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When Does Battlefield Success Mean Effective Counterinsurgency? Assessing the Effectiveness of Coercive Methods in Fighting Insurgencies[1]

Özlem Kayhan Pusane

States tend to use coercive/military means when they need to respond to challenges posed by violent insurgencies. It is possible to observe this tendency in different parts of the world, including Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East. However, coercion has a mixed record of success in counterinsurgency. Experiences of different countries show that even when states inflict serious military damage on the insurgents, this may not end the overall insurgency.

This paper explores the conditions under which coercive/military methods are more or less likely to bring success in counterinsurgency by drawing on the experiences of two cases, namely Turkey and Peru. These countries have been fighting against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan-PKK*) and Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) insurgents, respectively, since the 1980s. However, while Peru's campaign led to the capture of the Shining Path leader and disintegration of the insurgent organization by the late 1990s, the PKK insurgency persisted even after Turkey's military victory against the PKK and its capture of the PKK leader in 1999. Today, although remnants of the Shining Path are still engaging in violent acts in certain regions of Peru, they areno longer in a position to seriously challenge the Peruvian state. In contrast, the PKK is still Turkey's number one security threat. In this paper, first, a literature survey about the use of coercive/military methods in counterinsurgency will be provided. Second, after a brief overview of Turkey's fight against

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the PKK in the 1980s and 1990s, some of the major reasons of Turkey's failure to end the PKK insurgency will be discussed. The third section will examine the ways in which the Peruvian experience has been different and what kind of factors opened the way for Peru's relative success against the Shining Path in the 1990s. Finally, a summary of the findings and concluding remarks will be presented.

Insurgency refers to "a protracted political-military activity directed toward completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations."[2]When a state faces an insurgency movement, it usually chooses to respond to this challenge—at least initially—through the use of force. This is because the state finds it necessary to limit the insurgency's growth and stop the fighting as soon as possible. It feels the need to regain control over its territory. Although it is widely accepted that insurgency is not purely a military endeavor and thus the counterinsurgent stat e must take into account the social, economic, and political dimensions of the conflict in its response to insurgency, the use of coercion has always been an integral part of states' response to insurgent challenges. The literature on counterinsurgency accurately reflects this tendency. From the early works of the counterinsurgency literature onwards, authors have provided various accounts about what kind of a role coercion plays in counterinsurgency. Among the existing studies, some scholars attribute a more central role to the use of coercion. Authors such as Trinquier (1961), Galula (1964), Merom (2003), and Luttwak (2007) belong to this approach. These authors discuss different ways in which coercion works in counterinsurgency. For example, Trinquier talks about how it is essential to make use of the police forces, and if necessary the army, in order to eliminate the enemy

[2]Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency, p. 2.

organization among the population.[3]He even argues that the use of torture may be necessary from time to time during the interrogation of the prisoners.[4] Galula, on the other hand, accepts that counterinsurgency is a multidimensional effort and he promotes the idea that political and socio-economic measures are essential in counterinsurgency in order to win the support of the population. However, he also adds that in order for these measures to work, successful military and police operations must precede them to make sure the insurgents are no longer in control of the population.[5]Among the more recent studies on counterinsurgency Merom's *How Democracies Lose Small Wars* (2003) and Luttwak's *Counterinsurgency Warfare as Malpractice* (2007) follow a similar approach. While Merom argues that states that are willing to make use of brutal methods can be successful in eliminating insurgencies, Luttwak states that in order to defeat an insurgency, the simple starting point is to realize that "insurgents are not the only ones who can intimidate or terrorize civilians."[6] Thus, he recommends that states follow a similar strategy.

In the counterinsurgency literature, there are also those scholars who strongly emphasize the political nature of the insurgencies and argue that it is not possible to eliminate them mainly through coercion. Some of the well-known representatives of this approach include, but not limited to, Thompson (1966), Paget (1967), Kitson (1971), Arreguin-Toft (2001, 2005, 2007), Nagl (2002), and Cragin (2003). These studies share the common view that in order to end the insurgent violence in a country, it is necessary to formulate an

[3]Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (Westport, Conn: Praeger Security International, 1964), p. 37.

[4]Ibid., p. 19.

[5]David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport, Conn: Praeger Security International, 1964), p. 55.

[6]Edward Luttwak, "Dead End: Counterinsurgency Warfare as Military Malpractice, *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 314, No. 1881 (February 2007), p. 7, available at http://www.harpers.org/archive/2007/02/0081384.

effective response to the political subversion as well as achieve military success against the insurgent forces. They all argue that the state must have a clear political goal from the very beginning of the counterinsurgency and that in addition to the coercive measuresit must adopt political, economic, and social programs in order to achieve success. As Arreguin-Toft states, pure barbarism may be effective only in the short term and only as a military strategy. "If the desired objective is long-term political control, barbarism invariably backfires."[7]

In light of the existing literature on counterinsurgency, a comparison of Turkey and Peru's struggle with the PKK and Shining Path insurgencies, respectively, provide a valuable opportunity to have a better understanding of the connection between the use of coercion and success in counterinsurgency. There are two major reasons why a comparative study of Turkey and Peru is useful. First, these countries' struggles against the PKK and the Shining Path provide surprisingly similar experiences of insurgent violence. Both the PKK and Shining Path were founded as revolutionary organizations with a significant Marxist-Leninist-Maoist influence and an ethnic and regional character. Insurgents grew out of impoverished regions and pursued similar targets, such as local state officials, peasants, village self-defense groups, and security forces. They resorted to both terrorism and guerrilla warfare. Their aim was to show that the state was not able to protect its own citizens and they ultimately wanted to establish revolutionary regimes.[8]Second, both Turkey and Peru's counterinsurgency campaigns were marked by extensive use of coercion. However, while Peru's campaign led to the capture of the Shining Path leader in 1992 and the marginalization of the insurgent

[7]Ivan Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (Summer 2001), pp. 123-124.

[8]With respect to their ultimate goals, the PKK and the Shining Path diverge to some extent because although the Shining Path wanted to establish a revolutionary regime in Peru, the PKK's aim, when it was first founded, was to create an independent Kurdish state based on Marxist principles.

organization by the late 1990s, the PKK insurgency persisted even after Turkey's military victory against the PKK and its capture of the PKK leader in 1999.

A comparative analysis of these two cases shows that the variation in counterinsurgency outcomes in Turkey and Peru results from a major factor discussed widely in the counterinsurgency literature: the fact that insurgency is a political phenomenon. Throughout Turkey's struggle with the PKK from 1984 until the capture of Öcalan in 1999, Turkish governments in office, as well as the Turkish security forces, overlooked the political aspect of the PKK insurgency. While Turkey tried hard and ended up being successful in its military fight against the PKK, it failed to treat the PKK as a political organization, with a complex institutional structure, a system of ideological education and training, the claim to provide alternative judicial and administrative services to the local population in the Southeast, and a significant support base. Turkey defeated the PKK militarily and captured its leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999. In the aftermath of Öcalan's arrest, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew its armed forces outside of Turkey's borders. However, since Turkey failed to treat the PKK insurgency as a political phenomenon and did not deal with it accordingly, the organization easily recovered in the early 2000s and once again started to attack Turkey. In contrast to the Turkish case, the Peruvian state put more emphasis on the political aspect of the Shining Path insurgency. Although the Peruvian governments and security forces made extensive use of coercion throughout the counter insurgency campaign, at least some of these actors were aware of the important fact that the Shining Path was a political movement. That is why from time to time these actors included in Peru's counterinsurgency policy those measures that addressed the complex nature of the insurgency. When the Peruvian political and military actors were able to turn this awareness into a

consistent counterinsurgency policy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the organization got weakened significantly and became marginalized by the late 1990s.

Turkey's Counterinsurgency Campaign against the PKK

Historical Background:

The PKK was founded in 1978 and initiated its armed struggle against Turkey in the early 1980s with the goal of creating an independent Kurdish state in predominantly Kurdish populated areas of Turkey, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. The PKK's first major attacks were on gendarmerie posts in southeastern Turkey in August 1984. From 1984 onwards the PKK steadily gained strength and carried out a challenging insurgency campaign against the Turkish state. Throughout the fight against the PKK approximately 35000 people lost their lives.

Turkey initially gave a military response to the PKK. This was mainly because several provinces of the southeast region were under the Martial Law regime in the early 1980s and the ultimate authority in this area belonged to the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF).[9]However, the initial nature of the Turkish response continued even after the martial law regime ended in 1987 and the civilian governments began to have more control over the fight against the PKK. This may have resulted from a number of different reasons such as the continuing influence of the Turkish military in politics and/or the Turkish governments' inability or unwillingness to grapple with such a complicated issue like the Kurdish question. Thus, despite very few attempts to end the PKK violence through political means in the 1990s, the Turkish governments mainly resorted to coercive policies in their struggle with the PKK until the arrest of the PKK leader Öcalan in 1999. These policies included the TAF's direct military

[9]The martial law in the Southeast was declared due to the increasing violence in the region prior to the September 12, 1980 coup, and it remained in place until 1987.

operations against the PKK bases both in Turkey and across the Iraqi border, the employment of voluntary village guards (recruited among the local Kurdish population)for rural defense, forced evacuation of the remote villages in the Southeast in order to isolate the PKK militants from the local population, and restriction of rights and freedoms under the State of Emergency Rule in the Southeast between 1987 and 2002. Throughout Turkey's fight against the PKK, the Turkish state's policies involved significant human rights violations.

Although both domestic and international actors criticized this line of policy every now and then, the TAF's determined fight against the PKK turned out to be effective and caused serious losses on the part of the PKK. Turkey's cross-border operations into northern Iraq significantly damaged the organization's infrastructure and the PKK failed to replace the militants it lost with new recruits. From the mid-1990s onwards, the number of terrorist incidents perpetrated by the PKK and the resulting casualties decreased tremendously. By 1997, the PKK was already acknowledging its military losses in its private correspondence.[10] Moreover, during this period, the Turkish civilian and military leaders were of the opinion that the PKK threat was reduced to a controllable degree.[11]

Once it became clear that the PKK was weakened militarily, Turkey decided to send a final blow to the PKK and threatened Syria with military action in 1998 in order to force the Syrian regime tooust Öcalan from Damascus. Öcalan lived in Syria from the early 1980s onwards and the Turkish civilian and military leaders thought that his ousting from Syria would put the PKK in general and Öcalan in particular in a difficult situation. Indeed, Öcalan's removal from Syria, his longtime refuge, put him in a vulnerable position and

[10]Fatih Altaylı, "Pişmanlık Yasası Gerek" [Repentence Law is Necessary], *Hürriyet*, November 27, 1997; "Apo Zeka Özürlü" [Apo is Mentally Retarded], *Hürriyet*, December 3, 1997.

[11]National Security Council Press Briefings, available at http://www.mgk.gov.tr/Turkce/basinbildirileri.html

facilitated his capture on February 15, 1999. After his capture, Turkey sentenced Öcalan with capital punishment. However, his ruling was reduced to life sentence after the abolishment of the death penalty in Turkey in 2002. In the aftermath of Öcalan's arrest, Turkey entered into a period of calm regarding the PKK violence because in line with Öcalan's request, the PKK declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrew most of its armed forces outside of Turkey after 1999. However, this atmosphere of tranquility did not last long. The PKK regained its strength in a short period of time and put an end to its unilateral ceasefire in 2004.Since 2004, the PKK has been carrying out its armed activities against Turkey.

A close analysis of the reasons behind the PKK's quick recovery reveals that one of the major factors that led to this outcome was that the Turkish civilian and military actors who struggled with the PKK from the 1980s onwards treated the PKK mainly as a group of armed militants and overlooked its political dimension. After Öcalan was put into prison and the PKK withdrew its armed units outside of Turkey's borders, these actors thought that the PKK was over. However, although the PKK was militarily weak and unable to continue its armed struggle against the Turkish state in the late 1990s, it was intact as a political organization promoting itself as a defender of Kurdish cultural and political rights. Throughout its counterinsurgency campaign, Turkey perceived the PKK mainly from a security perspective and it focused on fighting the PKK terrorists. Thus, in the late 1990s, despite its defeat in the face of the Turkish security forces, the PKK was an organization with an established system of ideological education and training, with a claim to provide administrative and judicial services to the local Kurdish people as an alternative to the state apparatus, with considerable support among the Kurds, and with a clear ability to recruit new members.

In fact, in the 1980s and 1990s, the Turkish governments proposed a number of policies to address the political, social, and economic dimensions of the PKK insurgency. The

Southeast Anatolian Project (*Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi*-GAP), which included plans for a number of hydroelectric plants and irrigation systems on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, was one of the most important one of these policies. The GAP's main objective was to increase farm land, spread electricity, and create new employment opportunities in the Southeast region.[12]The policy makers expected that as the state provided the essential services and increase the living standards in the Southeast region, the Kurdish people's incentives to join the PKK would decrease. However, the relentless discussions about the actual connection between prosperity and terrorism prevented these kinds of socio-economic policies from becoming a major component of Turkey's counterinsurgency strategy. During these years, in addition to those who supported the pursuit of socio-economic policies in dealing with the PKK, there were also several political actors in Turkey who argued that economic prosperity would lead to the accumulation of more money in the hands of the PKK.[13]

Turkey also attempted to address the political dimension of the PKK insurgency under the leadership of first Prime Minister (1983-1989) and then President (1989-1993) Turgut Özal. During his tenure, Özal made a great effort to end the PKK violence through peaceful means. In order to achieve this goal, he took a number of important steps such as removing the ban on the public use of the Kurdish language, improving relations with the Iraqi Kurdish leaders and initiating indirect talks with the PKK leader Öcalan. However, these initiatives stopped all of a sudden when Özal died of a heart attack in 1993. In 1996, although Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan tried to follow a similar path by establishing indirect contacts with Öcalan in order to reach a peaceful solution to the Kurdish question, he could not gather enough support from the other major political actors in the country.

[12]Anonymous author, "The Case of the PKK: History, Ideology, Methodology, and Structure (1978-99), *Ankara Papers*, No. 9 (2004), p. 55.

[13]Ibid., pp. 55-56.

In sum, although from time to time Turkish policy makers realized that coercive policies would not be enough to end the PKK violence and they formulated policies that addressed the economic, social, and political roots of the PKK insurgency, these kinds of policies never became the priority or the most important concern of the Turkish governments in the 1980s and 1990s.Nor, were these policies developed as part of an overall political objective regarding the resolution of the Kurdish question. Instead, Turkey mainly developed a security perspective towards the PKK and tried toend this insurgency by fighting the PKK militants both in Turkey and across the Iraqi border.

After Öcalan's arrest in 1999, Turkey in fact acquired a tremendous opportunity to put an end to the PKK insurgency by looking at the conflict from a non-military perspective. During this period, the PKK had been militarily defeated and at Öcalan's request, it had declared a unilateral ceasefire and withdrawn most of its armed units outside of Turkey's borders. Now that the PKK was far from posing a military threat to Turkey, the time was ripe for the Turkish policy makers to address the social, economic, and political dimensions of the PKK insurgency and to take the essential steps for the resolution of the Kurdish question. However, the coalition government in office between 1999 and 2002, which was composed of the center left Democratic Left Party (*Demokratik Sol Parti*-DSP), ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*-MHP), and the center right Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*-ANAP), once again failed to treat the PKK as an insurgency movement even under these favorable conditions. The coalition partners all thought that the PKK was "defeated and dissolving,"[14]and thus what to do with the PKK in the post-terror phase was not their main policy concern. In fact, even if the members of this coalition government had

[14]Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, "The PKK in the 2000s: Continuity through Breaks?" in Marlies Casier and Joost Jongerden (eds.), *Nationalisms and Politics in Turkey: Political Islam, Kemalism and the Kurdish Issue* (New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 149.

wanted to take the necessary steps to deal with the PKK after its military defeat, they probably would not have achieved much because these political parties had very different approaches to the Kurdish question. For example, the MHP had a security perspective about the Kurdish question and the members of the MHP were only open to discussing the problem of PKK terrorism in the country without referring to its political, social, and economic dimensions. On the other hand, the DSP had a regional perspective and this political party was labeling the most important problem of Turkey as the Southeast issue rather than the Kurdish issue. The DSP Chairman Bülent Ecevit was of the opinion that it was possible to stop the PKK violence only through ending the feudal structure of the Southeast region with land reform and economic investment.[15]The ANAP leader Mesut Yılmaz was the only political leader in the coalition government who was explicitly talking about the ethnic roots of the PKK insurgency. Yılmaz was proposing that further democratization of Turkey through policies such as granting cultural rights to the Kurds would greatly contribute to ending the PKK violence and eventually resolving the Kurdish question. Thus, it was very difficult for these coalition partners to reach a common position vis-à-vis the Kurdish question. On top of this issue, urgent problems such as the need for reconstruction after the 1999 Istanbul and Düzce earthquakes and the need for economic recovery after the severe 2000-2001 economic crises put the government's focus away from the Kurdish question during this period.

How Turkey's Failure to See the PKK as a Political Phenomenon Allowed Its Revival in the Mid-2000s:

Turkey's failure to treat the PKK as a political phenomenon both during its counterinsurgency campaign and after Öcalan's imprisonment had two major consequences in

[15]Suat Kınıklıoğlu, "The Democratic Left Party: Kapıkulu Politics *Par Excellence*," *Turkish Politics*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Spring 2002), p. 15.

terms of facilitating the PKK's efforts to regain strength in the early 2000s. First, as a result of the country's coercive approach to counterinsurgency, although the Turkish security forces defeated the PKK in the late 1990s, organizationally the insurgency remained intact. Turkey weakened the PKK militarily with its determined counterinsurgency campaign. However, in the late 1990s the PKK was still a major actor in Kurdish politics. The PKK has never been only a group of armed militants. Instead, it has evolved as an organization composed of a complicated political, social, and military apparatus with well-developed networks and institutions.[16]Thus, the political and social organs of the PKK continued to work for the Kurdish identity formation and mobilization despite the organization's military defeat in the late 1990s.

When Öcalan was captured and brought to Turkey in 1999, the PKK in fact was temporarily left in a difficult situation because Öcalan had built a strong personality cult in the PKK and he was the undisputed leader and ideologue of the insurgency. However, Öcalan's absence did not create a permanent crisis within the PKK because despite Turkey's military success against the PKK and Öcalan's imprisonment, the PKK's organizational structure, as well as the rest of its leading cadres, who had been in power for more than two decades, were left untouched.[17]These leading figures managed to keep the PKK safe from internal rivalry and disintegration after Öcalan. During this period, especially the fact that the PKK militants had a safe haven in northern Iraq, where they could pursue their armed and political activities and that Öcalan continued to direct the PKK from his prison cell helped the PKK to keep its focus on its activities and avoid major internal problems. Öcalan's direction of the PKK through his lawyers allowed the organization to adapt itself to the new circumstances and

[16]Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, "The PKK in the 2000s: Continuity through Breaks," p. 147.

[17]One exception to this was the arrest of another leading PKK militant Şemdin Sakık in 1998.

rebuild strength relatively quickly.[18]Throughout this process, however, the PKK never gave up on its armed units. Although it declared that politics was the main method to achieve a democratic solution to the Kurdish question, the PKK maintained its armed units in case the democratic solution failed to take place or the organization experienced an attack.[19]

The PKK's networks and institutions in Europe constituted another aspect of the PKK that was left untouched as a result of Turkey's coercive counterinsurgency approach throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The European connection worked for the advantage of the PKK after Öcalan's imprisonment and helped the organization survive and remain as a relevant actor in Kurdish politics. Europe had been a significant logistical and financial support base for the PKK and in the post-terror phase the PKK's European establishment increased its influence within the movement. Several European countries already had a positive attitude towards the Kurdish nationalist movement, and the European Union had not included the PKK in its list of terrorist organizations until 2002. Money provided by the Kurdish diaspora in the form of donations, subscriptions, support campaigns, publications,

[18]In order to achieve this goal, Öcalan called for a change in both the organizational structure and the strategy of the PKK. Instead of the PKK's original goal of creating an independent Kurdish state, Öcalan focused on the concept of a "democratic republic". In his defense, he talked about the necessity of establishing a democratic civilization in the Middle East via the "development of pluralist democracy and civil society. He suggested that the only way to solve the Kurdish question was to do it within a united democratic Turkey. Öcalan made references to Atatürk, the founding father of the Republic of Turkey, and argued that granting their cultural and political rights to the Kurds would neither challenge the founding principles of Turkey, nor endanger the national unity and territorial integrity of the country.Öcalan's views initially created disappointment within the PKK. Several members of the PKK expected Öcalan to talk about the notion of self-determination for the Kurds and an independent Kurdish state in his trial. They did not expect him to talk about the prospects of Kurds and Turks coexisting within a democratic Turkey. As a result, those PKK members who thought that Öcalan's new discourse was in conflict with the PKK's founding principles left the organization. However, around 3000 armed PKK militants decided to stay and maintained their loyalty to Öcalan. In its extraordinary congress in January 2000, the PKK's presidential council announced its acceptance and support for Öcalan's new discourse and proposals. As a result, the PKK went through a process of transformation in the early 2000s. It redefined itself "as a movement capable of providing constructive solutions to the various social and political problems facing Turkey and Kurdish society." See Cengiz Güneş, *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey: From Protest to Resistance* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), p. 138.

[19]Ibid.

and other business activities constituted one of the important sources of funding for the PKK. Thus, the PKK's losses in the military realm did not negatively affect the PKK's European establishment, but rather strengthened it as politics assumed primacy over military methods in the immediate aftermath of Öcalan's imprisonment.

Turkey's failure to treat the PKK as a political phenomenon from the 1980s onwards had a second major consequence that facilitated the PKK's quick recovery after its military defeat, namely the persistence of the organization's support base among the Kurds and its continuing ability to recruit new members. Throughout its counterinsurgency campaign, Turkey failed to understand the real meaning of the PKK for the Kurds and did not try hard enough to win over the Kurdish population to the side of the state. Turkey's predominantly coercive polices failed to win the hearts and minds of the Kurdish people in the country. Instead, these policies alienated many local Kurds away from the state and contributed to the expansion of the PKK.As a result, even though the PKK was militarily defeated by the late 1990s, the organization's support base was untouched to a great extent.

Throughout Turkey's counterinsurgency campaign, many Kurds in the Southeast region lost their family members, they had to leave their homes due to the village evacuations, and they became subject to human rights violations. These kinds of experiences played an important role in politicizing the Kurdish people and increasing their support for the PKK. In order to make a reference to this situation, Öcalanstated in the early 1990s that "if Jezireh [Cizre] is ours today, it is half thanks to our efforts. But the other half, Turkey presented to us on a silver platter."[20]Although the PKK had to force and pressure the Kurds to join the PKK in the 1980s, from 1991 onwards the organization had to discontinue this strategy because it

[20]Cited in Chris Kutschera, "Mad Dreams of Independence: The Kurds of Turkey and the PKK," *Middle East Report*, No. 189 (July-August 1994), p. 14.

was no longer able to handle the training activities of large numbers of new recruits. Moreover, in 1994, a Turkish Parliamentary Commission, which was established to investigate the unsolved murders of the early 1990s, revealed that the security forces' operations against the PKK, which from time to time included extrajudicial activities, played an important role in decreasing trust towards the state and drove the people towards the PKK's side.

An analysis of the PKK members who were killed between 2003 and 2008 shows that the majority of these members joined the PKK between the years 1999 and 2003,[21] which clearly demonstrates that Kurds continued to join the PKK even after Öcalan was imprisoned. Indeed, after Öcalan was captured in Kenya and brought to Turkey in February 1999, a significant increase in the number of new PKK recruits was observed. This situation significantly helped the PKK to maintain itself as an insurgency movement after its defeat.

Turkey's coercive policies did not only lead to an increase in local public support for the PKK, but also contributed to a persistent increase in the votes received by the pro-Kurdish political parties among the Kurds. For example, in the 2002 national elections, pro-PKK Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) won the majority of the votes in several provinces of the East and Southeast, such as Hakkari, Van, Şırnak, Muş, and Batman. Local elections brought similar results for these political parties. In 1999, HADEP (*Halkın Demokrasi Partisi*- People's Democracy Party) won 37 municipalities. This number significantly increased in the following elections.

[21]Güneş Murat Tezcür, 'When Democratization Radicalizes: The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey' *Journal of Peace Research,* Vol. 47, No. 6 (2010), p. 780; also see Nihat Ali Özcan and Erdem Gürkaynak, Kim Bu Dağdakiler? TEPAV, 2012.

All in all, Turkey mainly used coercive means in its struggle with the PKK from 1984 until the capture of the organization's leader Abdullah Öcalan in 1999. Although these policies played an important role in weakening the PKK militarily and led to its defeat, they could not put an end to the PKK insurgency. In a short period of time, the PKK recovered and renewed its commitment to violence against Turkey. A close analysis of Turkey's counterinsurgency experience shows that this situation resulted from the fact that for a long time the Turkish civilian and military leaders focused on the PKK mainly as a group of armed militants and did not sufficiently pay attention to it as an insurgency movement. As a result first, despite leading to the insurgent forces' defeat, Turkey's coercive/military policies left several leading cadres, institutions, and networks of the PKK intact. Second, the state's extensive use of coercion in the 1980s and 1990s alienated many Kurds away from the state and increased support for the PKK among the Kurds. This situation allowed the PKK to take advantage of its existing organizational structure and support base in the early 2000s and regain strength relatively easily.

Peru's Counterinsurgency Campaign against the Shining Path

Historical Background:

Abimael Guzmán established the Shining Path in the early 1970s based on Maoist principles. The organization's goal was to overthrow the existing institutions in Peru and set up a revolutionary regime instead. Until 1980the Shining Path remained nonviolent. However, during the 1980 national elections—the first democratic elections in Peru after a 12-year military regime, the Shining Path initiated its armed struggle against the Peruvian state by burning ballot boxes in Chuschi, a town located in the Department of Ayacucho. In the early 1980s, the Shining Pathbegan to attack official buildings, banks, police stations as well as other left wing groups. But over time it turned into a more professional insurgent organization

controlling many parts of Ayacucho and capable of seriously challenging the Peruvian state. Throughout Peru's counterinsurgency campaign, approximately 70000 Peruvians lost their lives.

The Peruvian state initially did not take the Shining Path threat seriously and gave the duty to struggle with the insurgents to the police forces.[22] However, in a short period of time it became clear that the police forces were not sufficient to end the Shining Path violence. As a result, in early 1983 President Fernando Belaúnde eventually decided to assign the task of fighting against the Shining Path to the armed forces.

Belaúnde's decision marked the beginning of a policy of an extensive use of coercion against the insurgents in Peru. Especially between 1983 and 1985 the Peruvian armed forces carried out a strong counteroffensive against the Shining Path.After Alan García came to office as the president of Peru in 1985, there was in fact a brief period of time when his government made an effort to reform the way Peru conducted its counterinsurgency campaign. For example, President García highlighted the principle of respect for human rights in counterinsurgency. Moreover, the García administration put into effect a number of development projects and public dialogues with the peasants in less developed regions of Peru as part of his comprehensive counterinsurgency policy. However, after the 1986 prison uprisings in Peru,which were suppressed by violent means, the García Administration came to the conclusion that military means might be a more effective way of dealing with the insurgents. During this period, the worsening economic situation in Peru also put the economic and social policies in a difficult position. Some of the development programs had to end due to the economic problems.

[22]This was also closely connected to the fact that President Belaúnde had been overthrown by a military takeover in 1968 and thus he did not want to give too much power to the Peruvian military during his tenure.

In the late 1980s, it became clear that the predominantly coercive counterinsurgency policies were not working. The Shining Path violence was increasing steadily. Especially from 1986 onwards the Shining Path's terrorism spread beyond the Ayacucho region and began to affect the whole country. The years 1989-1992 constituted a period of extreme crisis in Peru.[23]However, despite the worsening security situation in the late 1980s, there still was not a unified counterinsurgency strategy in the country and the fight against the Shining Path was left, to a great extent, to the political-military commanders of the emergency zones. That is why, during those years several studies were carried out within the major institutions of Peru's security establishment about what needed to be done in order to end the widespread violence in the country.

After Alberto Fujimori was elected as the president of Peru in 1990, discussions that were taking place under the roofs of separate bureaucratic institutions turned into a unified policy. The Fujimori administration put emphasis on reforming the existing counterinsurgency policy. With his National Security Advisor Vladimiro Montesinos, he played an important role in the implementation of a more comprehensive policy and he put into effect a more centralized decision making mechanism.[24]Some of the major policy developments that marked Fujimori's tenure include the arming of local peasants for effective defense against the Shining Path in remote areas, formulating a repentance lawin order to open way for the surrender of Shining Path militants, and promoting small development programs in less developed regions of Peru.

[23]"Los Períodos de la Violencia," Informe Final, Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación, pp. 71-72, available at http://www.cverdad.org.pe/ifinal/index.php.

[24]Philip Mauceri, "Military Politics and Counter-Insurgency in Peru," Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Winter 1991), pp. 98-99.

During Fujimori's tenure, a major development regarding Peru's fight against the Shining Path came when the Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán was arrested in 1992 and sentenced with life imprisonment. Guzmán's arrest marked the beginning of a process of collapse in the Shining Path due to the hierarchical nature of its organizational structure. Guzmán reached a peace agreement with the Peruvian state after his imprisonment. However, some Shining Path factions preferred to pursue armed struggle despite Guzmán's decision. Today, the remnants of the Shining Path continue their armed activities in the country's jungle regions, namely the Upper Huallaga and the Apurimac and Ene River Valleys. Although these armed groups create concern, they are still far from posing a serious challenge to the security of the Peruvian state.

When the Peruvian experience in counterinsurgency is examined in comparison with the Turkish experience, it is possible to notice that despite their similar episodes in counterinsurgency, which were dominated by the use of coercive/military means throughout the 1980s and 1990s and which reached a breaking point with the capture of the insurgent leaders, these two countries achieved different outcomes in their struggle with the insurgents.

One of the major factors that differentiated the Peruvian experience from the Turkish one was that despite Peru's civilian and military leaders' extensive use of coercion against the Shining Path, these actors never completely disregarded the idea that the Shining Path insurgency was a political phenomenon. From the very beginning, they took into consideration the fact that they were dealing with an insurgent organization, not only with a group of armed militants. For example, as early as 1983 the political-military commander in the Ayacucho region, General Adrían Huamán Centeno attempted to go beyond coercive measures and advocated a counterinsurgency approach that would include economic and social development programs. Moreover, under the García administration (1985-1990) although many development

programs became unsustainable due to the economic crisis after 1986, the fact that the government initiated these programs in the first place shows a clear realization on the part of the policy makers that coercion by itself would not end the Shining Path insurgency. During his tenure, President Alan García also emphasized the need for the armed forces to be more respectful of human rights in their military operations in order to prevent the alienation of the local people away from the state. He kept the human rights issue on the agenda and tried to hold the military under his control in this area. Despite this awareness about the nature and the causes of the insurgency, however, for a long time the Peruvian governments could not develop an integrated counterinsurgency policy, which systematically brought together the military, political, economic, and social dimensions.

One of the most important consequences of the Peruvian leaders' relatively accurate understanding of the Shining Path as something more than a simple military group was that they became more successful in weakening the organizational structure of the Shining Pathin the early 1990s. This was seen best in the establishment of the Special Intelligence Group (*Grupo Especial de Inteligencia*-GEIN), which was a small police unit aimed at dissolving the Shining Path. This special police unit was established in 1989 in the last days of the Alan García administration and it based its work on in-depth knowledge of the Shining Path, as well as carefully gathered intelligence.[25]The GEIN's work targeted the soft belly of the Shining Path, namely its dependence on Guzmán's leadership. Thus, this police unit acquired detailed information about the insurgency and learned its organizational structure and characteristics. Based on this detailed information, it played an important role in the arrest of several leading Shining Path figures in the early 1990s, including its top leader Guzmán. After Guzmán's arrest, the GEIN also worked to dismantle the organizational structures of the

[25]Interview with Gustavo Gorriti, Inter Press Service News Agency, "Q & A: All Political Violence is not Terrorism," available at http://www.ipsnews.net.

Shining Path in Lima.[26] These developments sent a major blow to the insurgency. Although the GEIN was an underfunded police unit, which was never fully embraced by the Fujimori administration, its presence showed that there were at least some actors in Peru who had an accurate understanding of what the Shining Path was about and how to deal with it.The GEIN's work in revealing detailed information about the Shining Path's organizational structure and the workings of the organization greatly contributed to its marginalization in the early 1990s through the capture of its leadership cadres and the disintegration of its organizational structure in Lima.

Here, it is necessary to mention that in addition to the Peruvian policy makers' rightful understanding of the nature of the insurgency, the Shining Path's lack of an advanced international network also greatly contributed to the quick dissolution of the organization after Guzmán's imprisonment in 1992. Some of the assets that the PKK enjoyed, such as a living space in northern Iraq and a well-established network in Europe did not exist in the case of the Shining Path. Although the Shining Path was an insurgency movement with an advanced system of institutionalization at the local level, its organizational structure was not as complex as the PKK in terms of the international dimension. Thus, it was easier for the Peruvian policy makers to weaken the Shining Path organizationally. When it is argued that the Peruvian policy makers developed an accurate understanding of the Shining Path and acted accordingly, it is important to take this aspect into account.

In line with the idea that the Peruvian civilian and military leaders became more successful in weakening the Shining Path, it is important to emphasize that in order to achieve this goal, they also made a significant effort to win the hearts and minds of the local people

[26]Jo-Marie Burt, Political Violence and the Authoritarian State in Peru: Silencing Civil Society (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 173.

during the counterinsurgency campaign. Even in the initial years of the Shining Path insurgency, both civilian and military actors were aware of the political, social, and economic roots of the conflict and at least some of these actors advocated policies that would address the root causes of the insurgency in addition to the coercive approach. These policies were usually about bringing a variety of services to the remote and underdeveloped regions of Peru. The most successful one of these efforts was the small development programs promoted by the Fujimori Administration, which aimed at reducing poverty and improving the living standards at the local level. These programs, which included irrigation, reforestation, electricity, and road building projects, addressed the specific needs of the poorest districts in the country where the Shining Path activity was widespread.[27]They were mainly supervised by the members of the local communities and became very successful. These programs played a very important role in winning over the local population to the side of the state.

In the early 1990s, the Peruvian armed forces also implemented a number of hearts and minds policies in those urban areas, which were most vulnerable to the Shining Path activity. These policies included simple things like health services, soup kitchens, and trash clean-ups. However, they played a very important role in creating a positive image of the military in the eyes of the public and increasing public support for the counterinsurgency campaign.[28] The military also began to send native military officers to the regions where operations against the Shining Path were taking place. These military officers who spoke the local language and knew the community were well-received by the public and contributed to an improved communication with the local population.

[27]David Scott Palmer, "Terror in the Name of Mao," p. 100.

[28]Ibid., p. 96.

As much important as the Peruvian civilian and military leaders' policies that were aimed to win the hearts and minds of the local people, an additional factor that opened way for the marginalization of the insurgency in the 1990s was the Shining Path's parallel failure to gain public support. From the very beginning of the insurgency, the Shining Path killed peasants, kidnapped children, and forced them to fight as militants.[29] The organization's strict Maoist ideology caused the Shining Path to constantly use force vis-à-vis the peasant communities as a way of punishment and intimidation.[30] These kinds of tactics alienated the indigenous people living in the remote Andean villages and led them to give their support to the state. Thus, when it is argued that the Peruvian policies to win the hearts and minds of the people worked, it also needs to be mentioned that this was partly due to the parallel failures of the Shining Path. This aspect of the Shining Path experience greatly differentiates the Peruvian case from the Turkish case because in the case of Turkey, the PKK has been very successful in winning the hearts and minds of the Kurds.

In sum, Peru responded to the Shining Path challenge mainly through the use of coercion from the early 1980s onwards. However, throughout the counterinsurgency campaign at least a number of political and military leaders in Peru were aware of and explicitly acknowledged the political nature of the Shining Path and made an effort to develop policies that addressed the political, social, and economic dimensions of the insurgency. This awareness that the Shining Path was not only a group of armed militants, but rather a more complex organization had two major consequences for Peru. First, at least some efforts were made on the part of the state to understand the complex nature of the Shining Path insurgency and develop policies accordingly. The most successful one of these policies was the

[29]W. Alejandro Sanchez, "The Rebirth of Insurgency in Peru," *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Autumn 2003), pp. 187-188.

[30]David Scott Palmer, "Terror in the Name of Mao," p. 95.

establishment of the GEIN in 1989, which made a great effort to develop a very good understanding of the Shining Path's organizational structure based on careful intelligence and to formulate a strategy that would lead to the dissolution of this structure. The capture of the Shining Path's leading figures, including Guzmán was the outcome of this hard work. Second, because of the awareness about the political, social, and economic causes of the insurgency, in addition to the use of coercion, the Peruvian governments and security forces took important measures in order to win the hearts and minds of the indigenous people living in the remote areas of the country and suffering from the Shining Path's armed activities. Through these policies, the Peruvian political and military leaders wanted to avoid alienating the local people away from the state. All of these efforts played an important role in weakening the Shining Path as an insurgency movement by the late 1990s. However, it must be added that Peru's relatively successful outcomes in counterinsurgency partly resulted from the Shining Path's own organizational features and failures. First, although the Shining Path was a complex organization in the 1980s and 1990s, it did not have advanced international networks and institutions. That is why, compared to the PKK it was relatively easier for the Peruvian state to deal with the insurgency in the absence of a strong outside dimension. Second, by the early 1990s, the Shining Path had failed to build a strong and extended support base in Peru due to its own mistakes. Its persistent use of coercion against the peasants led them to eventually side with the state. This situation also allowed the Peruvian state to be more successful in its hearts and minds campaigns.

Conclusion

In light of the Turkish and Peruvian experiences in counterinsurgency, this paper explores the conditions under which coercive/military methods are more or less likely to lead to successful counterinsurgency. Both Turkey and Peru have been fighting against the PKK

and Shining Path insurgents from the 1980s onwards and both countries' counterinsurgency campaigns were marked by extensive use of coercion in the 1980s and 1990s. However, while Peru's campaign led to the capture of the Shining Path leader and marginalization of the insurgent organization by the late 1990s, the PKK insurgency persisted even after Turkey's military victory against the PKK and its capture of the PKK leader in 1999.Today, although remnants of the Shining Path are still engaging in violent acts in certain regions of Peru, they areno longer in a position to seriously challenge the Peruvian state. In contrast, the PKK is still Turkey's number one security threat.

This paper contends that one of the major factors that explains the difference between the counterinsurgency outcomes in Turkey and Peru is that throughout Turkey's counterinsurgency campaign the political and military leaders mainly focused on the PKK as a group of armed militants and did not sufficiently pay attention to the fact that the PKK insurgency was a political phenomenon. As a result, although Turkey's policies turned out to be successful in weakening the PKK militarily, they left the insurgency intact with its leading cadres, networks, institutions, and support base. On the other hand, Peru's extensive use of coercion against the Shining Path insurgents led to a different outcome. In fact, Peru's counterinsurgency policies from 1980 until the arrest of Guzmán in 1992 had various shortcomings. For example, for a very long time the Peruvian state did not have a unified counterinsurgency policy and throughout the counterinsurgency campaign the Peruvian security forces involved in widespread human rights violations. However, in the case of Peru, from the very beginning of the insurgency, there was awareness among at least some of the political and military actors of the counterinsurgency campaign that the Shining Path was not only a military phenomenon. It was an organization that had political, social, and economic

dimensions. Thus, especially in the late 1980s and 1990s, the counterinsurgency policies were able to address the real nature of the insurgency in Peru.

Although it is not possible to make generalizations based on just two cases, the experiences of Turkey and Peru suggest that coercive methods in counterinsurgency work only when they are used as part of an overall strategy that recognizes the insurgency as a complex phenomenon and that addresses the political, social, and economic dimensions of the conflict. Peru was able to do that during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and this played an important role in the marginalization of the Shining Path by the late 1990s. It was more difficult for Turkey to do the same because the PKK is an insurgency movement, which initiated its armed struggle in 1984 with the objective of establishing an independent Kurdish state. Thus, recognizing this political dimension and acting accordingly was considered dangerous for the national unity and territorial integrity of the country. As a result, for a long time, Turkish policy makers and security forces hesitated to acknowledge that the PKK was more than a group of armed militants. This situation prevented the governments from developing policies that would put an end to the PKK violence in the country. Despite its relative success against the Shining Path, current developments show that Peru also has not been able to put a complete end to the Shining Path violence in the country. It seems that Peru needs to reconsider which policies became successful and which policies failed during its counterinsurgency campaign in the 1980s and 1990s and act accordingly vis-à-vis the remnants of the Shining Path today.