howard J. Wiarda and Harvey F. Kline (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011), 234.
4. Lawrence, *Nationalism*, 178.
5. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1991), 7.
6. Gustavo Gorriti Ellenbogen, *The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 127.
7. Donna Lee Van Cott, *From Movement to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 143.
8. Rebecca L. Lee, "Putting a Face on Free-Market Economics: The Politicisation of Race and Ethnicity in Peru," *Race and Class* 51, no. 3 (2010): 49.

9. Van Cott, *From Movements to Parties in Latin America*, 140.

10. Ibid., 140-4.

11. Russell W. Switzer, Jr., "Sendero Luminoso and Peruvian Counterinsurgency" (MA diss., Louisiana State University, 2007), 1.

12. Max G. Manwaring, "Peru's Sendero Luminoso: The Shining Path Beckons," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 541, Small Wars (September 1995): 158.

13. Carrión and Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century," 234-6.

14. Ibid.

15. Orin Starn, "Maoism in the Andes: The Communist Party of Peru–Shining Path and the Refusal of History," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 27, no. 2 (May 1995): 403.

16. Ibid., 237.

17. José Itzigsohn and Matthias vom Hau, "Unfinished Imagined Communities: States, Social Movements, and Nationalism in Latin America," *Theory and Society* 35, no. 2 (April 2006): 206.

18. Ibid., 207. Juan Velasco was President of the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces from 1968-1975.

19. Carrión and Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century," 234-5.

20. Ibid., 237.

21. Ibid., 240.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., 241.

24. Itzigsohn and vom Hau, "Unfinished Imagined Communities," 206.

25. Carrión and Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century," 241.

26. Ibid., 244.

27. Ibid.

28. Starn, "Maoism in the Andes," 404.

29. Carrión and Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century," 241.

30. Ibid.

31. Switzer, "Sendero Luminoso and Peruvian Counterinsurgency," 14-5.

32. Carrión and Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century," 242-3.

33. Ibid., 243.

34. Itzigsohn and vom Hau, "Unfinished Imagined Communities," 207.

35. Ponciano Del Pino H., "Family, Culture, and 'Revolution': Everyday Life with Sendero Luminoso," in *Shining and Other Paths: War and Society in Peru, 1980-1995*, ed. Steven Stern (Durham, NC: Duke University Press 1998), 179.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., 244.

38. Ibid., 244-5.

39. Ibid., 245.

40. Ibid., 245-6.

41. Carrión and Palmer, "Peru in the Twenty-First Century," 243; Switzer, "Sendero Luminoso and Peruvian Counterinsurgency," 58.

42. Lee, "Putting a Face on Free-Market Economics,"48.

43. Ibid., 247.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.

[46.] Switzer, "Sendero Luminoso and Peruvian Counterinsurgency," 67.

[47.] Ibid.

[48.] Itzigsohn and vom Hau, "Unfinished Imagined Communities," 206.

[49.] Ibid., 207.

[50.] Van Cott, *From Movements to Parties in Latin America*, 140.

[51.] Ibid.

[52.] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

[53.] María Elena García, "The Politics of Community: Education, Indigenous Rights, and Ethnic Mobilization in Peru," *Latin American Perspectives* 30, no. 1 (January 2003): 71.

[54.] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 44-5.

[55.] Núria Vilanova, "The Emerging Literature of the Peruvian Educated Underclass," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 17, no. 1 (Jan. 1998): 4.

[56.] Ibid.

[57.] Itzigsohn and vom Hau, "Unfinished Imagined Communities," 207.

[58.] Vilanova, "The Emerging Literature of the Peruvian Educated Underclass," 2-3.

[59.] Ibid., 8.

[60.] Ibid., 7.

[61.] Ibid., 8.

[62.] Ibid., 9.

[63.] David Scott Palmer, "Rebellion in Rural Peru: The Origins and Evolution of Sendero Luminoso," *Comparative Politics* 17, no. 2 (Jan. 1986): 138.

[64.] Kenneth M. Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?: The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 240.

[65.] García, "The Politics of Community," 76.

[66.] Ibid., 71.

[67.] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 144.

[68.] Ibid., 145.

[69.] Ibid.

[70.] Ibid., 154.

[71.] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (New York: Penguin, 2002), 232.

[72.] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 4.