Violence in Peru, 1980-2000: Trauma’s Unresolved Memories

Dissertation

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By
Lauren Hendricks, M.A.
Graduate Program in Spanish and Portuguese

The Ohio State University

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Dissertation Committee:
Abril Trigo, Co-Advisor
Ana Del Sarto, Co-Advisor
Kenneth J. Andrien
Abstract

The topic of this dissertation is the social trauma produced by the political confrontations and civil war in Peru from 1980-2000. My hypotheses are that the Shining Path initiated its armed struggle partly motivated by the long history of colonial trauma, but the cycle of violence of these last decades added another layer of individual and collective trauma that Peruvian society is now trying to resolve. I discuss the theoretical framework, examine the newspaper coverage and the Shining Path perspectives of the conflict, analyze the literature and films which focus on the conflict and explore Peru’s attempts to achieve truth, justice and reconciliation. I demonstrate that the unresolved memories of the oppression of the lower classes created layers of trauma which motivated the Shining Path to perpetrate violence. I also discuss that Peruvians’ inability to work through their memories of the conflict has prevented them from being able to cope with their everyday lives and work towards creating a new future. Finally, I show that the documentary State of Fear, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and the Fujimori trial have enabled Peruvians to learn about the past, build a relationship of trust with the state and verbalize and confront their memories. Nevertheless, I assert that since divisions still exist among the social classes, the hidden layers of historical trauma have yet to be satisfactorily addressed.
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Vita

June 1995……………………………Central Columbia High School

May 1999………………………………B.A. Speech Communication, James Madison University

2002-2004…………………………Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Classical and Romance Studies, Bowling Green State University

August 2004…………………………M.A. Spanish, Bowling Green State University

2004-2007…………………………Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, The Ohio State University

2008-Present…………………………Adjunct Spanish professor, Broward College

Fields of Study

Major Field: Spanish and Portuguese
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Introduction

What is social and historical trauma? How has it affected the Peruvian population? These are the two principal questions which I will be attempting to answer in this study. I feel that this topic is both intriguing and timely for several reasons. First of all, even though the violence due to the recent conflict between the Shining Path and the state ended in the year 2000, Peruvians continue to suffer from different forms of trauma. The inability of many individuals to completely overcome their trauma has resulted in an impediment for the people to move forward and start a new life both individually and as a community. Nonetheless, since Alberto Fujimori left office, Peru has made attempts to achieve truth, justice and reconciliation. The Final Report of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission was presented to the Alejandro Toledo government on August 28, 2003, and the government has attempted to implement some of the changes suggested by the commission to benefit the victims and their families and pave the way for future reconciliation and justice. Finally, most recently, Peru has started plans to construct a memory museum, and ex-president Fujimori was tried for human rights violations and sentenced to 25 years in jail. The verdict was read this year, April 7, 2009, and, as a result, the effects of the trial are still being felt in Peru. While none of these projects has been or could be a cure for Peruvian society’s traumas, they show the importance that the people and the government have placed on the search for truth, justice and reconciliation and the desire that they have to create a better future for Peru.
In addition, given the current worldwide preoccupation with the consequences of terrorism and human rights violations, the events of the 1980s and 90s and their effects in the last decade are of vital importance to the international community. Though no two situations are equal, the world can learn many lessons from the way in which Peruvians have faced the social trauma gripping the country. The trial has been an especially important lesson for the world since it is the first time that a democratically elected president has been convicted of human rights violations. However, for the world and Peru to learn from this tragic historical experience, it is necessary to analyze the motivations for and the effects of the conflict in detail. In other words, it is essential to analyze the sources and manifestations of Peruvian contemporary social trauma. The Shining Path was motivated to initiate their armed struggle partly due to the historical accumulation of successive layers of trauma that had slowly developed since colonial times. The rigid social stratification between the upper and lower classes, the Creole elites and the indigenous peoples, the cosmopolitan Costa and the ancestral Sierra, resulted in the continuous oppression and internal colonization of the subaltern groups. And despite the fact that the Shining Path’s goal was to end those roots of Peruvian historical trauma by creating an egalitarian society which would return to the moral values of Tawantinsuyu, the final outcome was the formation of yet another layer of trauma. Therefore, Peruvians continue to suffer from different layers of trauma both individually and as a society; their memories of violence constantly invade their lives, their inability to process the events impeding them from moving on and starting a new life. Although many scholars have analyzed this period from a historical or sociological point of view, no study has fully analyzed Peruvian social trauma and its ramifications.
Therefore, in this study, I will be looking at all of the facets of Peruvian trauma, from the Shining Path’s motivations to start a savage cycle of violence to the development of a new layer of trauma in society to the search for truth, justice and reconciliation.

In the first chapter, I discuss my definition for both individual and collective trauma, utilizing theories developed by Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud as a foundation, as well as those of more current scholars to supplement the concepts with recent research. In essence, I will be looking at the inextricable link between trauma and memory, focusing on how trauma can develop when memory is unable to deal with events. Specifically, I analyze how the memories of ordinary events differ substantially from the memories of traumatic events, especially the way that these memories are stored and retrieved. In addition, I will be looking at the influence that actions in the present have over memory retrieval and how, in consequence, the present lives of individuals are then stagnated by these exceedingly incomplete and disorganized memories. In order to show how Peruvian society as a whole has been affected by the conflict and past oppression, I will examine the cultural memories present in Peru, showing how the memory of the indigenous peoples is at odds with that of the upper and middle classes, resulting in the suppression of the indigenous cultural memory by the state. I will then show how this suppression has crystallized certain layers of trauma and how these layers affected the indigenous people’s response to the Shining Path revolt and civil war and why the policies of forgetting imposed by Fujimori to establish consensus blocked Peruvian society from achieving true reconciliation. These policies were reversed by latter governments, who implemented a new policy of remembering in order to overcome
trauma and attain social reconciliation. In order for the reader to understand the
differences between these policies and how and why Peru has confronted the memories
of the conflict in the way that it has, I discuss theories of truth, justice and reconciliation,
showing how other countries like Argentina and Chile have confronted the effects of
extreme violence in the country. In addition, I demonstrate how Peru has learned from
the experiences of other countries to create their own strategy to obtain truth and achieve
justice and reconciliation. Most importantly, I focus on how Peruvian society has come
to believe that all three of these elements are necessary for the country to move forward
and create a new future, in contrast to some scholars who place less emphasis on attaining
justice.

Once the theoretical framework for my study has been set, in Chapter 2, I discuss
the events of the conflict from the perspectives of the media and the Shining Path,
expressly looking at the coverage from the Lima newspaper *El Comercio*, the speeches of
and interviews with Abimael Guzmán, the writings of the Shining Path leadership and the
coverage from the Shining Path newspaper *El Diario*. The events that I discuss are those
which form the foundation for the analyses of the last two chapters, thus allowing the
reader to better understand the subsequent reasoning of my research. However, this
chapter serves the purpose of more than just a familiarization with the events and the
motivations of the parties involved. *El Comercio’s* coverage also enables readers to see
the evolution of the awareness and fear of the vast majority of the Peruvian population
not involved in the fighting, from its almost disdainful attitude in 1980 to the anxiety and
alarm of the 1990s. On the other hand, the Shining Path sources show the reader how the
layers of trauma in society helped to form the foundation of the Shining Path ideology and strategy. They also illustrate the Shining Path’s constantly increasing attempts to discredit the state, make Peruvians aware of the dangers of their country’s supposed democracy and let Peruvians know that the Shining Path’s armed struggle was a serious endeavor. Therefore, by the end of the chapter, I hope I will have proved not only what occurred but also how the Peruvian population was being affected by the events and how and why they took place. The reader will also recognize how the coverage of the events influenced the formation of memories for the Peruvian population which would impede their ability to process past events, eventually resulting in the development of new forms of social trauma.

In the next chapter, chapter 3, I reveal how the effects of the news coverage and Shining Path sources translated to the fields of literature and film and how Peruvians in these sources began to exhibit signs of trauma. I analyze literature written and films produced by Peruvians both during and after the Shining Path revolt and civil war. Obviously, those sources created before the end of the conflict focus on actions and perspectives of the Shining Path, the military and the Peruvian people during the conflict. As a result, through their characters, these sources show the historical traumatizing of the Peruvian people that nurtured the launching of the armed struggle and why many Peruvians supported the Shining Path in their beginnings. Though the characters had not yet necessarily developed a new trauma, certainly the foundation for this trauma was being constructed. We can see how the characters struggled to understand their realities and cope with their lives in the present. At the same time, we can see how their fears
paralyzed them and blurred their hopes for a normal future. In contrast, those sources created after the conflict are expressions of trauma, and though they cannot be true representations of actual Peruvians, the characters do show us that Peruvians today are undoubtedly suffering from trauma both individually and as a society. The reader can also see the varying reactions of characters to the trauma which they are experiencing. While some of the characters give up on life, others seek revenge, others try to remember or forget and yet others attempt to overcome their trauma. The multitude of reactions depends on the individual experiences of each character as well as the layers of trauma which seem to weigh down some of the characters. Based on my analysis of the individual characters and Peruvian society in the short stories, novels and films, I will demonstrate how the writers, producers and directors have been able to portray the anxiety and terror of Peruvian society, their way of confronting trauma as a whole and the diversity of individual reactions which Peruvians have displayed since the end of the conflict. Literature and film are two methods used to voice the problems and crises of society. Since the Shining Path revolt and civil war have made such an impact on Peruvian society, writers, directors and producers have used their work as a platform to make the effects known and confront them on a personal level.

Finally, another way to confront the effects of the conflict is through the search for truth, justice and reconciliation. In chapter 4, I analyze what Peru has done in regards to this endeavor and how successful the state has been in achieving its goals. First, I look at the work of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). I present some of the truths attained by this commission and the suggestions that they made to the state
to aid in the justice and reconciliation processes. Then, I disclose to the reader which of the suggestions have and have not been implemented. Overall, the reader will see that while the state has initiated the reconciliation process, many of the suggestions have been only partially completed or not completed at all. Nonetheless, the Peruvian TRC has been very successful in finding and disseminating the multiple crimes to the Peruvian population and worldwide community, especially with the aid of the documentary *State of Fear*, which I also analyze. This documentary takes the findings of the TRC and puts them into a film, with the actual testimony of the victims or their families. In this chapter, I discuss the stories and testimonies of the interviewees and how each of them individually did or did not contribute to the search for truth and the attainment of reconciliation. Finally, in the last section of the chapter, I analyze *El Comercio’s* coverage of the Alberto Fujimori trial. For the state, the trial was a means to recover, at least partly, its tarnished legitimacy, while for many Peruvians, it was a means to achieve some form of social justice. Since most Shining Path militants and leaders had already been jailed, the state wanted to complete the justice process by punishing state violators of human rights. Certainly, since Fujimori was president of the country during a period of the conflict, punishing him would show Peruvians that violence at any level would not be tolerated and would make many Peruvians, especially the victims and their families, more willing to work towards reconciliation. In this section, I analyze the participation and reactions of the varying groups involved, including Fujimori, the witnesses, the lawyers, the journalists, the victims and their families and the Peruvian people as a whole. I show how each of these groups contributed to or detracted from the search for truth, the realization of justice and the continued development of the reconciliation
process. Finally, I reflect about the implications of the trial as a whole, discussing possible benefits for future justice and reconciliation processes.
Chapter 1: Understanding Trauma

Theories of Individual and Collective Memory

How do you define your identity? Your identity is based on many factors, from the events in your past to your relationships with others to the culture of the place where you live. How, then, does the past contribute to the constant recreation of your identity? There is no objective past; it is impossible for everyone to agree on what happened in the past and how it happened. The subjectivity of the past is due to the subjectivity of our memories; we do not remember events exactly as they happened, and we do not remember the entirety of what happened. Therefore, memory is the key to understanding the identities of a society. Specifically, in my study, I am going to analyze how the inability to deal with memories of traumatic events from the past has affected and continues to affect the people of Peru. If memories of ordinary events are not complete recollections of the past, then memories of traumatic events are even less than complete. They are less complete due to the individual’s diminished capacity to process the event given its traumatic nature. The end result of this process is the inability of the individual to live his or her life in the present. The individual cannot confront new challenges when he or she is confused by the past. And in the case of Peru, where society as a whole has been affected by trauma, the entire country has become stagnated by the past. How are Peruvians reacting to trauma and how do they become able to better cope with the present
and future? In order to arrive at the answer to this question, I will start this section by discussing basic memory formation but then will focus the analysis on individual and cultural memory formation and recollection of traumatic events.

Using as a foundation the work of Henri Bergson on memory, in his book *Memory, History, Forgetting*, Paul Ricoeur says that the brain, being an “organ of action”, “exercises its effects on the trajectory from the ‘pure’ memory to the image, hence on the trajectory of recollection” (431). The brain, then, stores the “memory-images” of past events, which wait for the individual to recognize them: “Recognizing a memory is finding it again. […] The experience of recognition, therefore, refers back to the memory of the first impression in a latent state, the image of which must have been constituted at the same time as the original affection” (Ricoeur 433). Therefore, images in our brains are available for access at any time, yet we do not access all of these images because we have to make a conscious effort to attempt to retrieve them. According to Charles L. Whitfield in his book *Memory and Abuse: Remembering and Healing the Effects of Trauma*, this process is made more complicated if the individual does not rehearse the event, “thinking, talking or writing about it” (14). He says that rehearsing an event “helps us to store, keep or retain it. Then, whenever we may need it or when something else may trigger it, we can retrieve it” (14). We could say, then, that all images of events can be accessed, but the possibility of that access in the future is limited if one does not first rehearse the event. This is especially true given that the retention of the details of an event declines over time, an assertion made by Whitfield upon analyzing the studies of Hermann Ebbinghaus and M.H. Erdelyi and J. Kleinbard on memory: “In
ordinary memory our retention of the details of an experience drops rapidly over the first hour and then trails off much more slowly over the ensuing hours and days” (40).

The reason for emphasizing the limitations on memory of ordinary events is twofold. First of all, these memories are more easily rehearsed than those of traumatic events. Thus, the retrieval for these memories is easier for the individual. Even so, the person retrieving the images still cannot access all of the details of the event. If this is the case for memories of ordinary events, the retrieval of details of memories of traumatic events is that much more difficult. Second of all, since memory is based on our ability in the present to retrieve images of past events from our brain, memory is ever changing, based on what we are able to retrieve and how present circumstances influence our interpretation of what we retrieve. In “From Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” Pierre Nora says that “memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present” (146). John Frow, in “From Toute la mémoire du monde: Repetition and Forgetting,” also reiterates the importance of the present in the retrieval of memories, emphasizing that the present dictates the meaning that we give to the memories: “Memory, rather than being the repetition of the physical traces of the past, is a construction of it under conditions and constraints determined by the present” (53-54). As a result, if memory is present, and an individual has difficulty retrieving images from the past in the present, then the person, unable to give new meaning to past events, will have difficulty to overcome trauma from the past.

Though I have mentioned that memories of traumatic events differ from those of ordinary events, these differences and the reasons for them have not been explained in
detail. First of all, according to Bessel A. Van Der Kolk and Onno Van Der Hart in their article “The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma,” while memories of ordinary events are converted into a story in our mind, those of traumatic events are not developed into a story and, as a result, are experienced simultaneously with other events. In order to explain this perspective, Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart use the holocaust victims in L.L. Langer’s 1991 study as an example; the victims are unable to link their past with their present, simultaneously switching between their two existences: “This simultaneity is related to the fact that the traumatic experience/memory is, in a sense, timeless. It is not transformed into a story, placed in time, with a beginning, a middle and an end (which is characteristic for narrative memory)” (177). As a result, a memory of a traumatic event, either consciously or unconsciously, continues to be lived in the present. Though the traumatic event or events have passed, their constant influence on the present prohibits the individual from developing his or her posttraumatic self. Therefore, while memories of traumatic events do not let us heal or grow as individuals, memories of ordinary events certainly do affect our present actions, yet they do not invade our present lives. The Peruvians affected by acts of violence undoubtedly have suffered from a skewed sense of time; the violence of the Shining Path and the government ended, for the most part, in 2000, yet many continue to react to the violence as if it had just happened. Their reactions to trauma in the present have sometimes been extreme, including committing suicide and exacting revenge. But no matter how abnormal these actions appear to be, they cannot be judged as they would for a person reacting to memories of ordinary events. The memories of traumatic events can cause acute reactions even if the events are far removed. In addition, whereas we
can choose to access memories of ordinary events when and how we desire, the retrieval of memories of traumatic events will cause us greater harm than good unless we have the safety and support necessary to work through those memories (Whitfield 49). This harm comes in the form of the extreme reactions just mentioned. It is for this reason that while memories of traumatic events must be engaged rather than dismissed, it is important that this is done at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way. As will be seen in my analysis, Peruvian people individually and Peruvian society as a whole still need work in engaging their memories of traumatic events appropriately.

The differences discussed thus far between memories of ordinary events and memories of traumatic events have focused on individual memories. In my analysis, I will, in fact, be looking at how memories of traumatic events have affected individual Peruvians. However, I will also be comparing individual reactions to memories of traumatic events with the reactions of society as a whole. Since individual memory formation is different from that of cultural memory, it is important to note these distinctions. In a talk given during a conference organized by Medios para la Paz in 1998, “Los medios, memoria y olvido”, José Martín-Barbero defined cultural memory in the following way: “la memoria cultural, no acumulativa sino conflictiva, articulada sobre los tiempos largos de la historia y cargada, preñada de sentido”. In his book *Memorias migrantes: testimonios y ensayos sobre la diáspora uruguaya*, Abril Trigo states that cultural memory is not cumulative because it is not memory focused on the past but rather memory that serves the purpose of making sense of the present and creating a common future: “Pues su función en la vida de la comunidad no es hablar del
pasado, sino dar continuidad al proceso de construcción permanente de la identidad compartida” (88). For example, the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Peru was an attempt to heal Peruvians suffering from trauma in the present and to unite them in a fight against human rights violations. They did not simply want to remember the past; they wanted to change the present and future of Peruvian society. The needs of today and tomorrow are what take precedence in the formation of cultural memory; consequently, we shape and recreate cultural memory based on our daily experience. Trigo highlights this fact when he says: “Las memorias culturales se urden en la experiencia vivida y la vida cotidiana de la gente” (89). Regarding the conflictive nature of cultural memory, Martín-Barbero explains that there can be no memory without conflict because there is never just one memory of an event, but competing memories fighting for prevalence: “No hay memoria sin conflicto, porque nunca hay una sola memoria, siempre hay una multiplicidad de memorias en lucha. […] No hay memoria sin conflicto significa que por cada memoria activada hay otras memorias reprimidas, desactivadas, enmudecidas. Que hay memorias legitimadas y memorias excluidas” (“Los medios, memoria y olvido”). Thus, we could say that cultural memory is the diversity of memories continuously created by and debated by individuals and groups in society. Cultural memories, according to Martín-Barbero, are those that make us up, “de que estamos hechos”, because it is only what makes us up that eventually allows us to dialogue with others in society, piecing together the varying memories which enable us to overcome the official memory offered by the state and the single-faceted memory proposed by the mass media: “Sino de la memoria de que estamos hechos, pues solo ésta es capaz de investigar la densidad simbólica de nuestros olvidos”,
that which provides us with “la posibilidad de mirarnos no al espejo sino unos a otros, a entrelazar memorias de modo que podamos develar las trampas patrioteras que nos tiende la memoria oficial y hacer estallar la engañosa neutralidad con que nos adormecen los medios” (“Los medios, memoria y olvido”).

In Peru, not all individuals share the same cultural beliefs or practices. There is a great distinction between the indigenous culture and the white/mestizo culture. In his book *Escribir en el aire: Ensayo sobre la heterogeneidad socio-cultural en las literaturas andinas*, Antonio Cornejo Polar emphasizes the differences between the cultures through looking at literature from the colonial period to the present. According to Cornejo Polar, there are contradictory socio-cultural universes in the Andes, which have resulted in a heterogeneous literature that expresses the continuous conflicts between these universes:

Esa categoría [heterogeneidad] me fue inicialmente útil, como queda insinuado más arriba, para dar razón de los procesos de producción de literaturas en las que se intersectan conflictivamente dos o más universos socio-culturales. […] Entendí más tarde que la heterogeneidad se infiltraba en la configuración interna de cada una de esas instancias, haciéndolas dispersas, quebradizas, inestables, contradictorias y heteróclitas dentro de sus propios límites. (10)

Throughout his book, Cornejo Polar shows how the conflict in cultures has manifested itself in every literary period. The beginning of this conflict is shown by demonstrating the clash between the indigenous culture’s orality and the Spanish culture’s focus on the
written word. The Inca Atahuallpa did not understand what the Bible was because, in his culture, books did not exist (Cornejo Polar 20-26). In the 20th century, this divergence between cultures could be seen in works such as that of José María Arguedas. In *Los ríos profundos* by Arguedas, the main character, Ernesto lives this heterogeneity within himself. Ernesto grew up surrounded by the indigenous culture but was educated in the white culture. He speaks Quechua and Spanish, and he feels “unstable” because he does not know how to marry the two worlds to which he has been exposed (Cornejo Polar 194). Through Cornejo Polar’s development of the concept of heterogeneity, it is apparent that the conflict of cultures serves as the foundation for understanding Andean society; the indigenous culture has always differed greatly from that of the white culture, but, in addition to this difference, Cornejo Polar points out the struggle within many individuals. Many indigenous peoples and some mestizos feel torn between two worlds which, throughout history, have not been able to merge or even coexist peacefully. Accordingly, there is a diversity of cultural memories in existence in Peru today, and due to the repression of the indigenous cultural memory by that of the white/mestizo population, the white/mestizo cultural memory has taken its place as the dominant narrative for society, consequently resulting in efforts of resistance, such as that of the Shining Path. According to Gonzalo Portocarrero in his article “Perú, el país de las memorias heridas: Entre el (auto)desprecio y la amargura,” Peruvians are trapped by their ethnic cultural memories. First of all, there are hurt memories in Peru due to the dominant Creole narrative produced in the 19th century. He calls the Creole narrative the “official truth” and says that this narrative “legitimó la explotación del indio y del cholo” (39). Peruvians cannot create a happy memory because history does not take into
account the entirety of the population (45). In other words, history does not take into account the cultural memory of the indigenous peoples. This memory crisis is compounded by the current memory crisis caused by the violence of the 1980s and 1990s.

We could say, then, that Peruvian society is made of conflictive layers of memory. Since colonization, each generation has experienced a form of exploitation. The way the indigenous people have been exploited has changed slightly over time, but the oppression has never ceased. Therefore, each form of exploitation makes up a new layer of memory in the formation of the historical memory of society. According to Trigo, historical memory is produced by the ideological apparatuses of the state, which attempt to marginalize other perspectives, such as that of the indigenous peoples in Peru:

La memoria histórica es reproducida por los aparatos ideológicos del estado y guiada, en consecuencia, por una teleología primordialmente nacionalista. […] La memoria histórica es un montaje narrativo, literario y pedagógico, que exorciza lo diferente, aquello que transgrede la norma o se desvía de la eterna repetición de lo mismo, bajo la pomposa pretensión de preservar una transhistórica memoria colectiva. (88-89)

Thus, the historical memory of the state is in constant search of a homogenous memory, specifically, the memory of the ruling class, isolating the heterogeneous cultural memories of the other groups in society. In contrast to these layers, however, the violence of the 1980s and 1990s was not a conflict of the historical memory of the state
and the cultural memories of the indigenous population. In the beginning, the Shining Path was made up primarily of university students and professors. It was not an indigenous movement. Though the Shining Path recruited many indigenous people, they also killed many indigenous people. And the Peruvian police and armed forces both tried to coopt the indigenous peoples to defeat the Shining Path and kill indigenous people for supposed ties with the Shining Path. Thus, violence was perpetrated by and against all social groups in society. For this reason, I think that it is important to look at the way the unresolved memories of the violence of these years affected all of Peruvian society. The diverse cultural memories continue to be diverse, yet there is some convergence of memories in regards to the crisis of these years; all of society either witnessed violence firsthand or secondhand. As a result, society as a whole must come together to overcome trauma. When analyzing how these unresolved memories have affected society as a whole, then, I will analyze the varied cultural memories and how they may have converged in certain cases. Subsequently, I will analyze how individuals have reacted to the development of trauma. In carrying out this analysis, it will be important to take into account how the cultural memories of the different groups in society before the conflict have influenced how they are coping with the current trauma. For example, how the indigenous people react to current trauma is influenced not only by their unresolved memories of the recent violence but by their unresolved memories of state oppression before the violence of the 1980s and 90s. Thus, even though Peruvians should be uniting as a country to overcome recent trauma, their past cultural memories do not permit this, and Peruvian society remains divided and traumatized.
Another aspect of the perpetuating trauma in Peruvian society is the consequences of the dichotomy of remembering versus forgetting. Ricoeur describes forgetting as “the unperceived character of the perseverance of memories, their removal from the vigilance of consciousness” (440). Hence, forgetting a memory does not mean that the memory does not exist; it simply means that we are not conscious of it. This leads Ricoeur to say: “We forget less than we think or fear” (441). When we are not conscious of a memory, we think that it does not exist when, in fact, it does. The consequences of this fact are that the memory can return to our consciousness at any time. Specifically in relation to the memory of trauma, Ricoeur refers to the blocking of memories: “Many instances of forgetting are due to the impediments blocking access to the treasures buried in memory. […] The first lesson of psychoanalysis is that the trauma remains even though it is inaccessible, unavailable. […] The second lesson is that, in particular circumstances, entire sections of the reputedly forgotten past can return” (444-445). Charles Whitfield reinforces this perspective when he says: “By definition, the human unconscious is a place or repository wherein we store cognitive information and emotional energy that relate to our past traumatic experiences that we have not yet consciously processed and healed to completion, and about which we are not fully aware” (99). Though memories not related to trauma can also exist in the unconscious, those related to traumatic events often preside there due to the act of blocking by the mind, which unsuccessfully attempts to detach itself from the pain. In “From Memory’s Time: Chronology and Duration in Holocaust Testimonies,” Lawrence Langer gives a specific example of this process in discussing forgetting in relation to Holocaust survivors. For him, the traumatic past of
Holocaust survivors is often forgotten, but it is not overcome because it is always present, haunting the victim even as it is forgotten:

For Lyotard, Holocaust past is ‘a past located this side of the forgotten, much closer to the present moment than any past, at the same time that it is incapable of being solicited by voluntary and conscious memory, and this is what I call duration, which exists this side of the forgotten, not to be dredged from memory because it is always, has always been there—an always present past.’ (194)

Though the Holocaust differs in many ways from the violent conflict in Peru, they do share one important fact in common: In both cases, gross human rights violations were committed, and many people and society as a whole have suffered from trauma as a result. Many Peruvians continue to suffer from trauma due to their blocked memories, just as was the case for Holocaust survivors. And many Peruvians suffer from symptoms due to these blocked memories, just like Holocaust survivors. For this reason, many trauma survivors in Peru have experienced problems coping with everyday life, have eventually committed suicide, and have sought revenge, among many other extreme reactions. Trauma is still present in their lives because they have not engaged and worked through those memories. I also believe that it is necessary to remember in order to forget.

In his discussion of forgetting in his article “Remembering to Forget/Forgetting to Remember,” Maja Zehfuss mentions Nietzsche, a proponent of forgetting. According to
this perspective, “The critical attitude towards the past—which calls for the strength to break with and dissolve the past in order to be able to live—becomes necessary from time to time when knowledge of the past threatens to rule over life” (218). While I would agree that it is important to break with a traumatic past in order to live, I think that it is important first for one to remember and work through those memories. The reason for my assertion is based on the explanation of blocked memories in the previous paragraph. Memories remain just beneath the surface, ready to resurface at any time and often resulting in physical symptoms even when they have not resurfaced. In order to put those events in the past, it is helpful to understand them, come to peace with them and learn how to live without punishing yourself through negative self-esteem and fear. According to Judith Herman in her book *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, “When the ‘action of telling a story’ has come to its conclusion, the traumatic experience truly belongs to the past’ (195). In other words, we can only really forget that which is no longer a threat to our mental and physical well-being. We may think that we are overcoming trauma by forgetting since we do not have to confront the excruciating pain of what happened, but, in reality, the excruciating pain is actually controlling us. It is due to this will to avoid the undesirable that John Frow sees remembering as a process of “selection and rejection” (154). We select what we want to remember and reject what we do not want to remember. We may consciously reject the memories of the traumatic events, but we may also do it subconsciously, trying to protect ourselves from the pain. We are not seeking truth but desiring comfort: “Memory has the orderliness and the teleological drive of narrative. Its relation to the past is not that of truth but of desire” (Frow 154).
Though traumatic memories can be subconsciously rejected by an individual, in some cases the state attempts to control the rejection of traumatic memories by society consciously and intentionally. Ricoeur calls this kind of forgetting commanded forgetting. The form that this commanded forgetting takes is that of amnesty. Though amnesty seeks reconciliation, integrating perpetrators back into society, it also forces society to move on without working through the trauma. The state is seeking a future-oriented approach. In some instances, they believe in focusing on making the future better rather than dredging up old wounds, and in others, they simply want to cover up their misdeeds. Ricoeur says: “Amnesty brings to an end all of the trials being conducted and suspends all judicial indictments. […] The expression ‘something that has not occurred’ is astonishing: it underscores the magical side of the operation consists in acting as though nothing had taken place” (454). The problem with this approach is that something has taken place, and just as is the case with individual memories of trauma, forgotten collective memories of trauma will remain just below the surface, threatening to resurface at any moment and creating secondary symptoms due to the pain that still exists.

One possible way for society, like individuals, to move forward is by working through their trauma. In Peru, the Shining Path revolt and civil war are still fresh in the minds of Peruvians, and social classes are still very much divided. While I do not promote collective amnesia in any circumstance, I think that it would be especially damaging in the case of Peru, causing greater social fissures between the upper and lower classes in society. Of course, though societies that embark on projects of collective
amnesia necessarily must grant amnesty, not all societies that grant amnesty develop projects of collective amnesia. In Chile, Pinochet tried to promote collective forgetting through passing the Amnesty Law, but after he left his post as commander in chief of the army, the Chileans found ways to prosecute perpetrators of violence even though the Amnesty Law was still in place, and they also embarked on projects of memory, such as a Wall of Names and a Peace Park. Chileans, like Peruvians, have realized that forgetting is not beneficial for their societies. As a result, though there is not one correct way for societies to overcome trauma considering that trauma is different in every context, I think that collective forgetting, while less painful and easier at the time, will only cause more pain and conflict in the future.

As this discussion has shown, without addressing how memories are formed and retrieved, it is impossible to understand why someone is suffering from trauma and what can be done to aid the individual in his or her recovery. Given that memories of traumatic events are often not complete in their formation and are often blocked or partially blocked from retrieval, it is a very long process for a trauma survivor to confront the past and move forward in his or her life. Likewise, it is a difficult process for societies to face cultural memories of traumatic events and move forward without creating further conflict and enabling victims to heal their wounds. In my analysis, I will be looking at how Peruvians and Peruvian society have engaged or not engaged their unresolved memories and how this has affected their progress in overcoming the trauma produced as a result of the violence of the 1980s and 1990s. In order to better understand
how trauma is produced and how it affects individuals and society, in the next section, I will discuss some theories of trauma and their relationship to the Peruvian context.

Theories of the Creation and Effects of Individual and Collective Trauma

The trauma experienced by the Peruvian people as a result of the conflict between the Shining Path and the government is a consequence of repeated traumatic events throughout the history of Peru. First of all, it is a consequence of the violent state repression of the indigenous peoples beginning during Spanish colonization and continuing during the Republican period of Peru. The repeated trauma experienced by the indigenous peoples built up over time, each new form of oppression compounding with those experienced by previous generations, the result being the creation of layers of trauma. Throughout this process, the indigenous peoples have protested and rebelled. However, the relationship between the indigenous peoples and the state is one that has hinged more on legal and nonviolent protest than on rebellion. Though trauma can lead to further violence, the indigenous peoples have tried to confront the state oppression in a somewhat measured manner, whether it be through law suits or land invasions or peasant unions. One major rebellion by the indigenous peoples was the Tupac Amaru II rebellion. Though the rebellion was not successful in the end, it was led by an indigenous person, José Condorcanqui, claiming to be a descendent of the first Tupac Amaru, and the rebellion had significant indigenous support. One of the main reasons for the overwhelming support of the rebellion was that it was organized to combat specific oppressive Spanish policies put into place, the Bourbon reforms. This and other minor rebellions, along with the other forms of legal and nonviolent indigenous protest, can be
seen as reactions to the trauma suffered by the indigenous peoples. These layers of trauma then became compounded by the violent and shocking events of the 1980s and 90s in Peru. The Shining Path leaders based their movement on societal inequality and tried to recruit indigenous peoples as the base of their fighting force. Nevertheless, the indigenous resistance prior to 1980, while providing an impetus to the Shining Path rebellion, was misappropriated by Shining Path leaders, who were mestizo university professors and students and rural school teachers. These leaders did not think that the indigenous peoples could lead themselves, viewing them as being inferior, and they were not truly engaged with the indigenous cause. As a result, many indigenous people did not support the armed struggle, supported it inactively or were forced to support it. For this reason, the Shining Path struggle added another layer of trauma to the already traumatized indigenous peoples. However, the conflict not only resulted in trauma for the indigenous peoples but also for the white/mestizo sector of society. The Peruvian middle and upper classes were not suffering from layers of trauma like the indigenous peoples were, but during the 1980s and 90s, they witnessed violence both secondhand and firsthand, some of the members of this class, such as politicians, being the target for Shining Path assassinations.

This trauma affecting Peruvian society as a whole is very different from trauma experienced due to one specific event in a person’s life or even from the trauma experienced during the political repression of the 1970s in countries such as Chile, Argentina and Uruguay. Of course, many Peruvians continue to experience trauma produced by one specific assassination of a family member or friend during the conflict.
However, the Peruvians, as a community, also suffer from trauma resulting from the combined effect of the collectivity of events that occurred. Thus, Peruvians are confronting both individual and collective trauma, the individual influencing the formation of the collective. Each person who witnessed violence firsthand shared that experience with others, either through word of mouth or through the media. This act of sharing contributed, little by little, to the formation of a collective traumatic perspective. In analyzing trauma at a general level, Cathy Caruth, in her book *Unclaimed Experience*, claims that Freud and many others have said that “trauma is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind” (3). Though trauma can produce physical symptoms, it is a result of the disturbance of the mind that they exist. Looking specifically at individual trauma, Kai Erikson, in his article “Notes on Trauma and Community,” says that it is the outcome of “a blow to the psyche that breaks through one’s defenses so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively” (187). On the other hand, Erikson says that collective trauma is a product of “a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of community” (187). Therefore, as Erikson affirms, the effects of collective trauma are not sudden (187). Over time, the number of people affected by the traumatic events increases, and, as a consequence, people become less and less able to communicate amongst each other and help one another to cope with the effects of the events. The end result of this situation is the paralysis of society, the inability of the people to move forward as a whole and confront the future. It means that society continues to live in the past rather than allowing the past to shape the future.
In addition to understanding the types of trauma which have resulted from the Shining Path revolt and civil war in Peru, it is necessary to understand the process of how trauma is initiated. According to Cathy Caruth, in the Introduction to her book *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, “to be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event” (4-5). However, as Caruth explains, this possession does not occur during or immediately after an event, “but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it” (“Introduction” 4). The possession occurs belatedly because of the extreme nature of the blow discussed previously. Though many extremely violent events take place every day, not all of these events affect us in the same way. For example, it is important to take into account if one is affected directly or indirectly by the event. But even if we were to narrow trauma survivors down to only those people affected directly by events, we would see that they too are affected differently depending on the circumstances of the events and the life history of the individual. Judith Herman affirms this idea in her book *Trauma and Recovery*: “Individual differences play an important part in determining the form that the disorder will take. No two people have identical reactions, even to the same event” (58).

One reason for this difference in reactions is the level of preparedness that one has for the event. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Sigmund Freud discusses the condition of traumatic neuroses: “A condition has long been known and described which occurs after severe mechanical concussions, railway disasters and other accidents involving a risk to life; it has been given the name of ‘traumatic neuroses’” (10). According to Freud, one of the principal characteristics of traumatic neurosis is that it involves the element of
fright. Freud argues that when one suffers from anxiety, one anticipates the danger and emotionally readies himself for that danger even if he does not know the form in which it is going to appear (11). If one experiences fear, one must be afraid of something specific (11). Nonetheless, in the case of fright, a person “has run into danger without being prepared for it; it emphasizes the factor of surprise” (11). Therefore, a person who experiences a traumatic event does not know that the event is going to occur, which results in his inability to react to it. We can see, then, that though traumatic events affect people in different ways, they do affect all people, whether it be severely or mildly, depending on how unprepared the individual is for the event that occurs. Herman states: “There is a simple, direct relationship between the severity of the trauma and its psychological impact. […] Studies of war and natural disasters have documented a ‘dose-response curve,’ whereby the greater the exposure to traumatic events, the greater the percentage of the population with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder” (57). As a result, in the case of Peru, where violent acts took place for a period of twenty years and tens of thousands of people were killed, it is a certainty that a large number of people suffered and continue to suffer the effects of trauma.

In addition to the inability to anticipate what is going to happen, when an event is a surprise, we often do not have the mental framework to assimilate the experience. In their analysis of memory and trauma in the article “The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma,” Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart, say that people attempt to assimilate experience through the use of “mental constructs” which make up their narrative memory (160). They claim that we may not be able to completely
integrate traumatic events into our memory because we do not have cognitive schemes constructed which these experiences can fit into. The result is that the memories of these events become unconscious and are not able to be retrieved at will:

Frightening or novel experiences may not easily fit into existing cognitive schemes and either may be remembered with particular vividness or may totally resist integration. Under extreme conditions, existing meaning schemes may be entirely unable to accommodate frightening experiences, which causes the memory of these experiences to be stored differently and not be available for retrieval under ordinary conditions: it becomes dissociated from conscious awareness and voluntary control. (Van Der Kolk & Van Der Hart 160)

This inability to retrieve memories is what I previously referred to as blocked memories. One form that these blocked memories can take is that of dissociation, or an alteration of our state of consciousness: “Unbearable emotional reactions to traumatic events produced an altered state of consciousness. […] Janet called this alteration in consciousness ‘dissociation’” (Herman 12). In his book *The Mental State of Hystericals*, Pierre Janet shows through example exactly how memories can be dissociated from conscious awareness. His patient Mme. D. cannot answer direct questions, however, when she answers questions automatically, “through the mechanical association of ideas”, she can remember events (104). As a result, Janet arrives at the conclusion that “remembrance, in a word, manifests itself only unconsciously to the person; it disappears when he tries to speak or write in his own name” (105). The hysterical patients that Janet analyzes have
become hysterical due to traumatic incidents, either an accident or a personally traumatizing event. They retain memories of traumatic events, but, due to the extreme circumstances at the time of acquisition, they are stored differently and not easily accessed. Certainly, the type of trauma experienced by Peruvians was very different from that experienced by Janet’s patients, not to mention the extreme polarity of the contexts. Nonetheless, Janet’s analysis shows us that extreme circumstances at the time that an event occurs can result in problems in the storage and retrieval of memories for an individual.

Given that events are not integrated completely into our mental schemas, how then do we experience the events belatedly? In an interview published by Cathy Caruth entitled “An Interview with Robert Jay Lifton,” Lifton discusses his perspective on trauma. According to him, after experiencing a traumatic event, our whole persona is changed and “‘there is a traumatized self that is created’” (Lifton 137). This traumatized self carries the burden of the trauma in his subconscious, only to be retrieved as a result of a dream or a trigger. In analyzing the first retrieval method, Freud affirms that people suffering from traumatic neurosis can have dreams which transport the individual to the scene of the traumatic event (11). The purpose of these dreams, according to Freud, is to create anxiety. People need to experience anxiety because, as I have previously noted, it allows them to ready themselves for the difficult situation. Even though the situation has passed, the person has not been able to experience the event; dreaming is a way of enabling someone to prepare himself to experience the event: “These dreams are endeavoring to master the stimulus retrospectively, by developing the anxiety whose
omission was the cause of the traumatic neurosis” (Freud 36-37). The other retrieval method is through triggers which produce flashbacks. Jon G. Allen claims that flashbacks are “traumatic memories associated with a feeling of painfully reliving the event,” and can be provoked by “anything that engenders a feeling of extreme helplessness” (83, 87). This extreme helplessness occurs when an individual is presented with cues which are reminiscent of cues present during the traumatic event (Van Der Kirk & Van Der Kolk 163). These flashbacks cannot be prevented given that the cues automatically trigger not only the reminiscent cues but also the other aspects of the situation (Van Der Kirk & Van Der Kolk 163).

Nevertheless, even when the events are not triggered or dreamt, they become “subconscious fixed ideas”, a concept developed by Janet to describe the state of traumatic memories in the brain, and they “continue to influence current perceptions, affect states, and behavior” (Van Der Kolk & Van Der Kirk 163). The reason for this continued haunting influence is that this relegation of the event to the realm of the subconscious is an act of dissociation and not repression, dissociation being “a horizontally layered model of the mind” rather than a vertical model (Van Der Kolk 168). In this horizontal model, memory is retained in an “alternate stream of consciousness” and thus can either be subconscious or conscious, as occurs during flashbacks (Van Der Kolk 168). Janet says that memory depends on personal perception and being able to link past remembrances together: “The personal perception must also seize upon the image and connect it with the other remembrances, with the sensations clear or confused, exterior or interior, the ensemble of which constitutes personality” (103). Janet calls this
activity the “personal perception of remembrances or psychological assimilation of images” (103). The importance of this activity, according to Janet’s theory, is that when one is unable to perform the assimilation of images, the memories will be dissociated: “Its [psychological assimilation of images] absence will be enough to produce in the patients a disturbance of memory which will be, for them, a real amnesia; and we think that, in most cases, hysterical amnesia is nothing else than an amnesia of this kind, a simple amnesia of assimilation” (Janet 103). Thus, according to Janet’s theory, the memory exists and can be accessed by the individual if the conditions are appropriate. Specifically, in the case of Mme. D. previously mentioned, the memory is accessed when the patient is put in a situation in which she is not consciously thinking about her past (Janet 104).

The reason for this dissociation is due to the belatedness of experiencing an event already mentioned; trauma is considered to be “the delay or incompleteness in knowing, or even in seeing, an overwhelming occurrence that then remains, in its insistent return, absolutely true to the event” (“Introduction” Caruth 5). This delay in knowing is due to the surprise of the event and the lack of mental structures in the brain to accommodate the event previously discussed. Specifically, the person present for the event does not completely process what is occurring at the time of the event. In the words of Caruth, the person is unable “fully to witness the event as it occurs” (“Introduction” 7). Similarly, Janet says that “a remembrance may be insufficient because it has been incorrectly acquired, badly organized, from the beginning of its formation” (107). Janet is referring to patients who cannot process an event due to mental weakness at the time of the
occurrence, the effect being the inability to provide a foundation for remembering in the future (107). In the case of trauma victims of mass violence, they do not suffer from mental weakness at the time of the event, yet the shock creates an instantaneous mental weakness; it is equivalent to listening to someone speak but not having the capacity to understand what they are saying. You are simultaneously involved and not involved in what is happening. The end result is the impossibility to easily access the memory of the event; the individual does not consciously remember the event because he or she did not consciously experience the entire event. Of course, it is impossible to consciously experience the entirety of an event even if it is not traumatic. Nonetheless, if the event is traumatic, a higher degree of the event will be missed by your conscious mind. Utilizing the term “latency” first developed by Freud, in which an individual experiences an event belatedly, Caruth affirms that “it is only in and through its inherent forgetting that it is first experienced at all” (Introduction” 8). Thus, though much of a traumatic event is processed subconsciously, it does exist in our minds. Therefore, in order to experience an event in the future, it must first be forgotten.

If, then, victims of trauma experience events belatedly, they are profoundly affected by the trauma from the time in which the event occurs, but they do not understand how they have been affected until later. According to Slavoj Žižek, trauma victims suffer two deaths, the first of which occurs after witnessing the traumatic event, when “you don’t know that you are dead” (Sublime 134). It is in this first death that “I lose one of my lives”, and in the second, “I lose the game itself” (Sublime 135). It is between these two deaths, according to Žižek, that exists “the site of das Ding, of the
real-traumatic kernel in the midst of symbolic order” (Sublime 135). Thus, to suffer a traumatic event is to die, to lose your first life and become another person, suffering all the more because latency prevents you from understanding your death. Since the event was not comprehended when it was viewed, the only way to really witness the event is through its forgetting and subsequent triggering which I have discussed. The consequence of this process is that the memory is even more fragmented than it would have been for an ordinary event. Whereas a person remembering an ordinary event can create a basic narrative of the event which makes sense to him or her, the person remembering a traumatic event cannot form a coherent whole or narrative of what happened, and he cannot order it along with other events in his life (Van Der Kirk & Van Der Kolk 178). This inability to order can be compounded by long-term trauma. The hippocampus is the region of the brain which is responsible for ordering our memories, but if a person is exposed to “severe or prolonged stress”, the hippocampus can stop functioning properly, causing the individual to be unable to contextualize events (Van Der Kirk & Van Der Kolk 178). Thus, if the individual does not understand what happened to him or her or when it happened, he or she would be unable to cope with everyday life in the present or future. This is, precisely, what has occurred in Peru, where many individuals and the country as a whole have not been able to move past the trauma and advance socially and politically.

Like Peru, other countries in Latin America have suffered from extreme trauma and have struggled to move forward. For example, many scholars have discussed the trauma caused in Chile by the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. Nelly Richard highlights
the fragmented memory of the Chilean people through Diamela Eltit’s novel *El padre mío*: “‘Shreds of newspapers, fragments of extermination, syllables of death, pauses of untruth, commercial phrases, names of the deceased’ that together speak, in a jumble, about the ‘infection of memory’ that contaminated us through ‘a deep crisis of language, a disarticulation of all ideologies’” (6). The Chileans, unable to fully witness the horrors of the dictatorship, remember through remnants of trauma which, in turn, result in flashbacks. The trauma of the past events, not being able to be ordered or integrated into their memories, consequently cannot be organized under an ideology or verbalized. How do you speak of events which have no coherence and no fusion? The Chilean existence in the present is a muddle of memory cues which the people must learn how to decipher. Their cultural memories are the results of a mixture of personal tragedy with the ideologies of the state with fragments of the mass media. Their society is beginning to value remembering over forgetting more and more, however, they have yet to complete this process of remembering. The question, then, is how to fill in, make sense of and order the memories in order to confront and overcome this trauma. According to Richard, one way that the Chileans did this was through the use of photos. Some of the family members of Chileans who disappeared or were detained during the dictatorship decided to march on the streets with photos of their loved ones (9). This display made the anonymous public, the forgotten remembered. As Richard affirms, the “portraits became the image of photographic denouncement in Chile. Such denouncement conceived of the photograph as a ‘crime scene’ in which, according to Benjamin, the artist must ‘reveal guilt and… point out the guilty’” (9). Identifying the guilty has three purposes for the Chilean people. It enables them to fill in the gaps of their fragmented
memory, and thus, also to confront the trauma that they are suffering from. To identify the guilty is to verbalize past events, to put a face on what was once unspeakable. Pinochet granted amnesty to influence society into forgetting, and The Rettig Commission, Chile’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, would not name the individual perpetrators of violence. Thus, by displaying pictures of the guilty, Chileans take back their memory. At the same time, it is a way to search for justice. If justice is able to be achieved, it gives the people hope to face the future, hope that traumatic events such as these will not reoccur.

While the violence which occurred in Chile is not the same as that which occurred in Peru, there are commonalities between the two situations: in both countries, people disappeared, people were tortured and people were killed over an extended period of time. The witnessing of violence and the citizens’ inability to control this violence resulted in the development of trauma in both countries. It is for this reason that some of the same effects of trauma are seen in Peru as have been experienced in Chile. The Peruvians, like the Chileans, were unable to fully witness the traumatic events which occurred during the conflict and have suffered from nonintegrated memories. In addition, the Peruvians and the Chileans have struggled to verbalize their traumatic past. As a result, both countries have had to find ways to confront their traumatic past. As Nelly Richard has shown, the Chileans have tried to remember and verbalize their trauma through the use of portraits and through literature. In addition, as previously mentioned, the Rettig Commission was formed in Chile in 1990 by the new democratic president, Patricio Aylwin, so that the truth of the traumatic events could be heard.
Peruvians have used some similar methods. First of all, they formed a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2001 during the new democratic presidency of Alejandro Toledo, allowing victims to speak about their experiences. Second of all, there are many short stories and several novels written about the Shining Path revolt and civil war in Peru which I will be analyzing in this dissertation. And similar to the Chileans’ use of portraits, on July 18, 2008, the Peruvians held a wake and a mass for those who died in the Universidad La Cantuta (Mejía Huaraca July 19, 2008). In 1992, nine students and a university professor were killed by the military without warning, the only motive being that they were suspected of being Shining Path members. The military then buried the students and professor to hide their actions, the remains not being found until an anonymous tip was received a year later. Given the outrage of the family and Peruvian society regarding the actions of the military, the remains of those who died were given to their family members and eventually taken to the university, which was the site of the wake (Mejía Huaraca July 19, 2008). By carrying out these activities, Peruvians sought to remember their loved ones, create awareness among the Peruvian population and raise a call for justice in the face of Fujimori’s trial concerning human rights violations related to La Cantuta. The sentiments of Peruvians are expressed very clearly by university president Juan Tutuy Aspauza when he says: "Estos muertos están más vivos que nunca, los que están muertos en vida son sus asesinos" (Mejía Huaraca July 19, 2008).

Peruvians continue to remember the victims of La Cantuta, and they continue to condemn the perpetrators of violence. Of course, even though Peru has and continues to take legal action against the perpetrators, Peru has still not been able to completely overcome their trauma. However, they have taken a step towards justice and reconciliation.
Despite these similarities between Chile and Peru, there are also many differences in how trauma affected the people of both countries. Trauma can be considered a psychodynamic process, which, according to David Becker in his article “Confronting the Truth of the Erineyes: The Illusion of Harmony in the Healing of Trauma,” means that one concentrates on the psychological effects of trauma, while at the same time taking into consideration the social context of the trauma (237). Thus, we could say that the analysis of trauma must be twofold; if we look solely at the nature of the trauma, we could misjudge the effects of the trauma. Trauma must, in fact, be historically based. One’s reactions depend on what we, as individuals have suffered from in the past and what society has suffered from in the past. In the case of Peru, it would be critical to look at the impact of the interrelated traumas that I discussed in the previous section. How did cultural heterogeneity influence colonial and Republican era exploitation and repression of indigenous peoples and lower classes in Peru, and how did this affect their view of life and society? In turn, how have their perspectives affected current attitudes toward violence and repression? In addition, how have squashed past rebellions affected the development of and responses to uprisings today, such as that of the Shining Path? Žižek says that past revolutions are repressed from the dominant historical narratives of a society, but that there can occur a monad, which is “the moment of discontinuity, of rupture, at which the linear “flow of time’ is suspended, arrested, ‘coagulated’, because in it resounds directly—that is to say: bypassing the linear succession of continuous time—the past which was repressed” (Sublime 140). This monad would be the revolution of the present, which is influenced by its symptoms, past squashed revolutions: “The actual revolutionary situation presents an attempt to ‘unfold’ the symptom, to ‘redeem’—that is,
realize in the Symbolic—these past failed attempts which ‘will have been’ only through their repetition, at which point they become retroactively what they already were” (Sublime 141). Therefore, the past only exists in as far as the present attempts to complete what the past failed to do, succeeding in its attempt to change, which results in the recovering of the repressed past. In terms of memory, cultural memories previously rejected by society can now be validated by it; thus, the rejected memories are incorporated into the dominant historical memory. In the case of Peru, though the Shining Path was not successful, meaning that the rejected memories never became validated, the Shining Path’s armed struggle did bring back the cultural memories of a repressed past full of violence and exploitation, and thus of memories of past trauma suffered by Peruvians who experienced or witnessed this violence. As a result, the layers of trauma which led up to the Shining Path armed struggle most definitely influenced how Peruvians responded to and continue responding to the trauma caused by the events of the 1980s and 1990s. It is not only feelings of anguish which pervade Peruvian society but also feelings of hatred, anger, frustration and helplessness which are compounded with the current anguish to create a form of trauma differing from that experienced in Chile or in any other country that has had to confront trauma resulting from extreme violence.

Hence, the Peruvians of the present are not the same people as the Peruvians before 1980. Though the pre-1980 Peruvians were affected by the previous layers of trauma constituted by the history of the country, they, as a society, had not been directly affected by violence of the magnitude of the Shining Path revolt and civil war. And,
more importantly, the effects were even greater given that it was not just one portion of society being affected, like the many past exploitations and repressions suffered by the indigenous peoples, but all sectors being subject to the violence. The result of the events of the 80s and 90s was, in a sense, the death of certain organization of the society, which, as a whole, has changed. Since the capture of Abimael Gúzman and since the end of the Fujimori government, there have been calls to confront the trauma that the society suffered, including the writing of short stories and novels, the production of films, the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the sentencing of Fujimori. These projects function as attempts to understand what happened and as attempts to arrive at reconciliation. Peruvians will never fully be able to comprehend what happened to them, therefore never completely realizing that they have experienced the death of witnessing a traumatic event. Nevertheless, they can work towards remembering enough so that they are able to come to terms with the events and subsequently forget them in order to move on with their lives. Idelber Avelar, in analyzing the novel *En estado de memoria* by Tununa Mercado, says that “reactivation of memory creates conditions for reflexive, active forgetting” (226). In other words, we can forget for the right reasons once we have made the effort to remember and confront the past. As I discussed previously, it is necessary to forget to a certain extent in order to move forward with your life in a healthy way and create new experiences. But if you have not confronted the past, forgetting only serves to prolong your trauma: “We must remember some events to heal, but once we have healed, we are then able to forget, or continue with our lives without the constant threat of flashbacks” (Allen 97).
Confronting the past is exactly what Peru and many other countries that have undergone violent conflicts are trying to do. Peru, Argentina and Chile have all attempted to seek truth, reconciliation and justice, though their success has varied depending on factors specific to each country’s conflict. In the following section, I will be discussing these three concepts and how they work with or against each other in countries’ attempts to overcome the cultural memories of traumatic events and aid in the recovery of the individual trauma victims in their societies.

Overcoming Trauma: Reconciliation, Truth and Justice

In overcoming trauma from mass violence, there are many strategies that a country can take. As we have seen, one approach is selective amnesia. In Chile, Pinochet tried to promote collective forgetting by instituting the 1978 Amnesty Law. In his book *Justice and Reconciliation: After the Violence*, Andrew Rigby states that the government’s rationale for granting amnesty was to achieve reconciliation in the country: “The junta proclaimed on 19 April 1978 that as the state of internal war had come to an end and peace and order had been established, an amnesty was to be granted to all ‘authors, accomplices, or concealers’ of politically connected crimes since the coup. The aim, so it was claimed, was to ‘leave hatreds behind’ and promote national reconciliation” (80). Though President Patricio Aylwin had promised to repeal the Amnesty Law in his 1989 campaign, he later found it impossible to do so once taking office given that he did not have enough votes in the Senate (Rigby 80). Despite this setback, Aylwin did create a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate the acts of violence and propose reparations. But the commission decided not to reveal the names
of individual perpetrators of violence due to “the desire to restore the dignity of those who had suffered from the human rights violations of the old regime” instead of punishing perpetrators. As a result, Chile has had to struggle to exact justice for human rights violations. According to Alexandra Barahona de Brito in her article “Passion, Constraint, Law and Fortuna: The Human Rights Challenge to Chilean Democracy”, many military personnel began to be detained and sentenced only after Pinochet was arrested in 1998 (Barahona de Brito 196). Ultimately, then, Pinochet’s strategy of promoting forgetting has not been successful in Chile. Unfortunately, what Pinochet did was prolong the process of healing. Chileans were forced to forget for several years after Pinochet’s regime ended given that Pinochet maintained the office of commander in chief of the army until 1998. In her book Unspicable Truths: Facing the Challenge of Truth Commissions, Priscilla Hayner says that it was looked down upon to discuss human abuses in Chile before 1998:

> Despite the work of the truth commission, the issue of past abuses was not often comfortably discussed by the public or press in Chile for a number of years following. As one torture survivor told me in 1996, to bring up the subject of the abuses under Pinochet in any social context was considered to be ‘in bad taste.’ It was not until Pinochet stepped down as commander in chief of the army […] that the issue of past human rights violations began to be widely discussed and debated in Chile. (37-38)

In addition to increased trials and increased discussion of human rights violations, a Wall of Names was also created in Chile at the end of 1998: “A Wall of Names (Muro de los
Nombres) was inaugurated there on December 21, 1998, bearing the names of 230 disappeared persons and the inscription, ‘forgetting is full of remembering’ (‘el olvido está lleno de memoria’) by the Uruguayan novelist Mario Benedetti” (Barahona de Brito 201). Chileans were recognizing that in order to overcome their trauma and forget the pain of the past, they had to first remember, something that was now possible with Pinochet out of a position of power. Even though the Chileans’ path to recovery was delayed, their overall process in search of truth justice and reconciliation has had success and continues to move forward. I believe that for a society to overcome trauma, it must confront the trauma. Reconciliation, truth and justice are three forms of addressing collective trauma. Often, either reconciliation and truth or justice and truth are used as strategies to overcome trauma. As we have seen, in Chile, President Aylwin worked toward truth and reconciliation without making many efforts to achieve justice. Many scholars believe that justice does not promote reconciliation and that reconciliation does not promote justice. However, since 1998, Chile has attempted to seek justice, along with truth and reconciliation, and Peru has tried to attain reconciliation, truth and justice from the beginning of reconstructive process in 2000. The gains that Chile has made in justice, though, do not seem to be of primary importance to Chileans: “A poll conducted in December 1998 by Qué Pasa indicated that the issue of whether or not Pinochet should be tried was ranked only fourth among those of importance, and almost half of those polled considered it personally unimportant. It seems, then, that people do not find the issue of justice for violations a top priority” (Barahona de Brito 199). If Chileans are ambivalent about the search for justice, is Peru’s search for truth, justice and reconciliation the correct path? What success has Peru had in achieving these goals? In
order to answer these questions, it is important to first define what human rights are and how they came into existence. Then, it is necessary to understand the meaning of reconciliation, truth and justice. Finally, it is imperative to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy and decide whether or not it is possible to achieve reconciliation, truth and justice.

In Latin America, the discussion of human rights began in the 16th century with the debate between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda. In 1550, King Charles V of Spain organized a group of scholars to meet in Valladolid to discuss the role of the indigenous people in Spanish America (Ludwig Hernandez). While, “for Sepúlveda, the Indians were irrational beings whose inherently inferior condition immediately made them slaves by nature”, for Las Casas, “since the Indians were rational and civilized human beings, Spaniards had no right to subject them neither to slavery nor to war” (Ludwig Hernandez). Specifically, in his essay “In Defense of the Indians” which responded to Sepúlveda’s perspective, Bartolomé de las Casas says:

“How will that nation love us, how will they become our friends […] When they see those they love wounded, imprisoned, plundered, reduced from an immense number to a few? When they see their rulers stripped of their authority, crushed, and afflicted with a wretched slavery? […] From the fact that the Indians are barbarians it does not necessarily follow that they are incapable of government and have to be ruled by others, except to be taught about the Catholic faith and to be admitted to the holy sacraments. (120)
No winner being declared in the debate between Las Casas and Sepúlveda, it marked the starting point of centuries of controversy about the role of the indigenous people in society. Even once slavery was abolished, Sepúlveda’s basic perspective of inferiority was used as a rationalization for the repression of the indigenous peoples. For this reason, to the present day, indigenous groups in Peru and other Latin American nations continue to fight for equality in society.

However, in regards to the international debate, human rights initially began as natural rights. In 1690, British philosopher John Locke wrote of the natural rights of man, the main point being that the individuals will live by the “laws of nature”, and they will not be subject to a “superior power” (Kadragic 13). This then influenced the creation of the Declaration of the Natural Rights of Man and of the Citizen in France during the French Revolution and the United States in their writing of the Declaration of Independence which guarantees its citizens the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness (Kadragic 14). However, it was not until the end of World War II that human rights became guaranteed internationally (Kadragic 18). In 1945, the United States, France and Britain decided to put into place the Nuremberg War Trials, during the process of which 51 nations ratified the Charter of the United Nations. And subsequently, in 1948, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights was created (Kadragic 17-18). In this declaration, “Rights were understood to be universal, that is, applicable to all human beings by virtue of their humanity” (Uvin 10). This was an improvement on natural rights given that “natural rights had been historically conceived of as only applying to men, or propertied men, or white men” (10). Though written in
1948, this declaration was not made into covenants by the UN until 1966, eventually becoming legally enforced in 1976 (Uvin 10). In the Civil and Political Rights Covenant, which would pertain to situations of mass violence, two of the rights asserted are “freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment” and “freedom from arbitrary arrest and detention; the right to humane and respectful treatment of persons lawfully deprived of their liberty” (Uvin 11).

It was in the 1990s that many countries really began to take these human rights seriously, resulting in the development of many commissions, such as the Commission of the Disappeared in Argentina and the Rettig Commission Chile, as well as the initiation of human rights trials and measures to compensate victims and safeguard societies from future human rights abuses. Both of the rights that I have cited were trampled during the 1980s and 90s in Peru, when Peruvians were tortured and arrested arbitrarily. They were not given the most basic, common respect set out by the UN and reinforced by all of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions formed in the 1990s. It is due to these violations that the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in 2001, in order to investigate the acts of violence. In addition, trials have been and are taking place as a result of human rights violations, the most important one being the one against Alberto Fujimori for his role in the illegal detention and interrogation of Samuel Dyer and journalist Gustavo Gorriti and the mass killings at a party in Barrios Altos and of students and a professor of the university “La Cantuta”. By investigating human rights violations, Peru hopes to prevent the reoccurrence of abuses in the future and also to initiate the process of healing society through the processes of reconciliation, truth and justice.
According to Erin Daly and Jeremy Sarkin, “Reconciliation connotes the coming together of things that once were united but have been torn asunder—a return to or recreation of the status quo ante” (5). In this general definition, it is important to note that if parties are to reconcile, they necessarily must have once been united. In the case of Peru, I am not sure if we can say that the different social groups were ever really united. Since colonization, society has always been heterogeneous. As a result, this makes the process of reconciliation all the more difficult. Reconciliation will always be partial since it is only attempting to resolve the divisions created by the Shining Path insurgency, not those still existent between the state and indigenous peoples. It is as if the reconciliation for the current trauma covers up the social conflict of the past. Nevertheless, this current reconciliation would attempt to heal society from the psychological wounds of the trauma suffered during the 1980s and 90s: “Reconciliation is a mechanism for dealing with the past that is forward-looking—constructive and transformative rather than punitive and retributive. The goals are aimed at healing the victim, educating society, and helping the perpetrator to reintegrate into society” (Daly & Sarkin 15). Despite the drawbacks to the current reconciliation process, it may be able to serve as an impetus for future reconciliation of all the groups in society.

Truth is connected to the concept of reconciliation because it either leads to or develops from reconciliation: “It is commonly stated that truth leads to reconciliation. […] Or perhaps the relationship works in the opposite direction: reconciliation leads to truth by creating the conditions in which the truth can emerge” (Daly & Sarkin 6). Truth can lead to reconciliation through institutions such as the truth and reconciliation
commission. These commissions allow victims, and depending on the case, also the perpetrators to tell their version of what happened. Through this process, victims and society as a whole can learn the truth of what happened, and a type of catharsis can result for both of these parties. Victims can begin to heal themselves when they tell their stories, and society can begin to understand what happened and take steps towards preventing this type of violence in the future. At the same time, reconciliation can lead to truth in certain cases. If perpetrators are granted amnesty in return for telling their stories, then society’s attempt to integrate these perpetrators back into societies provides the conditions for truth telling; perpetrators are not afraid of the consequences of telling the truth. Nonetheless, amnesty does not always lead to truth. In the cases of countries such as Chile and Argentina, amnesty was granted, but there were no conditions placed on the amnesty, the result being that the military/government officials refused to talk.

In addition to its relationship to reconciliation, truth also has a relationship to justice. In punitive justice, people learn some of the truths of past events through witness testimony. Along with this truth comes, in some cases, the punishment of the perpetrator and monetary restitution for the victim. Joseph V. Montville describes justice in the following way: “In its most general sense, justice implies order and morality. That is, justice means predictability in the daily life of a community and its individual members and the observance of the basic rules governing right and wrong behavior” (129). Of course, order and morality can be attained in many ways. The punishment and restitution that can result from trials allows the victim to feel that the damage done to them has been recognized and has been attempted to be made right to the extent that it can. However,
no trial is necessary for justice to be achieved according to the proponents of restorative justice, a form of justice in which the defendants and the victims work together to try to “rebuild and strengthen” society (Daly & Sarkin 14). In this case, the crime is seen to be against the victim, rather than the state, and thus the focus is on healing the victim and society: “The aim of the judicial system, then, is to reconcile conflicted parties while repairing the injuries from the crimes” (Estrada-Hollenbeck 74). The most notable case where restorative justice has been used would be South Africa, where amnesty was granted and society worked together to reconcile their differences. It is due to this concept of restorative justice that such an emphasis has lately been placed on reconciliation, specifically through the development of truth and reconciliation commissions. In Latin America, countries have benefited from the increased focus on reconciliation. In Chile, Peru and Argentina, trials have taken place, so we can say that they have not taken the path of restorative justice exclusively. And in Peru, specifically, trials have been seen as a necessary part of achieving justice, which has been shown by the jailing of Abimael Guzmán and the recent conviction of Alberto Fujimori. However, all of these countries value reconciliation, as can be seen by the creation of their truth and reconciliation commissions.

With a clearer understanding of the concepts of reconciliation, truth and justice, it is important to understand the advantages and disadvantages of these strategies for confronting collective trauma. Reconciliation is extremely beneficial because it enables much of the truth of what happened to be uncovered, it addresses the needs of individuals to heal and it works towards healing society as a whole, through arriving at peaceful
coexistence and eventually with the goal of forgiveness. Partial truth is acquired through processes such as the truth and reconciliation commission, which allows both victims and perpetrators to tell their side of the story. Sometimes perpetrators are granted amnesty and sometimes they are not. If they are granted amnesty, then it is much easier to learn the truth of what the perpetrators did, as long as disclosure is a condition of the amnesty: “People are unlikely to reveal the full extent of their involvement in, and knowledge of, crimes and abuses without some kind of promised immunity from punishment—otherwise, why should they incriminate themselves?” (Rigby 184-185). However, in the case of Latin America, where disclosure was not made a condition for granting amnesty, the opposite effect occurred. If perpetrators are granted amnesty and they do not have to disclose information in return, why should they? In this case, the disclosure of information will only tarnish their reputations.

In the case of Argentina, the military junta granted itself amnesty before relinquishing power, which meant that there were no conditions placed on the amnesty (Hayner 33). In addition, since Argentina’s National Commission on the Disappeared was created by the president rather than Congress, it had no power to compel perpetrators to talk (Hayner 34). As a result, the military had no incentive to speak the truth, and, in the end, they did not: “The commission received almost no cooperation from the armed forces, despite repeated requests from the armed forces” (Hayner 34). Though Raúl Alfonsín’s civilian government repealed the amnesty law in 1983 and was able to convict five out of nine members of the military junta, he enacted the Due Obedience Law in 1987 which placed all of the blame on senior officers; all of the other military personnel
“were only following orders and as a result were exonerated” (Rigby 72). The next president, Carlos Menem, went even further, granting pardons to military officers and leftist guerrillas in 1989 and pardoning the members of the military junta in 1990 (Rigby 72-73). In 1993, Alfonsín said that while punishment was not enforced, the trials did result in truth telling: “‘The revelation of truth through impartial judicial proceeding and the resulting public condemnation serve just as well as the imposition of punishment to impress upon the public minds the kinds of behavior that society is unwilling to accept’” (Rigby 73). Thus, through Argentina’s process of amnesty, some truth was heard, and no justice was achieved. The eventual forsaking of justice could be said to help society move towards reconciliation, though many people, angry that the perpetrators of violence were not punished, could feel less inclined to work towards an eventual reconciliation.

Based on the cases of Chile and Argentina, a couple of questions remain. Was reconciliation, in reality, the goal of their amnesty laws? Can truth and reconciliation be achieved if amnesty is unable to do so? In both Chile and Argentina, amnesty was granted by the main perpetrators of violence; the government/military was responsible for the majority of human rights violations. Though these groups may have said that their goal was to achieve reconciliation in the countries through granting amnesty, it is obvious that their main goal was to remain out of jail. Since Chileans and Argentineans were clearly able to recognize that their governments did not have a true conviction to achieve reconciliation, the people did not believe in them as moral examples of change. However, even the subsequent civilian governments, who were more committed to achieving reconciliation, did not garner the support of society as a whole. As previously
discussed, in the case of Chile, amnesty was not repealed and the Rettig Commission did not reveal the names of the perpetrators in their report. Besides the fact that Aylwin was physically unable to repeal amnesty, his principal aim was to seek truth and prevent future acts of mass violence from taking place. Nonetheless, even after a reparations corporation provided victims with reparations for their losses, human rights activists criticized the lack of justice in Chile’s approach to overcoming trauma: “A more fundamental criticism of the work of the Commission and the Reparations Corporation made by human rights activists within and outside of Chile was that in the pursuit of truth and social peace as a basis for reconciliation, justice had been forsaken” (Rigby 87).

Nonetheless, Chile did eventually have some judicial success. Though Pinochet was not put on trial, he was arrested, and his arrest sparked changes in the courts of Chile. New judges took office in 1999, and a perspective was advanced which allowed some of the violators of human rights covered under the Amnesty Law to be prosecuted: “This pro-human-rights shift led to the emergence of the so-called ‘post-Aylwin doctrine.’ This is based on the idea that disappearance is a continuous crime and as such cannot be amnestied until certain death is ascertained” (Barahona de Brito 196). This led to new convictions and the reopening of old cases. Chile, then, was not able to exact full justice, but they did take some steps towards justice. In addition, they sought truth and reconciliation through their construction of the Peace Park and Wall of Names.

On the other hand, in Argentina, where amnesty was granted and repealed, with perpetrators eventually being pardoned, the lack of a consistent strategy made it difficult for Argentineans to believe in the different governments’ attempts at reconciliation. As
result, Argentineans have sought their own form of justice, truth and reconciliation. Initially, a group was formed, comprised of mothers whose children disappeared due to the violence, called Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo. This group’s mission was to search for truth, an explanation for the disappearances (Rigby 67). Later, in 1996, the children of the disappeared formed a group known as Hijos, or Children for Identity and Justice and Against Forgetting and Silence (Rigby 74). This group, in addition to their search for truth, also sought non-legislative justice by shaming the perpetrators of violence:

Their aim is to reveal the whereabouts of the former torturers and death squad members, and then to shame them. Once the homes of former torturers have been identified, demonstrations are held, with leaflets distributed to local residents reading ‘Warning—killer in the neighborhood.’ Mock road signs are held aloft demanding the trial and punishment of the targets and warning passersby of the dangers ahead, while jail bars are symbolically placed in front of the homes of the dirty war veterans. (Rigby 75)

Finally, a Wall of Memory was erected and a website was created including a Gallery of Argentinean Torturers and Killers “with photographs of those responsible for the abuses during those years” (Rigby 75). Therefore, though the amnesty of Chile and Argentina did not have sufficient moral backing or consistency for them to be completely effective, some truth and reconciliation have been achieved by the people. If, however, in addition to attempts at truth and reconciliation, perpetrators are prosecuted, this gives victims the sense that wrongs will not recur in the future, and they may be able to heal themselves
more quickly. This seems to be what the group Hijos in Argentina has been looking for. And even from jail, it is possible for perpetrators to repent their actions and possibly ask for forgiveness. Consequently, justice can be complementary to the search for truth and reconciliation.

In the case of Peru, as in Argentina, amnesty was granted by a government responsible for human rights violations, and then it was repealed by a democratic government. In Peru, the amnesty law was passed in 1995 during Fujimori’s regime and then repealed in 2002 during Alejandro Toledo’s presidency. However, unlike Argentina, Peru has not, as of yet, pardoned any of the military/government officials in jail. And, most importantly, on April 7, 2009, Alberto Fujimori was sentenced to 25 years in jail for human rights violations. It remains to be seen whether Fujimori will win an appeal or whether his daughter, Keiko Fujimori, will pardon him if she wins the presidential election in 2011, but Fujimori’s conviction, along with those of other prominent officials, has provided evidence to Peruvians that justice is being served. In addition, due to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, victims have told their stories and are attempting to overcome their trauma. It is also important to note that whereas in Chile, Argentina and other Latin American countries, the hearings were closed, in Peru, the truth commission had “public hearings and open dialogue sessions with civic leaders” (González Cueva 60). Making the hearings public is vital to disseminating the truth and allowing society as a whole to heal. We could say, then, that the Peruvian state has been very successful in its search for truth, and, especially, in its search for justice. Since Peru has undergone this process more recently than Argentina, Chile and other Latin American
countries, it certainly has learned from the mistakes that these countries have made and from their successes. In addition, Peru is unique in that the state was not responsible for the majority of the violence. According to the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Shining Path was responsible for 54% of human rights violations. Given this fact, the state has always supported justice in regards to the human rights violations of Shining Path members. What has been more difficult has been the acknowledgement and punishment of wrongdoing on the part of the state. Based on what we know today, has Peru achieved reconciliation? Peruvian society has definitely not completely healed, especially given that many of the perpetrators of violence will not admit their guilt, but the country has achieved a peaceful coexistence to the extent possible, taking into account the still existing social divisions due to the heterogeneous makeup of society. For this reason, Peru may never arrive at true reconciliation; it is very difficult for groups with such differing social perspectives and memories to come together, especially when repression of the lower classes has been occurring since Spanish colonization. Nonetheless, Peru has made great strides in trying to overcome the violent conflict of the 1980s and 90s.

In addition to achieving truth, reconciliation efforts also aid in the healing of individuals in society. As I discussed in the previous paragraph, many reconciliation efforts in the recent past have included the creation of a truth and reconciliation commission which allows individuals to tell their story to society. The opportunity to remember and speak is a form of therapy. It was referred to as the “talking cure” by Joseph Breuer’s patient Anna O. (Herman 12). When an individual talks about a
traumatic memory, they are able to confront a past that has been haunting them. They make conscious what was dissociated in their memory, and they feel that their pain has been recognized by society. According to Nigel Biggar in his article “Making Peace or Doing Justice: Must We Choose?,” recognition is one of the most important factors in beginning the process of healing: “To suffer an injury and to have it ignored is to be told, effectively, ‘What happens to you doesn’t matter, because you don’t matter.’ Therefore, to have it acknowledged is to have one’s dignity as an equal member of a human community affirmed” (9). If their pain exists, and the violence committed is deemed to be wrong, then an individual can commence the process of healing. My use of the word “commence” is deliberate; though telling stories is a step towards reconciliation, an individual does not become healed solely by talking. Once a person has told his or her story, it is necessary for him or her to begin individual or group therapy since the process of recovery could take months or years to be completed. Brandon Hamber, in his article “Does the Truth Heal? A Psychological Perspective on Political Strategies for Dealing with the Legacy of Political Violence,” emphasizes that story telling, such as revealing your story to a truth commission, is only the first step in healing: “All the public revelation of truth in the world will not guarantee immediate psychological restoration. Telling the story is only one component of the victim’s typically lengthy and painful process of healing” (Hamber 161). But without a truth and reconciliation commission, many individuals would not have the courage to begin their process of recovery. Even those victims that do not get to tell their story before the commission, which is a significant number since only a small percentage is selected to speak, may hear the others speak, identify with their stories and be encouraged to begin the process of therapy.
Thus, collective reconciliation can be seen as the means by which individuals are enabled to start healing themselves, which, in turn, results in the healing of society.

Another significant advantage of reconciliation is that it aids in the attainment of peaceful coexistence and the attempt to achieve forgiveness. Although peaceful coexistence is possible in the majority of cases, forgiveness is often not possible or, at the very least, very difficult to achieve: “With forgiveness, the common humanity of the perpetrator and victim entails embracing the perpetrator back into society’s fold” (Daly & Sarkin 152). Embracing the perpetrator back into society is not easy for victims to accept, especially when this means that “the perpetrator is separated from his deed” (Daly & Sarkin 152). For victims, the perpetrator is the deed since this deed is what has caused them to suffer from trauma. As a result, even if the victim cannot forgive the perpetrator, all parties in a conflict can at least try to understand the positions of the other groups, and the society as a whole is then better off in the end. And reconciliation attempts to do just that. While punishment can prevent recurring violence in the future, it does not promote the healing of individuals or the dialogue of opposing groups. Thus, punishment can possibly fix the current problem by taking perpetrators of violence off the streets and deterring others from committing acts of violence, but it does not get to the root of the problem. Dialogue between opposing parties is absolutely essential in resolving structural issues in society. This is the assertion of proponents of restorative justice, or reconciliation: “Within this system, if there is no restoration of the social relationships that the conflict affected, true justice does not occur” (Estrada-Hollenbeck 74). In the case of Peru, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has promoted the healing of
relationships; though the process has been effective, the fact that some of the perpetrators of violence will not admit to wrongdoing somewhat hinders the healing.

As I have previously discussed, the cause of the Shining Path movement was the deep divisions in society which were created during colonization and have only been reinforced over time. Again, though the Shining Path did not truly represent the indigenous peoples, they did use the inequalities of Peruvian society as basis of their struggle. Therefore, if the only method for addressing trauma is to send perpetrators of violence to jail, then these deep divisions will always continue to exist. Consequently, whether or not punitive justice is used as part of a process for overcoming trauma, some type of strategy for reconciliation must exist in order for society to truly move forward. This idea is apparent in the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s definition of reconciliation:

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) understands “reconciliation” to be a process of reestablishment and recasting of fundamental ties among Peruvians; ties that were destroyed or that deteriorated in the conflict experienced over the past two decades. Reconciliation has three dimensions: 1) the political dimension, involving a reconciliation between the State and society, and between the political parties, the State and society; 2) the social dimension, encompassing reconciliation of civil society institutions and public spaces with society as a whole, with special consideration for marginalized ethnic groups; and 3) the interpersonal dimension, involving members of communities or
institutions who found themselves in conflict. Thus, reconciliation requires
the reconstruction of the social and political pact. (37)

While the focus of this definition is on reconciling the conflict of the 1980s and 1990s, the Peruvian TRC recognizes the need to reconcile with “marginalized ethnic groups”, a reference to the division of society pre-Shining Path. As I mentioned previously, it may be impossible to completely reconcile the differences that have resulted from the heterogeneity of society, but the Truth and Reconciliation Commission does take a first step in addressing this problem. Most importantly, though, the Peruvian TRC has as its goal the attempt to reconcile the political, social and interpersonal dimensions of society. They hope that all groups, institutions and individuals will be able to find common ground and work together towards understanding why the conflict occurred and trying to prevent its recurrence through improving social and institutional bonds.

In efforts to do this, however, the TRC does promote punitive justice: “The TRC also recommends measures to strengthen the system for the administration of justice and to reform the penitentiary system” (39). Specifically, one of the measures that the TRC proposes is the following: “Establish a specialized temporary system for trying cases of human rights crimes and violations” (42). For the TRC, holding individuals accountable for committing violent crimes is necessary in combination with measures towards reconciliation. Of course, the disadvantage of holding perpetrators accountable through punitive justice is that these perpetrators may not be willing to admit to their crimes or make attempts at reconciling themselves with society. In Peru, perpetrators were given two options in exchange for their testimony before the commission:
Either give anonymous testimony, so that the TRC will learn about the facts without being able to identify the source should the Attorney General request the identity of the person who gave such information; or they can give confidential testimony that will be passed on to the judicial authorities for them to process under the condition that perpetrators may utilize traditional judicial mechanisms that permit the exchange of information for substantially reduced penalties. (González Cueva 60-61)

In this case, there are benefits to testifying if authorities agree to reduce the penalty, however, not all perpetrators have been prosecuted, so many perpetrators most likely did not testify knowing that it may well not be necessary. The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) set up in 2002 in Peru by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission focused on cases with “better conditions of successful prosecutions”, and even at the outset, they only expected “to identify a handful of very strong cases” (González Cueva 63-64).

Trials are very expensive and time consuming, so it is only realistically possible to prosecute a small percentage of cases in situations of mass violence. As a result, many people may have thought that they could live as free individuals without testifying. For many, the thought of any jail time at all might have influenced them to take the risk.

On the other hand, the disadvantage of not holding the perpetrators accountable is that justice is not achieved. Although trials only punish a small number of criminals in cases of mass violence, if amnesty is granted, society is sent the message that horrendous actions often do not have severe consequences. Perpetrators may be publicly shamed when they are not incarcerated, but is public shaming justice? For most people, the answer would be no. Eduardo González Cueva reports that in Peru, people
overwhelmingly demanded justice: “At the hearings, victim after victim demanded that the criminals be punished” (62). In addition, a public opinion poll taken in September of 2002 showed the same results: “When asked about the four main policies that would contribute to national reconciliation, the public answered in this order: punishing the criminals, 60.1%” (González Cueva 62). Given the constant repression of the lower classes due to cultural heterogeneity, many Peruvians were tired of being subjected to violence and seeing no changes occur in society. It is true that in this case, it was not only the state perpetrating violence but also the Shining Path. Nonetheless, they were still being victimized, and most likely they needed the peace of mind that the perpetrators of violence would not be a threat in the future. Equally, Peruvians of upper classes must have been afraid of the future threat of violence as well since they too, though to a lesser degree, were victims of the violence. If people, then, are strongly in support of measures to achieve punitive justice, how do countries resolve the issue that reconciliation can take away from the pursuit of justice while the pursuit of justice can take away from processes of reconciliation?

Though we have already seen some of the advantages and disadvantages of punitive justice, specifically that it can detract from processes of reconciliation yet show society that violent acts are recognized and will not occur again in the future, there is one more significant advantage to the pursuit of punitive justice. It is, in fact, a form of attaining the truth. Through the testimony of witnesses and perpetrators, society can learn some of the truths about the past. Of course, this truth is necessarily partial. In a trial, only the facts germane to the case are brought up, and cases only cover one or few
incidents of what happened, not to mention the fact that perpetrators often lie in order to save themselves, while lawyers manipulate facts to best serve their clients:

Trials have their limitations when it comes to unveiling the truth about the past. They are combative encounters where the defendant and prosecutor compete to get their version of the truth accepted as authoritative. In this process both sides are engaged in what we might term the manipulation of history, insofar as they each have an interest in concealing some aspects of the past and highlighting others. (Rigby 6)

Nonetheless, some facts about past violence are discerned through trials, especially when these cases involve important political figures like Alberto Fujimori. Despite the fact that Fujimori denied and continues to deny his involvement in gross human rights violations, many witnesses came forward to provide information that otherwise may not have told their story for fear of defaming a public figure. Prosecuting a person of major political importance also provides the advantage of proving a point to society. If Fujimori can be prosecuted and sentenced, then no one is above the law, and human rights violations may be curbed in the future. In this sense, justice is a positive force in society, providing citizens with renewed hope in the fairness of the state. Overall, then, we could say that justice can result in both the attainment of truth and the boosting of citizen confidence in the impartiality of the state, which has the possibility of leading to reconciliation between the state and marginalized groups in society.

Given the discussion up to this point, is it possible for a country like Peru to achieve reconciliation, truth and justice? In contrast to Chile and Argentina, which have sought mainly reconciliation and truth, with limited success in their search for justice,
Peru, in addition to seeking truth and reconciliation, has put its full effort into attaining punitive justice. What these countries have in common is that they all want their citizens to overcome the trauma of their violent conflicts, and in order to do so, they have been willing to search for the truth of what happened and improve relations between the state and society, and in the case of Peru, between the state and society and the Shining Path. With the restorative justice of reconciliation, countries can achieve justice in that perpetrators are confronted and asked to participate in the process of reconciling parties, which will hopefully lead to peace in the future. Though the military/government has not been very compliant in Argentina and Chile, this type of reconciliation is achievable when the government/military is required to participate in truth telling. In this case, even though the perpetrators are not incarcerated, they must go through the public shame of telling their stories, and they can help contribute to a more just future society by changing their behavior. On the other hand, with punitive justice, perpetrators can be incarcerated, though there is less of a chance that they will be completely truthful and work to resolve their differences with society. However, this does not mean that punitive justice is entirely at odds with reconciliation. Incarcerated perpetrators of violence can feel remorse for their actions and work towards restoring their relationship with society. For example, in Chile, the atmosphere produced by the post-Aylwin doctrine has influenced military personnel into breaking their silence: “In April 1999 the army major serving time in jail for the murder of truck driver and PDC member Mario Fernández López made a public apology for what he had done” (Barahona de Brito 198). But in order to be effective, punitive justice should be used in conjunction with reconciliation measures. I believe that Peru’s strategy of prosecuting perpetrators in addition to the restorative work
of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is a positive step towards overcoming trauma. The one drawback that Peru may face in this mission is that the truth revealed by the perpetrators will be lessened due to fear of incarceration, but on the positive side, Peru is setting a precedent for not tolerating human rights abuses. Thus, Peru can achieve reconciliation, truth and justice, but they have contended and must continue to contend with lack of full disclosure about the traumatic events of their past. Their strategy is not perfect, but I do not think that any perfect strategy has been designed or will be designed to overcome collective trauma related to cases of mass violence.
Chapter 2: Understanding the Shining Path and the Peruvian State in the 1980s and 1990s

Many histories have been written of the development of the Shining Path and the actions and ideologies of the modern Peruvian state throughout the years. The goal of this chapter is not to write a history of the conflict from 1980-2000. Instead, my aim is to analyze specific events and the motivations for those events which will allow the reader to better understand the literature, films and trial discussed in subsequent chapters. Specifically, I will be looking at the events which the literature, films and trial refer to and those which Shining Path militants saw as vital to the advancement of their cause and Peruvians suffering from trauma in the present still remember. We will see how the Shining Path, instigated by the layers of trauma already pervading Peruvian society, took action to save the lower classes from continued oppression, though the results of their struggle had the contrary effect, causing greater divisions in society and impeding Peruvians in the present from moving forward in their lives both individually and as a society. Of course, the trauma that Peruvians are suffering from today is not apparent by simply reading or analyzing media coverage of the Shining Path revolt and civil war. The coverage shows an increased awareness of the violence on the part of the Peruvian media and Peruvians in general. It also shows that Peruvians became increasingly frightened of the Shining Path and the government as the conflict worsened over the years. While the initiation of the development of individual and collective trauma had
begun before the conflict ended, the manifestation of societal trauma would not be
apparent in media coverage until after Fujimori had left office and the policy of forgetting
had been abandoned. The awareness and fear produced by the excessive violence which
can be seen in the media coverage of the 1980s and early 90s would cause Peruvians to
have difficulty dealing with the events in the future, resulting in the continued
development of individual and collective trauma.

In order to carry out this analysis, I will be using articles from Lima’s newspaper,
*El Comercio*, as a basis. Víctor Peralta Ruiz underscores the importance of *El Comercio*
in Peru: “A lo largo de su trayectoria, *El Comercio* ha sido el diario de mayor tiraje,
circulación e influencia en el país. En 1990 su tiraje rondó los 200 mil ejemplares
diarios, situándose muy por encima de sus competidores más cercanos” (29). Regarding
the reporting of the conflict, Peralta Ruiz says that *El Comercio* maintained a
conservative ideology, conforming to information received by the government and
attempting to be cautious in its reporting (31). Looking at *El Comercio*’s treatment of the
different governments, Peralta Ruiz affirms: “Fiel a su línea ideológica conservadora este
diario apoyó al segundo gobierno de Fernando Belaunde Terry y, aunque inicialmente dio
una tregua al gobierno centro-izquierda de Alan García Pérez, en 1988 se convirtió en
uno de sus más feroces críticos” (31). It was not until Fujimori’s auto-coup that *El
Comercio* swayed somewhat from its conservatism, critiquing Fujimori’s actions, though
the newspaper still maintained its severe criticism of the Shining Path, which it viewed as
a criminal rather than political movement (Peralta Ruiz 31). The reporting in *El
Comercio* was a stark contrast to the reporting of leftist newspapers which were much
more sensationalistic, exaggerating the acts of violence (Peralta Ruiz 30). Therefore, though *El Comercio* reported only a fraction of the violence covered in other Peruvian newspapers, “el diario tuvo un nivel de credibilidad muy alto en cuanto información sobre la violencia política, sobre todo porque el sensacionalismo fue sustituido por un mecanismo que se decantó por la información a medias y a veces por el silencio” (32). Given its high credibility rating and greater circulation, *El Comercio* must have had a profound influence on how the Peruvian people viewed the events of the 1980s and 90s. In addition, given the conservative nature of the paper, its readers must have also been somewhat conservative in ideology, and thus not Shining Path supporters. For this reason, *El Comercio* is a good source to utilize in gauging how the typical Peruvian not involved in the conflict became increasingly aware of and was impacted by the violence that was occurring. It is for these reasons that I will be focusing on *El Comercio*’s coverage, in addition to the fact that it is important for the reader to see a less exaggerated version of the events, which will contrast to my analysis of the Shining Path’s interpretation of the events. I will be showing this perspective through an analysis of the Communist Party writings, speeches by and interviews with Abimael Guzman and articles written in *El Diario*, a newspaper which functioned as the Shining Path’s mouthpiece.

Within *El Comercio* and the Shining Path sources, in particular, I will be looking at how the events are portrayed and which details are included and excluded from the coverage. The Shining Path sources will provide a basis for analyzing how the layers of trauma have been formed in Peruvian history since colonization. What were the
motivations for the Shining Path’s actions? Then, using the *El Comercio* sources, we will see the effects of these actions. What information was Peruvian society exposed to while the violence was occurring and how did this influence their evolving awareness of the conflict and the eventual development of trauma? Our lives in the present are based on our memories and perceptions of the past; therefore, understanding what Peruvians knew at the time is important for documenting the formation of their memories and, consequently, locating the foundation for their present trauma. Likewise, looking at these newspaper articles is a way for the reader to understand the Shining Path revolt and civil war from another perspective, one not formed after the fact, and thus not influenced by subsequent events and their analyses. Nonetheless, where information is lacking, secondary sources written by historians and journalists with firsthand knowledge of the events, such as Umberto Jara, who interviewed key military leaders, will be used to provide the reader with a more complete vision of the events. The newspaper coverage simply cannot provide all of the facts about the events since neither the state nor the Shining Path provided the media with all of the details of their strategies or actions. Without these facts, the reader cannot fully appreciate the increasing complexity and severity of the conflict.

Analysis of violence in Peru from 1980-1995

The Initiation of the Shining Path Armed Struggle in 1980

In order to understand the Shining Path struggle, it is important to first understand Abimael Guzmán’s personal motivations for starting a revolution. It is certain that
Guzmán was following communist doctrine in initiating the armed struggle, but he was motivated to take up the communist cause because of personal experiences in Peru. In his interview with Luis Arce Borja and Janet Talavera Sánchez entitled “La entrevista del siglo” and published in El Diario, Guzmán said that the struggle of the masses in Peru had influenced the political path that he would take in his life. Two events that Guzmán mentioned were the 1948 and 1950 rebellions:

‘He podido ver la combatividad del pueblo en Arequipa en el levantamiento del 50, y cómo la masa ante un atropello bárbaro de asesinar jóvenes responde con furia incontenible, cómo se han batido contra el ejército y los han hecho replegarse a sus cuarteles y tuvieron que traer fuerzas de otras partes para poder aplastarlos. […] También he tenido ocasión, retrotrayendo, de ver el levantamiento del 48 en el Callao, he podido ver con mis propios ojos, entonces juveniles la bravura y cómo se derrocha por el pueblo heroicidad.’ (45)

Though both rebellions failed and were not fought in the name of communism, they taught Guzmán a lesson. He learned that the masses contained the key to change in the country and that road to change was through violence: “Diría que estos hechos han ido marcándome la idea del poder de las masas y de la capacidad transformadora de la guerra” (Guzmán “Entrevista del siglo” 45). With his own eyes, he had seen how Peruvians would not accept oppression by the government. These previous rebellions, then, were further proof of the layers of trauma existent in society and how they incited
protest by the people. Guzmán must have thought that this time, though, he would be successful and that his rebellion would create positive change for all Peruvians.

In response to this impetus, the Shining Path armed struggle began on May 17, 1980 with the burning of the ballot boxes in Chuschi, a village in the Ayacucho department of Peru. Only one month prior to this attack, on April 19th, Abimael Guzmán gave a speech concerning the launching of the armed struggle [iniciación de la lucha armada – ILA]: “‘Se inicia hoy nuestra labor armada: levantar a las masas, levantar campesinos bajo las inmarcesibles banderas del marxismo-leninismo-pensamiento Mao Tse-Tung. […] La clave son las acciones, el objetivo el poder. Eso haremos nosotros, la historia lo demanda, lo exige la clase, lo ha previsto el pueblo y lo quiere’” (“ILA 80” 27). Guzmán showed that he wanted their armed struggle to be fought by, though not led by, the peasants in the country. He believed that the peasants wanted a revolution, obviously due to the the exploitation that they had suffered from. In addition, both Mao and Mariátegui, who equally inspired Guzmán, believed that the revolution should be fought by the peasants in the context of an underdeveloped nation. When Guzmán said that history demands the armed struggle, I believe that he is referring to the fact that Marxism-Leninism believes in armed struggle as the only course for revolution, along with the fact that the layers of trauma existent in Peruvian society necessitated change. Guzmán then made a direct reference to this need to end exploitation:

‘Ha llegado la hora de ajustarles cuentas. […] Ellos en su vieja y sangrienta violencia, […] entra por fin a la parte final, a la culminación de la etapa democrática de la revolución… […] El pueblo con las manos
According to Guzmán, then, the exploiters needed to be stripped of their power. In this case, the exploiters were the upper class Spaniards and then Peruvians that had been in power for the last 400 years. Those exploiters before colonization, the last of whom would have been the Incas, who conquered and ruled over a large territory in the Andes, had already been stripped of their power, though their exploitation remains as part of Peruvian history. The trauma of some of the conquered and oppressed indigenous groups of the Andes may contribute to the layers of trauma formed after colonization. But now, in the eyes of Guzmán, during the last phase of their revolution, the situation would change: “La promesa se abre, el futuro se despliega” (“ILA 80” 31). There is a promise of a new life for all Peruvians, a life of equality that would reverse the exploitation of the past. Guzmán’s revolution could not erase past exploitation or the past layers of trauma, but it could allow Peruvians to confront and overcome their trauma.

Based on Guzmán’s speech, it is apparent that his threat of violence was real. And on May 17th, this threat became a reality. For anyone following Guzmán’s movements, it seemed clear that this was only the first of many attacks to come. Nevertheless, when I searched for articles about this incident in *El Comercio*, I was not able to find anything. Quite to the contrary, all of the articles about the election reported that the electoral process had gone smoothly. On May 19, one of the headlines read “Con entera normalidad se realizaron comicios en el país dijo Montoya Manfredi”. Montoya
Manfredi was the president of the National Jury of Elections, and he was quoted as saying, “‘Todas las noticias de las elecciones dan cuenta de que éstas se han desarrollado con entera normalidad’” (“Con entera normalidad” May 19, 1980). Another article on the same day said: “La Fuerza Armada y Fuerzas Policiales cumplieron una destacada labor, pues garantizaron precisamente el ejercicio del derecho de sufragio” (“Ejemplar demostración” front page). This evidence does not mean that the incident was not covered by any media source, but it is telling that in the capital, it did not even register as news.

According to Gustavo Gorriti’s research in *The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru*, The Shining Path was not seen as a threat at this point: “In terms of internal security, the Shining Path had a relatively low priority compared with the Morales Bermúdez administration’s other concerns. […] Beginning in 1977, details warning about Shining Path preparations for armed struggle started to arrive at the various intelligence services” (46). Gorriti also says that since the Morales Bermúdez administration did nothing with the intelligence that the military, specifically the SIN, Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional or National Intelligence Service, had received, they did not want the current government to realize its incompetence and thus did not provide them with the intelligence reports (54). Specifically, the SIN had information forewarning the Chuschi attack: “Two intelligence reports from different sources, yet on the same subject and separated by a mere five days, gave the date and location of an imminent guerrilla explosion, with forty days’ warning. One could not ask much more of information. Nevertheless, no decisions were made and not a single action was taken”
(Gorriti 54). Therefore, given that the military government was still in control of the content of the media, to avoid further damage to their reputation, the government would prevent the story from being covered in the news. Unfortunately, this resulted in Belaunde’s government starting with a lack of information about a serious threat, and it also meant that the Peruvian people had no forewarning of what was to come.

Even once news started to be reported in *El Comercio* about attacks by the Shining Path, the information was not complete since the government was starting at a deficit in intelligence, having not received the reports about the Shining Path’s activities from the previous government. On July 28, 1980, Belaunde’s inauguration day, a terrorist attack was perpetrated. The article that mentioned the attack was on p. 18 of the newspaper, in the bottom right-hand corner. In the article, they said that it was a terrorist attack, but there was no information about the Shining Path: “Elementos terroristas dinamitaron anoche las instalaciones de la Sub estación eléctrica del Parque Industrial de Arequipa, motivando un corte del fluido eléctrico a un gran sector de la población y paralizando la actividad industrial de esta ciudad” (“Dinamitaron subestación” Información Nacional 18). A few isolated attacks by an unknown group which were given almost no press meant that in 1980 most Peruvian people were not really aware of the Shining Path, much less starting to becoming worried about them.

This is exactly the reaction that Guzmán had planned for when he was deciding on how to start the revolution. Guzmán explained his strategy to Shining Path members and *El Diario* journalists Arce Borja and Talavera Sánchez:
El año 80 tenía que entregar el gobierno a través de las elecciones, eso iba a requerir más o menos entre un año y medio a dos años para que el nuevo gobierno pudiera armar el manejo del Estado. […] Eso fue lo que calculamos, así como la situación en que entraba el nuevo gobierno, que los militares salían después de 12 años y fácilmente no podrían asumir una lucha inmediata contra nosotros, ni podrían de inmediato retomar el timón del Estado, porque se había desgastado política y desprestigiado; eran hechos concretos, una realidad. (18)

Guzmán wanted to take advantage of the new government’s and the military’s weaknesses. If the military had been allowed free reign to defeat the Shining Path from the beginning, the Shining Path may not have had time to develop its bases, as Guzmán was fully aware. In addition, Guzmán did not believe in Peru’s democratic governments; the Shining Path had never participated in any of Peru’s elections because they felt that they would only be perpetuating the current system: “Sin violencia revolucionaria no se puede derrumbar un viejo orden para crear uno nuevo, hoy un nuevo orden dirigido por el proletariado a través de partidos comunistas” (Guzmán “La entrevista del siglo” 15). It was necessary to use violence to end the imperialism and exploitation which caused the suffering of the peasants in Peru.

1981-82: The Armed Struggle Strengthens in Ayacucho and Begins in Lima

Though there were few incidents in Lima in 1981-82, Peruvians as a whole were starting to at least become aware of the Shining Path armed struggle due to the slowly
increasing media coverage of their attacks. It was the assault on the police station of Tambo, a district just outside of Ayacucho, that caused President Fernando Belaunde Terry to decree a state of emergency which was announced on October 13, 1981 in *El Comercio*. The headline on the front page declared: “En 5 provincias de Ayacucho gobierno decreta emergencia por asalto al puesto policial de Tambo que costó la vida un GC y dos civiles.” The article mentioned that three people died, including one member of the civil guard, one civilian and his son, and it also stated that the act was committed by terrorists. Another article in the same edition specifically laid out the rights that would be suspended during the state of emergency, including the right to not have their house searched without the permission of the person or a warrant, the right to leave and enter the country at anytime, the right to gather peacefully without arms, and the right to not be detained without an arrest warrant (“Derechos suspendidos” October 13, 1981). Then, in an article on October 14th, *El Comercio* interviewed four Peruvian citizens about their perspectives. All of them agreed that the measure was necessary in order to stop the terrorism, two of them specifically mentioning that the killing of children was especially grotesque (“Gobierno debe defender” Locales A-3). However, one of the interviewees, German Baglieto, specifically added that the suspension of rights was permissible as long as innocent people were not affected: “Luego dijo que las autoridades también tienen que tener mucho cuidado para no equivocarse y ‘reprimir gente inocente que no tiene nada que ver con dichos atentados’” (“Gobierno debe defender” Locales A-3). Baglieto’s statement is telling for two important reasons. First, he and the interviewees showed the willingness to give up democracy for the sake of combating terrorism from the very beginning of the armed struggle, even when Peruvians had not
yet been exposed to the brunt of the violence. Second, Baglieto expressly showed that there must be limits to the suspension of democracy; innocent people must not be killed. It is true that *El Comercio* always showed the conservative perspective of the conflict, specifically backing Belaunde, as I mentioned in the introduction to the chapter, which means that not every Peruvian probably shared Baglieto’s and the other interviewees’ perspectives. Nonetheless, we know that there were Peruvians who supported Belaunde’s measures, and most likely *El Comercio* convinced others to believe in his strategy as well. The situation was relatively non-severe in 1981, and the armed struggle was primarily centered outside of Lima. The fear of the Shining Path had not yet set in. Only four days after the attack on the Tambo police station, *El Comercio* claimed that the people of Ayacucho were once again calm: “La presencia de una numerosa dotación de la Guardia Civil, ha devuelto la tranquilidad a los habitantes de esta capital departamental” (“Presencia de GC” October 15, 1981).

Another major Shining Path attack during this time period was the one against the Ayacucho prison on March 3rd, 1982, in order to free Shining Path prisoners. The headline on the front page of *El Comercio* on March 4th broadcasted: “Noche de terror en Ayacucho dejó un saldo de 12 muertos”. The title is significant due to the dramatic language used; it was not simply a terrorist attack but a “night of terror”. If Peruvians were not aware of the Shining Path yet or did not take them seriously, the coverage of this event certainly must have made them aware of the gravity of the situation. And this view was cemented even more given that this story was major news for more than a week in *El Comercio*. The article on March 4th said that around 180 terrorists were involved in
the attack against police stations, the jail and the hospital that lasted all night, the result being the escape of 304 prisoners. In the article, the terrorists are believed to be from the far left of the political spectrum, though they are not mentioned as being Shining Path members (“Noche de terror” front page).

In response to the attack, a March 6\textsuperscript{th} article showed that some disapproved of Belaunde’s strategy. The president of the Senate, Javier Alva Orlandini, felt that it was necessary to involve the military in the anti-terrorism strategy: “[Alva Orlandini] Señaló que el Ministro del Interior, Teniente General FAP (r) José Gagliardi ‘había tomado determinadas medidas para enfrentar la violencia que hoy se vive en el país, pero que evidentemente no habían tenido total éxito” (“Javier Alva reitera: FA” Política A-4). In response to Alva Orlandini’s call for change, Belaunde showed resistance, though did not discount the possibility of a future change of strategy: “El president Belaunde dijo que el pedido para que intervenga la Fuerza Armada en la lucha contra el terrorismo es un planteamiento digno de estudio, pero que no se puede tomar una decisión precipitada, porque la Fuerza Armada tiene una misión que cumplir y debe permanecer intacta para cualquier emergencia internacional que pudiera presentarse” (“El Narcoterrorismo” front page).

Despite the fact that Alva Orlandini, and surely many Peruvians, felt that the government was not defeating the terrorists, there was still faith that the democratic system would prevail. This perspective can be seen in the editorial printed in the March 6\textsuperscript{th} edition of \textit{El Comercio}:
Todo lo que hará el Perú con estos delincuentes se resume en una palabra: justicia. Serena, legítima y firme justicia, que no habrán de olvidar.

Tendrán que aprender con la fuerza de los hechos, ya que desprecian ideas y deberes, que las instituciones democráticas tienen una fortaleza a prueba de arrebatos y aventuras de esta laya, y que harán respetar las leyes y les enseñarán a cumplirlas. […] Por lo demás, deben tener la seguridad de que sus derechos humanos serán siempre protegidos. […] Los derechos humanos forman parte del conjunto de valores democráticos que han defendido en Ayacucho los caídos en cumplimiento del deber y que han violentado los terroristas. Sin embargo, no les serán negados a estos comunistas. (“Mártires de la Ley” Editorial A-2)

The message stated in this editorial, however, was a myth; human rights were not and would not be protected in many cases. It was the message constantly reiterated by the Belaunde government, and though it was their intention to follow through with a strategy based on justice and the respect for human rights, it was not happening in real terms.

Gorriti describes the killing of three Shining Path members who were injured in the Ayacucho prison attack: “Urbay, Alcántara, and Wensjoe were taken from the hospital. Víctor Melgar, a nurses’ aide, reproached the policemen, but they threatened him with their weapons and forced him into a room. […] Wensjoe, Urbay, and Alcántara were shot to death outside the hospital” (170). However, in El Comercio, the Minister of the Interior proclaimed to have no idea how these men died: “El ministro señaló que sobre este caso hay tres posibilidades: ‘que de verdad hayan querido fugar, que terroristas con
uniforme policial hayan entrado al nosocomio para rescatarlos o que realmente fueran
matados por efectivos de la Guardia Republicana’” (“Comando guerillero” Política A-4).
Given that this article was published on March 9th, six days after the events occurred, the
Minister of Interior’s lack of knowledge can be questioned. Even more disconcerting is
the fact that the special commission that was sent to Ayacucho to investigate all of the
events, including what happened in the hospital, did not come to any resolution on the
matter. The article on March 9th, “Comisión llegó a Ayacucho y enseguida abrió
investigación,” only mentioned the medical treatment of Shining Path leader Jesús Luján
Gonzales, and the March 11th article, “Comisión elevará a dos Ministros informe sobre
hechos de Ayacucho” did not mention the hospital events at all. If the government had
admitted to the shootings, demonstrating their violation of human rights, their democratic
message would have started to come into question. Since democracy was only reinstated
in 1980, that would not have been beneficial for the Belaunde government.

Although the majority of the terrorist attacks were occurring in Ayacucho during
this time period, in concordance with Guzman’s plan to start the armed struggle in the
country, Lima did register the beginning of what would later become much more
substantial attacks. One example of the initial attacks in Lima would be the August 19th,
1982 blackout: “Varios atentados se registraron anoche durante el apagón en Lima:
Terroristas volaron cinco torres de alta tensión” (front page). In describing the violence
that accompanied the blackout, the journalist mentioned that the Shining Path was the
group suspected of perpetrating the actions: “Activistas presumiblemente del grupo
‘Sendero Luminoso’ incendiaron arrojando tres bombas ‘molotov’ a la tienda ‘El’ de la
2da. cuadra de la avenida Emancipación, en pleno centro de Lima” (“Varios atentados” front page). It is interesting to note that there was no explanation of who the Shining Path was; it was simply the group Shining Path. The Peruvian people were much more aware of the Shining Path at this point, probably, in large part due to the attack against the Ayacucho prison. And the fact that this attack occurred in Lima only raised the visibility even more, especially since the blackout affected the whole city. However, in reality, the level of actual violence in Lima was still quite low. The threat continued to be, for the most part, in Ayacucho and the surrounding areas.

Increased Difficulty Coping with Reality Outside of Lima: 1983

Given the escalation of violence outside of Lima, many of the people living in rural Peru had already witnessed or heard about many acts of violence when the rest of the country was barely aware that the armed struggle had begun. These rural Peruvians were having difficulty coping with their everyday lives because memories of past acts of violence were constantly assaulting them. Each day, they would hear about new acts of violence or would see the influence of the Shining Path in their towns. Thus, they were constantly reminded of the past that they did not understand or accept, and they were unable to live their lives. The foundation was being laid for the development of trauma. One example of how the peasants outside of Lima were having difficulty coping with their present reality was the massacre of Uchuraccay. In this town outside of Ayacucho, peasants killed eight journalists on January 26th, 1983. The surprising fact about this incident is that neither the government nor the Shining Path was involved in the perpetration of violence; the peasants acted on their own. The story was first published in
the January 30th edition of El Comercio under the title “Campesinos de Huanta habrían dado muerte a ocho periodistas”. According to the article, the peasants confused the journalists with terrorists: “A las cinco de la tarde habrían llegado (los periodistas) a la localidad de Uchuraccai, donde habrían sido victimados al ser confundidos como terroristas por los campesinos del lugar” (“Campesinos de Huanta” front page). A January 31st article explained the antecedents to the incident: “A raíz de la muerte de una columna de doce sediciosos del grupo “Sendero Luminoso” por la misma comunidad de Uchuraccai, ocurrida días atrás, los pobladores —según manifestaron— recibieron instrucciones de las fuerzas del orden para defenderse de un posible ataque de represalia de parte de los terroristas” (“Confirman muerte” front page). Were they, then, just defending themselves or was there something more behind these killings?

The story told by José Argumendo highlights the peasants’ fear of the Shining Path. José, brother of Jorge Argumendo, the journalists’ guide who was also killed during the incident, discussed the observations that his mother and sister had made after going to the community in search of Jorge: “Mi madre me dijo que los campesinos hablaban de realizar sus propia justicia con los sediciosos y no se andaban en preguntas antes de atacar a cualquier extraño que vieran por la comarca” (“Los campesinos decidieron” Locales A-7). Given the fact that the Peruvian peasants historically do not kill indiscriminately, this behavior had to be motivated by some external factor. They could have been influenced by the layers of trauma that they were suffering from. Tired of being the object of oppression for centuries, they could have decided that now it was time to act out. They had not done so in the past, but the Shining Path and the military
had already set a precedent for violence. Or it could be that the peasants’ inability to confront their memories of the violence that they had witnessed in the last two years was already starting to affect the development of trauma. Their senses of fear and revenge would have compelled them to act out in this way. This perspective was reiterated in the February 1st edition of *El Comercio* by departmental secretary of AP in Lima, deputy Ricardo Surga Velasco: “Opinó que los campesinos son por lo general pacíficos, debiendo explicarse su violenta reacción ‘en la situación que actualmente viven, confundiendo como seguramente ocurrió a los periodistas, con un grupo de Sendero Luminoso, que anteriormente los han sometido a abusos y desmanes’” (“Una investigación imparcial” A-4 Política). Later in the same article, Óscar Trelles Montes, President of the Commission of National Defense and Internal Order of the Senate, said: “‘La violencia demencial del Sendero Luminoso ha abatido a los campesinos’” (“Una investigación imparcial” A-4 Política). Whether or not there was confusion, as Surga Velasco and many others had claimed, what is evident is that the peasants had been “knocked down”. For the peasants to have reacted in such a violent way when it was not their custom to do so, the Shining Path violence must have affected their mental states. The peasants did receive training from the forces of order, which very well may have influenced their actions. Nonetheless, I believe that the community members most likely would not have acted if it had not been for the extended violence experienced in the region, a stronghold of the Shining Path for its proximity to Ayacucho. Therefore, though none of the investigations carried out regarding the incident have been able to completely uncover the truth, the trauma of the residents of this region had to have played a part in the events that took place.
Unfortunately, the peasants’ problems in coping with their present lives would only be compounded when two months later, the Shining Path attacked the peasants of Lucanamarca. According to a document written by the peasants, the Shining Path had taken over their town and had tried to impose their ideology on the peasants, but a month before the attack “se habían organizado y lograron sacar a los sediciosos de su territorio; sin embargo, pesaban sobre ellos amenazas de represalia por parte de los subversivos, por lo que solicitaban protección policial” (“Terroristas victiman a 45” front page). The result was the massacre of 45 of the peasants by the Shining Path reported in an April 5th article: “Treinta de las víctimas fueron abatidas a balazos y a pedradas en la plaza del lugar, mientras que las quince restantes fueron asesinadas tras ser perseguidas en las alturas” (“Terroristas victiman a 45” front page). Despite their fear, the peasants, who did not believe that the Shining Path’s cause was the correct path to change, decided to act. However, the massacre had to have affected the mental state of the survivors or those who lived in nearby areas, who would now live in constant fear that they would be the next targets of the Shining Path’s excessive violence.

Despite the brutality of the actions portrayed in *El Comercio*, Abimael Guzmán believed that they were justified. In his interview with Arce Borja and Talavera Sánchez in 1988, Guzmán said that the military initiated a campaign of genocide against the Shining Path in 1983-84: “‘El problema de enfrentar el genocidio de los años 83 y 84, está en los documentos, no será necesario enumerar pero sí queremos resaltar que fue un genocidio bárbaro e inmisericorde; creyeron que así nos iban a barrer del mapa y tan cierto es esto que a finales del 84 van a comenzar a distribuir, su documentación sobre
aniquilamiento” (“Entrevista del siglo” 19). In his interview with El Nuevo Diario in June of 1986, Guzmán explained why he saw the military’s efforts to defeat the Shining Path as genocide. The interviewer asked: “‘Por qué llamar GENOCIDIO y no simple matanza a las acciones que las Fuerzas Armadas implementaron en las zonas de emergencia’” (Guzmán “Entrevista al líder máximo” 149). In response, Guzmán said: “‘Porque el genocidio es la destrucción sistemática de un grupo social por motivos de raza, de política o de religión, no es la simplemente mortandad de personas que caen durante un combate y eso es lo que han hecho’” (“Entrevista al líder máximo” 149).

Most likely, Guzmán felt that the Shining Path was being systematically destroyed because the state had always been repressive towards the lower classes, especially the peasants, when they attempted to protest in any way. Therefore, the government’s campaign to defeat the Shining Path was but one more act of repression against the masses, attempting to rid the country of a dangerous political threat.

Since Guzmán viewed the military’s efforts in this way, he felt that he had to attack back and teach the military a lesson. The way that he and the Shining Path did this was through the massacre at Lucanamarca; Guzmán declared to Arce Borja and Talavera Sánchez:

‘Frente al uso de mesnadas y la acción militar reaccionaria le respondimos contundentemente con una acción: Lucanamarca, ni ellos ni nosotros la olvidamos, claro, porque ahí vieron una respuesta que no se imaginaron, ahí fueron aniquilados más de 80, eso es lo real, y lo decimos, ahí hubo exceso. […] Nuestro problema era un golpe contundente para
sofrenarlos, para hacerles comprender que la cosa no era tan fácil. […] Los sofrenamos y entendieron que estaban con otro tipo de combatientes del pueblo. […] Puede cometerse excesos, el problema es llegar hasta un punto y no pasarlo porque si lo sobrepasas te desvías.’ (‘La entrevista del siglo” 19)

Since the town seemed to be taking the side of the government, for Guzmán it was acceptable to kill peasants. The Shining Path was supposed to be fighting for the peasants, but if the peasants got in the way of their ultimate goal of defeating the Peruvian military, they had to be sacrificed, especially when the killings could be used as a scare tactic against the military. Therefore, in this specific case, excesses were permitted according to Guzmán. Of course, at the same time, Guzmán did not believe that the military was allowed to commit excesses because their ultimate goal was genocide. We could say, then, that Guzmán’s motivations for his actions were the oppression of the Peruvian people and the layers of trauma that had built up in society, but in carrying out his actions and attempting to claim victory in the long-term, he betrayed his motivations in the short-term. Sacrifices had to be made to achieve the egalitarian society that he sought.

Increased Violence in Lima: 1986

For the first years of the conflict, the people of Lima had been somewhat isolated from the violence, but now it was becoming a stronger presence. While the armed struggle was primarily a rural one, there was not as much at stake. But the change to an
urban threat meant that there was a greater risk to the stability of the democratic government and Peruvian people’s trust in that government. An article on February 8, 1986 emphasized the increased violence:

Lima fue, en cierta forma, bombardeada desde el lunes. Primero hubo un apagón, cuyos efectos no fueron mayormente percibidos, porque se inició alrededor de las 5 de la mañana. En la madrugada fueron atacados con explosivos bancos, establecimientos comerciales y un local del Apra. En total, veinte atentados. […] Al día siguiente, en las primeras horas de la madrugada, se provocó un espectacular incendio en pleno centro de Lima, prácticamente en la Plaza de Armas. […] En la noche, en el puerto del Callao, se incendió el trasporte ‘Pariñas’, con harina de pescado. La causa del siniestro parece ser un corto circuito. Pero el efecto sobre la población fue idéntico. Todos parecían preguntarse: ¿hasta cuándo y hasta dónde van a llegar las cosas? (“Debe evitarse la crisis” Opinión A 2)

The question raised at the end of the quote is extremely revealing. Though Peruvians in the countryside had probably been asking this question for the last few years, now the whole country, including Lima, was asking the question. Peruvians were afraid of how violent the situation could get, and they were probably afraid of being personally affected by the violence, if they had not been already. Thus, while the memories assaulting Peruvians in the countryside were already affecting their ability to cope with life in the present, Peruvians in Lima were really starting to witness the violence firsthand.
While Alan García had promised to confront this threat, the violence only proliferated as the years passed, compounded by the worsening of the economy in the second half of his presidency, and Peru, as a nation, suffered the effects of this prolonged violence. One clear example of García’s failed strategy in dealing with the Shining Path would be the rebellions in three Lima prisons in June of 1986. Given that there was a failed jail revolt in 1985, the government should have been prepared for future attempts at rebellion. However, the fact that the Shining Path was able to carry out rebellions in three jails at the same time was a testament to the power that they had, and it proved the government was still not able to control the jails. The June 19th edition of *El Comercio* announced the revolts: “Las Fuerzas Armadas sofocaron los motines protagonizados por elementos terroristas en los penales de El Frontón y San Pedro (ex-Lurigancho). Similar acción llevó a cabo la Guardia Republicana y su batallón antisubversivo ‘Llapin Atic’ en la cárcel de mujeres Santa Bárbara del Callao” (“Fuerza Armada sofocó motín” front page). Nevertheless, no mention was made of the prisoners killed by the Armed Forces either in this article or in any other article of the edition. According to this article, everything seemed to have gone very smoothly: “Las fuerzas armadas, luego de restablecer el orden en los tres penales afectados, procedieron a trasladar a los terroristas involucrados al penal de alta seguridad de Cantogrande.”

It was not until the next day, June 20th, that there was news of the death of inmates. The headline on the front page declared: “La Marina capturó penal de El Frontón convertido en fortín: Sofocación de motines en los tres centros penitenciarios habría dejado 250 muertos.” In the article, the journalist mentioned that “las acciones
más graves se registraron en El Frontón, donde la Unidad de Demolición de la Marina destruyó el Pabellón Azul, en el que estaban recluidos aproximadamente ciento cincuenta terroristas, la mayoría de los cuales resultaron muertos.” In the same edition, the government’s intentions were put into doubt: “El juez instructor de turno, Hernán Saturnino Vergara, y el fiscal, César Girao Zegarra, habrían sido limitados en sus funciones en el motín registrado en el penal San Pedro (ex Lurigancho), permitiéndoseles sólo levantar un acta consignando la muerte de 123 internos acusados del terrorismo recluidos en el Pabellón Industrial” (“Juez levantó acta” Locales A 12). The fact that 123 inmates were killed in Lurigancho raised questions as to what had actually happened, and when the judge was limited in treating the case, even more questions began to be raised. Was the government/military hiding something? This skepticism concerning the events becomes stronger by the time the reader gets to the end of the article, where the coordinator of the Human Rights Association “expresó su extrañeza porque no se había hecho presente el Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja, cuya misión es establecer el número de internos heridos, muertos y la situación de los que han sido evacuados a otros penales.” Unless there were more deaths and injuries than reported or the repression was carried out differently than reported, why would the Red Cross not be involved? Was the government suppressing information that would tarnish their democratic strategy for fighting the Shining Path? An article in the June 21st edition would give more credence to this line of thinking: “Los jueces del fuero común perdieron toda la jurisdicción para tomar conocimiento sobre los trágicos sucesos de los Cras San Pedro (ex Lurigancho), San Juan Bautista (ex El Frontón) y Santa Bárbara, tras haberse declarado ‘zona militar restringida’ los penales donde murieron más de 250 terroristas que se hallaban
amotinados” (Jueces del fuero común” Locales A 8). This meant that the cases would be handled by military courts, which would undoubtedly be more lenient in judging the military personnel involved.

Based on press coverage, it was becoming more and more obvious that the military must have used some unnecessary force in quelling the rebellions. Maybe for this reason, the government suddenly changed its stance on the events. Instead of covering up the actions, the government admitted the use of excessive force in an official communication published in the June 22nd edition:

En las acciones en el penal de Lurigancho, el número de muertos que alcanza 124 hace presumir que se cometieron excesos en el uso de la fuerza para cumplir las disposiciones del gobierno. Ante esta posibilidad, el gobierno ha ordenado al Comando Conjunto de la Fuerza Armada instruir de inmediato al fuero militar que realice investigaciones para determinar el alcance y gravedad de los sucesos. […] Fiel a su responsabilidad democrática el gobierno garantiza la sanción de cualquier exceso que pueda haber ocurrido en el restablecimiento del orden en el penal de Lurigancho. (“Emiten nuevo comunicado” Política A 7)

Through reading the coverage of this story, it appears that García realized that concealing the excessive use of force was not convincing Peruvian society of the military’s innocence. As a result, in order to protect his democratic strategy for dealing with the Shining Path, he needed to admit guilt and promise the punishment of those responsible.
After having the official report published, García decided to address the nation on June 24th. The headline on the front page of the June 25th edition announced: “El gobierno respalda acción de Fuerza Armada: Presidente García anuncia sanción a miembros de la Republicana por excesos en Lurigancho.” The article said that García had admitted that the Republican Guard had killed possibly 30-40 prisoners without cause: “En su denuncia contra efectivos de la Guardia Republicana, dijo que se fundamenta por haber dado muerte a un número no precisado de terroristas presos en Lurigancho, tras la rendición de los amotinados. […] se ha dispuesto el apresamiento y enjuiciamiento de jefes, oficiales y subalternos que resulten responsables” (“El gobierno respalda acción” front page).

Nevertheless, while admitting guilt and promising punishment, García also defended the intentions of the government suppression: “El Consejo de Ministros dispuso que entrara en acción el Comando Conjunto de la Fuerza Armada, ‘para restablecer el orden y recuperar la autoridad, invocando primero a los amotinados a deponer su actitud y, de ser necesario, usar toda la fuerza de la ley y toda la energía de las armas que tiene la democracia’” (“El gobierno respalda acción” front page). In this sense, it is the right of a democratic government to defend itself and use force when necessary. On the other hand, unnecessary force, according to García, was never acceptable: “Pero ahora me dirijo al país para decir que no está dentro de la ley que, cuando los amotinados se rinden y están inermes y con los brazos en alto, se los aniquile” (“Presidente demanda unidad” Política A 4).

But even more than just condemning these killings, García condemned the strategy of fighting terror with terror: “Los subversivos y los senderistas pueden caer en
el salvajismo, matando a traición, atemorizando, violando y nosotros debemos actuar con firmeza, pero no responder con sus mismas reglas, porque ésta no es una sociedad de salvajes” (“Presidente demanda unidad” Política A 4). This quote is important because it demonstrates the difference in ideology between García and the next president to confront the Shining Path, Alberto Fujimori. García’s intention to use democratic means to fight the Shining Path is apparent, and he definitely did not permit the Armed Forces to carry out as much excessive force as did Fujimori. Nonetheless, it is easy to see by the way that García handled the prison rebellions that he was becoming desperate. He knew that he had to do something to stop the Shining Path from taking over the government, and if he did not put a stop to the rebellions, the Shining Path would be that much closer to a victory. Thus, he approved the use of force to quash the rebellions. Whether he approved the use of excessive force is impossible to know, but no matter what kind of force was approved, it must have been clear to the Peruvian people that the government was not in control of the situation. The Shining Path was becoming more powerful, and the government did not know what strategy would defeat them. The government either took actions that were too weak or too strong. Consequently, the government failure up to this point must have caused Peruvians to worry about continued negative effects of the conflict in the future. Would García’s strategy be tough enough to stop the Shining Path? Would human rights be respected?

At the same time that Peruvians must have been questioning their new president, the Shining Path was only gaining momentum from the events. In a report written by the
Central Committee in June of 1986, the Shining Path claims that the dead cadres are heroes and that the government committed genocide:

El 19, el reaccionario gobierno aprista encabezado por Alan García, luego de su grotesca farsa manipulando la llamada ‘comisión de paz’, desencadenó el más protervo y negro operativo de exterminio; movilizando el Ejército, la Marina de Guerra, la Fuerza Aérea y las fuerzas policiales, bajo el Comando Conjunto, consumó el más infame genocidio asesinando cientos de guerrilleros e hijos del pueblo prisioneros de guerra, bañándose una vez más en la ardorosa sangre popular. […] Así el 19 de junio se estampa imperecedero como DÍA DE LA HEROICIDAD; la sangre de estos héroes ya fructifica la revolución armada incendiándola más, levantándose como monumental bandera tremolante e inagotable grito de guerra que convoca al inevitable triunfo final. (Arce Borja 293)

Again, as was the case in 1983-84, the Shining Path saw the government’s use of force as being an attempt to strategically eliminate them. Guzmán himself reiterated this message, adding to the accusations by directly blaming García in his interview with *El Nuevo Diario* immediately following the jail revolts:

Es evidente que la responsabilidad política principal recae en Alan García, pues, a más de desempeñarse como Presidente es jefe supremo de las fuerzas armadas, siendo él y su Consejo de Ministros quienes dispusieron
In blaming García, Guzmán wanted to show that though the military was committing excesses, a common occurrence in Peruvian history, this excess was ordered by the supposedly democratic government and by the “so called” party of the people, APRA. His strategy was to make the government’s actions appear appalling, thus garnering more support among the population for change in society: “Ese genocidio de exterminio es innegablemente un hito en la lucha de clases del país y su repercusión ha generado la más grande crisis del actual gobierno aprista hasta hoy [...] muestra la caducidad del sistema social imperante y la incontrovertible necesidad de derrumbarlo cabal y completamente. [...] porque históricamente es una necesidad ya madura” (Guzmán “La entrevista al líder máximo” 97). As a result, while they lost many cadres in the rebellions, I do think that this sacrifice was successful for them in that it vindicated their cause. According to the Shining Path, they were making legitimate petitions in the jails, and the government, as always, acted in an oppressive manner. In essence, the Shining Path knew how to manipulate the situation. They, in fact, started the violence, and their actions should not be condoned, but the military made the mistake of taking the suppression too far. The military was violating human rights, and, at the same time, they were not able to defeat the Shining Path; this combination of factors must have resulted in increased anxiety in society about the future of the country.
Remembrance and Precursors to the Fujimori Regime: 1988-89

1988 was an important year for the Shining Path because it marked the eighth anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle. Having fought for eight years, the Shining Path felt renewed in their attempts to start a new Peruvian society. On May 17, 1988, *El Diario* published an article to remember their years of struggle and reaffirm their project. The article starts by recalling the events of May 17, 1980 in Chuschi:

El 17 de mayo de 1980, fecha en que se inició la Guerra Popular en el país, fue considerada por el movimiento estudiantil como un hito histórico que se grabará en la conciencia de las generaciones venideras. Un día como hoy, un comando guerrillero del PCP incursionó en la localidad de Chuschi, Ayacucho, horas antes de las elecciones de ese año, y atacó uno de los locales donde se encontraban las ánforas, dado que su consígan era NO VOTAR. Con este tipo de sabotaje se daba el Inicio de la Lucha Armada (ILA). (“Hace ocho años” 5-17-09)

It was a day that all Shining Path members remembered and would continue to remember, though due to the lack of coverage in the mainstream newspapers, the Peruvian society as a whole would not. What Peruvian society will remember was the violence unleashed by the Shining Path and the message behind their actions. It is this message which the article emphasizes. The Shining Path started their armed struggle because they wanted to end the oppression and exploitation of the lower classes: “Los estudiantes de San Marcos, UNI, y UNAC, así como los docentes, concidieron en señalar
que esta histórica fecha es el punto de partida de la toma de conciencia de la clase obrera y la decisión de cuestionar este sistema opresor, enfrentándose contra todo lo que representa el sustento de la clase explotadora” (“Hace ocho años” 5-17-09). And now, the Shining Path was motivated to continue their armed struggle for the same reasons; remembering their initial inspiration could propel them toward victory.

Meanwhile, the government was still struggling with how to defeat the Shining Path and, at the same time, maintain the support of the Peruvian population. Similar in many ways to the case of the prison rebellions of 1986, the Cayara case is one comprised of excess force by the military and subsequent cover-up. The case was first mentioned by El Comercio on May 18th, 1988. On that day, there was a small article published in the police section of the paper with the headline: “Varios comuneros muertos deja intervención militar.” The article is not very detailed, but does give the reader a good idea of the basic events:

Fuentes extraoficiales afirmaron que la intervención militar se produjo tras la emboscada terrorista de la madrugada del sábado último, a tres kilómetros de Cayara, donde, según se informó, hubo catorce muertos: once subversivos y tres efectivos del Ejército. Indicaron que, a las 4 de la tarde de ese mismo día, fuerzas militares rodearon a comuneros en el campo y los victimaron, aunque algunos lograron huir. Según esas mismas fuentes, en Hualla fueron incendiadas varias viviendas y se notó que las mujeres lloraban a sus deudos en la plaza del pueblo. (“Varios comuneros muertos” Policial A 11)
Nevertheless, these basic facts became anything but basic in the following week of press coverage. While some members of the Senate insisted on further investigation of the military’s actions, the government denied the veracity of the facts published in the May 18th article and only permitted certain people to investigate the case. On May 19th, *El Comercio* published an official report about the case written by the Zone of National Security of the Center, denying any military wrongdoing:

> La infundada denuncia de autoridades de la zona, sobre posibles pérdidas de vidas de un número elevado de pobladores de Cayara, carece de absoluta veracidad, así como las versiones de un inexistente bombardeo, todo lo cual tiene como inequívoco objetivo impedir la continuación de la acción de las fuerzas del orden para la captura de los delincuentes subversivos autores de la emboscada a la patrulla del Ejército. (“En enfrentamiento mueren 4 militares” front page)

However, in the May 20th edition, the denial of the events was put into question by an article on the Senate debate of the Cayara case. Many senators wanted to form a special commission to investigate the case given the “‘indicios razonables’ que existen sobre un supuesto genocidio cometido en esa localidad” (“Senado inició debate” front page). Specifically, one senator, Jorge del Prado, criticized the government’s version of the events, “recordando que nunca reconocieron errores, citando los casos específicos de los Penales y de Accomarca. Indicó que siempre se han detenido las investigaciones en torno a esos casos, lo que hace parecer que ‘estamos frente a un terrorismo oficial que tiene las características de impunidad’” (“En el Senado: La oposición” Política A 4). In
an article on the same day, the president of the Commission of Human Rights of Deputies, Flavio Núñez Izaga, also expressed his disapproval: “‘Condenamos la violencia, tanto de Sendero Luminoso como la que pudiera haber de parte del Ejército, pues consideramos que estando en un sistema democrático, elegido por el pueblo y nacido de la voluntad nacional, no se puede usarse la violencia para combatir la violencia, pues significaría crear el caos y la anarquía en el país’” (“Comisión de DD.HH.” Política A 5). As a result, the Commission of Human Rights was planning on going to Cayara to investigate the incidents in more detail. Nonetheless, the day that their trip was planned, May 20th, they were unable to travel since there were supposedly no vehicles to take them there. The district attorney, however, decided to go on his own and was able to interview peasants who survived the attack, “quienes le manifestaron que las Fuerzas Militares causaron la muerte de entre 50 a 80 pobladores” (“Ni diputados ni periodistas” front page).

It is apparent that the government and military did not want anyone to find out the true details of the case; they did not want the commission or journalists to be able to interview the peasants, as the district attorney did. This view seems clear after reading the official report written by the Chair of the Council of Ministers published in *El Comercio* on May 22nd: “A través de los testimonios libremente expresados por los pobladores de Cayara se ha comprobado la falsedad de las versiones que dejan entrever violaciones de mujeres, incendios, bombardeos, asesinatos de niños, ocasionando un centenar de muertos y otros actos de genocidio en la mencionada localidad atribuidos a las fuerzas del orden” (“Gobierno desmiente versiones” front page). Nevertheless, how
did the peasants express this view if the journalists were not able to interview any of them? In the May 24th edition, a journalist from *El Comercio* denounced the situation:

Objetivamente, hay, de momento, desinformación e incluso una suerte de manipulación de lo que se filtra a la prensa. En este punto debemos llamar la atención, justamente, sobre las trabas insalvables para la cobertura periodística. Nuestro propio diario, por lógico interés, destacó personal a Ayacucho, sin que pudiera llegar, hasta la fecha, a Cayara, al igual que los enviados de otros medios. (“Cayara: investigación necesaria” Opinión A 2)

The writer of this article was undoubtedly right about the government/military cover-up. If the military had done no wrong, there would be no reason why the journalists could not enter Cayara. To anyone following the story in the press, it would have seemed obvious that the military did, in fact, use excessive force in Cayara. However, the government may have felt that admitting this fact would only have worsened the public’s opinion of their “democratic” government. And given the severe economic recession and inflation in the country caused by the implementation of García’s policies, the government was probably not anxious to receive more negative press.

Nonetheless, although García permitted human rights abuses, he was not willing to go as far as Fujimori later would in fighting terror with terror. What effect did this have on the Peruvian population? Most likely, they were confused by García’s strategy. He wanted to protect democracy, yet undemocratic actions were being committed, and,
most importantly, he still had not defeated the Shining Path. Thus, the Peruvian people were being exposed to more and more violent acts, and they had no guarantee that the situation would change. This constant threat made it very difficult for the people to live their lives. In addition to causing them to fear for their future, it provided the foundation of the process of the development of trauma by continually bringing to the present their memories of the past which prevented them from processing the events effectively.

Abimael Guzmán and the Shining Path had achieved what they were hoping for in intensifying their attacks; the Peruvian people understood the power that they wielded and they knew the danger that this posed. Nonetheless, Guzmán believed that the Shining Path’s actions were not being publicized fully. In discussing Cayara in his interview with Arce Borja and Talavera Sánchez, Guzmán only mentioned in passing the military’s acts of violence. He was more concerned with the Shining Path’s role in prompting military violence, specifically, their attack on the military in Cayara:

Me refiero a una relacionada con Cayara, la emboscada de Erusco, son 25 los que hemos aniquilado, sólo uno se ha salvado herido, por eso es que han respondido en la forma como son ellos, los hechos no son como los están pintando y que conste que han movido grandes fuerzas y no han podido cazarnos y que conste también que nos llevamos las armas, y ellos muy bien que lo saben y no volamos un solo carro sino los dos carros porque fue minado todo un kilómetro de carretera y no tenían escapatoria posible; lo que nos ha presentado en la televisión ese que funge de presidente y los que han ido en esa llamada comisión, son como se dice
Guzmán wanted the people to see the Shining Path’s strength, and he felt that the government was covering this up. The Shining Path’s strategy was terror, and if the people could not see the terror, then there would be more confidence that they could be defeated. Thus, whereas Guzmán wanted as much publicity of the Shining Path violence as possible, García was trying to avoid publicity of excessive military violence and any indication that the Shining Path could be winning the war.

Another precursor to the Fujimori presidency and search for publicity was the Shining Path attack on the presidential military escort on its way to the Palace of Government. The attack took place in Barrios Altos, a location that would become even more infamous two years later. The front page headline on June 4th, 1989 pronounced: “En atentado asesinan a 7 soldados de la escolta presidencial.” The article reported that eight people died, including seven members of the escort and one of the Technical Police. The Shining Path threw five kilograms of dynamite under the military bus, which resulted in a great explosion. The result was devastating: “En el lugar de la explosión, todo era dolor y desolación. Los cuerpos de los soldados estaban seccionados y esparcidos en un radio de diez metros. Debajo del ómnibus, convertido en chatarra, quedó un forado de más de un metro de diámetro y dos de profundidad, desde el cual se podía ver el canal de alcantarillado, que quedó destruido” (“Terrorista que jalaba” Policial A 12). The attack showed that the Shining Path was still strong and that García’s strategy was not successful. As a June 5th editorial emphasized, given that the attack took place very close
to the National Congress and against the presidential escort, it was a very sobering reminder of the Shining Path’s efforts to dismantle the Peruvian State:

El hecho, además, reviste una particular gravedad, en la medida que se trata de un crimen selectivo perpetrado por los terroristas a pocos metros del Congreso Nacional, con la clara e innegable intención de resquebrajar las propias estructuras del Estado y en tanto que el blanco no ha sido uno cualquiera, sino, más bien, el cuerpo de élite encargado de custodiar y proteger al Presidente de la República. (“Necesaria decisión” Opinión A 2)

García knew that the Shining Path attack resulted in an increased risk to the security of the government and the country, and for this reason, he spoke to the nation about an apparent change in strategy: ‘‘Prefiero en estas circunstancias convocar a todo el país a cerrar filas tras el Ejército, agruparse con la Fuerza Armada y respaldar a la Policía Nacional.’ […] y no hacer escándalo cuando ocurre algún problema o algún exceso pues –en su opinión- así se origina inhibición en el accionar de la gente” (“Presidente invocó cerrar filas” Política A 4). What García was saying, then, was that though he was not condoning a strategy of state terrorism, he was condoning the use of excess force because the military should not feel inhibited in fighting the Shining Path. In effect, he was excusing human rights violations. Nonetheless, given the fact that Peruvians were already having difficulty in coping with their everyday lives due to the traumatic memories of the conflict and the constant threat of new acts of violence, giving the Armed Forces full reign to defeat the Shining Path would not result in society outrage.
but rather in support. As the June 5th editorial declared: “Ojalá que de manera tan precisa hubiese habido un pronunciamiento de esta magnitud en el pasado. […] Debemos hacer eco de lo señalado ahora por el Presidente” (“Necesaria decisión” Opinión A 5). The Peruvian people were tired of García’s weakness; they wanted results. But would they really want results at any cost? García, whose presidency would end one year after this incident, never really delivered on a strategy of win at any cost, but Alberto Fujimori certainly did.


On the front page of the Monday, November 4th, 1991 edition of El Comercio, there was a small article in the bottom left-hand corner of the page about a killing in Barrios Altos. The article said that fifteen people were killed by terrorists: “Según refirieron testigos, ocho subversivos encapuchados y armadas de metralletas, llegaron en dos camionetas, irrumpieron a la referida habitación, sacaron a los presentes al patio de la quinta y luego, sin pronunciar palabra alguna, les dispararon a ráfagas de metralleta” (“Matan a 15 personas” front page). Though the article did not give any explanation of why the killings took place, it is apparent that the victims were not questioned in any form before being killed. On the same day, there was a follow-up article published in the police section of the newspaper that included a few more details but still did not provide any reasons for why it occurred. The article said that the people killed were having a party, that the neighbors did not hear any shots fired, that most of the victims were ice cream vendors and that the vehicles used by the shooters had the appearance of official state vehicles (“Pollada acabó en tragedia” Policial A 11). On the following day,
November 5\textsuperscript{th}, a more detailed article was published in \textit{El Comercio} which tried to give reasons about why it may have been the Shining Path that committed the acts. First of all, some of the victims were shot in the head, “como si hubieran sido ‘rematados’, una de las características del accionar de los grupos de aniquilamiento de Sendero Luminoso” (“Víctimas de asesinato masivo” Policial A 8). The other reason is that some of the victims were from Ayucucho and thus could have been former terrorists that deserted (“Víctimas de asesinato masivo” Policial A 8).

On November 11\textsuperscript{th}, the Minister of Defense and the Minister of the Interior gave their reports about the events to the Senate, which corroborated \textit{El Comercio}’s belief that it was a terrorist attack: “Esbozó [Minister of the Interior] tres hipótesis sobre la presunta autoría, referida que habrían sido huestes de Sendero Luminoso, del MRTA o de otras organizaciones terroristas, sobre las cuales no adelantó ningún criterio” (“Rechazan los informes” Política A 4). In response to the presentations, the Senate rejected the findings. For example, Jorge Hurtado Pozo (IU) said that the presentations were “‘poco convincentes y poco satisfactorias’” (“Rechazan los informes” Política A 4). Another senator, Javier Diez Canseco (PUM) “fue el primer orador de la jornada, denunciando el nivel de desinformación del ministro del Interior sobre la masacre de Barrios Altos, más aun cuando desde marzo de 1989, efectivos de inteligencia del Ejército llevaron a cabo seguimiento a las personas que ocupaban el local de la mortal pollada, ubicada en jirón Huanta 840” (“Rechazan los informes” Política A 4). The comment by Diez Canseco is especially telling since it shows that the Senate was aware of the military’s vigilance in Barrios Altos. Given that military personnel were killed by the Shining Path in the same
neighborhood two years before, they surely should have had more information about what happened at the party. For anyone following the story in the newspaper, the actions of the police and military had to be suspicious, but, still, no one really knew what had happened.

In actuality, it was the military, specifically, the group La Colina, that killed the people attending the party. The details of the case are told by Santiago Martin Rivas in *Ojo por ojo*. First of all, Martin Rivas explained to Jara why the military had decided to kill the people rather than capture them: “Era inútil capturarlos: ‘¿Para qué? ¿Para que los jueces los liberen?’” (Jara 145). Then, he explained the reason for the attack: “El objetivo era darle un mensaje contundente a Sendero. Esa casona era un centro de operaciones senderista. Fíjese lo que le voy a contar. De ahí salieron y allí volvieron los que hicieron el atentado a los Húsares de Junín’” (Jara 146). Next, he goes on to explain that the job of ice cream vendor was used as a cover to find out information from the police; by working in front of the police station, they could intercept a great deal of intelligence. Finally, Martin Rivas explains the specific goal of Fujimori, to let the Shining Path know that he was not as weak as Alan García: “‘El nuevo presidente le notificaba a Abimael Guzmán que no era igual al anterior, que esta vez la cosa iba en serio y que lo pensara dos veces antes de atentar contra él o contra su entorno’” (Jara 149). According to Martin Rivas, Fujimori, along with his advisors, made the decision and that was the reason why they were not jailed after the attack and were later granted amnesty: “‘Grupo Colina no era un grupo de militares locos que actuaban por su cuenta y hacían lo que querían. Si hubiese sido así, entonces, de inmediato, habrían dado de baja y..."
encerrado a todos. Si no lo hicieron, si se opusieron a las investigaciones y al final dieron una ley de amnistía es porque ellos, Fujimori, Montesinos y Hermoza, tomaban las decisiones” (Jara 150).

After reading the explanation given by Martin Rivas, all of the disparate information in *El Comercio* begins to make sense. It was a cover-up at the highest levels. Fujimori had decided to fight terror with terror, and he did not feel that the public needed to know all of the details. Whether members of the Shining Path or not, the victims were mistreated, their human rights plainly violated. We do not know how Peruvians would have acted had they found out the truth at that moment, but many of them are outraged now, having watched the trial of Fujimori and having heard about the abuses that occurred. The trial brought back their memories of these events, which being unresolved, could have contributed to further trauma, but the jury’s guilty verdict has helped them to confront the memories, giving Peruvians a sense that some form of justice has been served and that maybe there is hope for Peru to move forward as a nation. In 1991, however, the events of Barrios Altos contributed to the ever increasing fear of the Peruvian population. No matter who perpetrated the killings or why, more violent acts were being committed and any Peruvian could possibly be the next victim. Thus, the memory of this event stayed with Peruvians, while their inability to confront it affected how they carried out their daily lives, thus contributing to the eventual development of trauma.

Another act of violence that greatly impacted many Peruvians was the killing of María Elena Moyano by the Shining Path on February 15, 1992. On the front page of the
February 16th edition of *El Comercio*, one of the headlines announced: “Terroristas matan a dirigente de Villa Salvador.” María Elena was a local leader who formed an organization to provide food to the poor and also participated in an organization to protect women’s rights. In addition to providing these services to her community, María Elena also publicly condemned the Shining Path: “La ardorosa defensora de los programas de Vaso de Leche y Comedores Populares, fue quien lanzó su voz de condena cuando Sendero Luminoso asesinó a dirigentes populares. Asimismo, encabezó –en setiembre pasado- una manifestación de la Federación Popular de Mujeres de Villa El Salvador para repudiar al terrorismo” (“Terroristas matan a dirigente” front page). For María Elena, the Shining Path represented the enemy because they used violence, instead of helping others, as their way to change society: “‘Nosotras –dijo- no estamos con quienes asesinan a dirigentes populares. Estamos contra los que socavan las bases del pueblo y quieren imponerse por la fuerza y la brutalidad’” (“María Elena siempre rechazó” Policial A 14). After her death, her mother talked about how María Elena always worked on projects that would help the community, rather than tearing down, like the Shining Path did: “‘Su práctica fue la de construir, y desde los 14 años ayudó a las madres a levantar locales comunales, postas médicas, plantar árboles, etc. Contribuyó, asimismo, a la conformación del comité de lucha de animadoras de educación inicial’” (“Su práctica diaria” Policial A 10). However, despite all of the good that María Elena did for the community, the Shining Path did not respect her; they not only killed her but tried to make an example of her, using excessive violence in her assassination:
Según versiones de testigos, Moyano, fue sorpresivamente atacada por una mujer de baja estatura, recibió impactos de bala en la cabeza y en el pecho, ante los horrorizados ojos de numerosas personas. […] Fue arrastrada, a una señal de la misteriosa mujer, y dejada en las afueras del local, donde culminaron el salvaje atentado colocándole debajo del cuerpo una carga de dinamita de no menos 5 kilogramos que luego hicieron detonar. (“Una mujer y cinco individuos” Policial A 11)

The Shining Path apparently thought that Peruvians, upon hearing about María Elena’s death, would become even more afraid for their lives and decide to cooperate with them.

Nevertheless, the extreme brutality that the Shining Path used in killing María Elena would make her a martyr, not only for her community but for all of Peru. When María Elena was buried, the support was overwhelming. On the front page of the February 18th edition of El Comercio, there was a picture of thousands of people paying homage to María Elena, and the caption read: “Decenas de miles de pobladores de Villa El Salvador se concentraron en la Plaza de la Solidaridad, para rendir homenaje póstumo a su dirigente María Elena Moyano, asesinada por senderistas.” In addition, the article on the same page mentions that everyone was carrying a white flag as a symbol of peace (“Multitudinario repudio al terrorismo”). This show of support demonstrates that the Shining Path’s strategy of intimidation was not effective enough. Surely, people were afraid. But more than afraid, people had been inspired by a woman who was willing to stand up for peaceful change no matter what the costs were. María Elena understood the inequalities that existed in Peru, but she did not believe that violence was the answer: “La
revolución es vida nueva, es luchar por una sociedad justa, digna y solidaria, al lado de las organizaciones creadas por nuestro pueblo, respetando su democracia interna’’
(“Heroína del pueblo” Opinión A 2). Despite receiving death threats, she continued her fight for a just society to the end: “El viernes último, día del llamado ‘paro armado’, encabezó una marcha por la paz, repudiando, una vez más, al terrorismo” (“Heroína del pueblo” Opinión A2). For these reasons, her legacy continued even after death: “María Elena Moyano ha pasado a ser una heroína del pueblo. Su muerte, a manos de un puñado de asesinos de la secta Sendero Luminoso, le ha dado vida perenne en la memoria de los peruanos” (“Heroína del pueblo” Opinión A 2).

Peruvians wanted to emulate María Elena; they wanted to defeat the Shining Path without becoming like the Shining Path. The journalist who wrote the editorial emphasized this perspective when he or she said: “Al gobierno hay que volverle a recordar que la prioridad número uno en estos momentos es frenar la violencia y pacificar al país, cueste lo que cueste, pero siempre dentro del marco legal” (“Heroína del pueblo” Opinión A 2). According to the journalist, then, the government needed to protect its democracy; the Shining Path needed to be defeated without fighting terror with terror. Nevertheless, however much the Peruvian people believed in María Elena and her cause, were they willing to put her ideas into practice? María Elena made Peruvians more determined than ever to fight and defeat the Shining Path. But was the heart of her message truly internalized by society? Fujimori decided to combat the Shining Path using undemocratic methods, and the people accepted his strategy.
Although Fujimori had already put his strategy into practice unofficially, as can be seen by the actions of the military in Barrios Altos, all Peruvians became aware of a change in strategy from that of García once Fujimori’s self-coup took place on April 5th, 1992. Not receiving the support necessary from the Congress to fully implement his anti-subversive strategy, Fujimori enlisted the aid of the military to change the government through force:

El Presidente de la República, Alberto Fujimori Fujimori, dispuso anoche la disolución temporal del Parlamento Nacional, y anunció que la continuidad gubernamental del país se dará transitoriamente a través de un ‘gobierno de emergencia y reconstrucción nacional.’ Asimismo, dispuso que las Fuerzas Armadas y la Policía Nacional asuman control total de la situación, a fin de cautelar el orden y seguridad ciudadanas (“En sorpresivo mensaje al país” front page).

In response to this measure, congressmen tried to meet to declare the impeachment of the president for moral incapacity, but they were violently repressed by the military: “La represión fue extremadamente dura, utilizando la viva fuerza, bombas lacrimógenas y potentes chorros de agua lanzados por el rochabús contra los parlamentarios y los hombres de prensa, lo que produjo temor entre los transeúntes y vecinos” (“Fuerzas del orden frustran reunión” Política A 4). It seemed that Fujimori had made up his mind about how he was going to confront the Shining Path and government inefficiency and corruption. It was clear that he was going to make all of the decisions and that those that opposed him would be punished.
To ensure the success of his strategy, Fujimori also had the military take over the mass media:

Miembros de las tropas ingresaron a los locales de los principales medios de comunicación. Por ello, nuestro diario, ‘El Comercio’, fiel a sus principios de defensa de las libertades de prensa y expresión, protesta enérgicamente ante este hecho, que se repitió en otros diarios, emisoras de radio y canales de televisión. […] El país, con toda seguridad, no aceptará que se atente contra los derechos de libertad de prensa y que se instaure la censura a la prensa libre. (“En sorpresiva mensaje al país” front page).

In another article published on the same day, one of the military officials that entered El Comercio explained the government perspective: “‘Sólo se trata –dijo escuetamente- de garantizar que el mensaje del Presidente de la República no sea tergiversado’” (“Elementos del Ejército ingresaron” Política A 5). Though his comment attempted to justify the military’s actions, entering these offices obviously went against the right to freedom of the press. According to this line of thinking, the mass media would be obliged to report exactly what the President wanted to be reported, rather than the opinions and facts uncovered by the media. If Fujimori’s actions were, in fact, justifiable, then there should have been no need to watch over the media.

Though government and public institutions clearly opposed Fujimori, what did the public think? Initial interviews published in the April 7th edition of El Comercio
showed a variety of opinions. While some people definitely opposed the measures, others did not see any problems. Nonetheless, based on these interviews, those who agreed with Fujimori’s actions did not seem to completely understand what was to come. One man, Mario Felipe Puma, said that “si se trata de moralizar el Poder Judicial, estaba bien. Además, anotó, a los parlamentarios les faltó un mejor trabajo, no todos cumplían con su papel” (“Hubo diversas opiniones” Locales A 8). Certainly, making Congress and the courts less corrupt would be a noble endeavor, but what Puma did not know was that this process of “moralizing” was not the main goal of Fujimori. Even though many Peruvians may not have been clear about the exact intentions of Fujimori, the results of a poll published only three days later showed that the majority of Peruvians supported the president: “Un 95% expresa su acuerdo con la reorganización del Poder Judicial y un 84% con la disolución del Congreso, mientras que un 78% con la modificación de la Constitución” (“Encuestados apoyan medidas” Política A 6). After the self-coup, Peruvians continued to demonstrate their support of Fujimori by raising his approval rating: “La conciencia de los defectos del Legislativo y el Poder Judicial, fomentada por el propio presidente Alberto Fujimori, desde que asumió la Presidencia de la República, así como las últimas medidas dictadas, le ha valido un aumento en su nivel de popularidad, la cual había descendido en los últimos meses” (“Encuestados apoyan medidas” Política A 6). Why would Fujimori’s popularity increase when he was implementing an authoritarian government? Peruvians, quite frankly, were suffering. Many were suffering due to the incapability to work through the memories of violence that they had either experienced first-hand or witnessed through the mass media; it is this suffering that would contribute to the development of trauma. On top of that, Peruvians
were suffering from the layers of trauma that had built up since Spanish colonization. Generations of Peruvians had suffered from oppression and internal colonialism. Now, another form of oppression had developed, and though both the Shining Path and the military were both guilty of perpetrating violence, many Peruvians did not believe in the Shining Path ideology, especially towards the end of the conflict, and thus they saw the Shining Path as the bigger threat. Consequently, Peruvians were in a state of panic, and after twelve years of violent conflict and hundreds of years of oppression, they were willing to do whatever it took to defeat the Shining Path. García’s democratic method had not worked, so maybe Fujimori’s strategy was the only plausible recourse.

One of Fujimori’s goals during his emergency government was to take control of the jails where the terrorists were being held. As we have seen, the Shining Path had a substantial amount of power in the jails from the very beginning. They had special privileges, they were able to stockpile weapons, and they were able to not only plan revolts in the jails but also to plot attacks on the outside. As a result, Fujimori made it one of his missions to regain control of the jails, thus cutting off a significant source of power for the Shining Path. The perfect opportunity to do so presented itself in May of 1992, when the government was planning on moving the female prisoners from the Canto Grande Jail to the Chorrillos Jail for women in Lima. The government knew that the terrorists would object to the move, thus causing a confrontation. In the end, this is exactly what ended up happening. The inmate revolt lasted for four days, from May 6-10. On the front page of the May 7th edition of El Comercio, the initial revolt was announced: “Diez muertos deja motín terrorista en Canto Grande.” When the police tried
to carry out the transfer, the terrorists reacted violently: “Para el caso, utilizaron armas automáticas de guerra, explosivos caseros y productos químicos, en su intento de impedir el traslado de las reclusas acusadas de terrorismo” (“Diez muertos deja motín” front page). According to the article, the military tried to persuade the Shining Path to surrender, the Minister of the Interior said that “todo se estaba haciendo en presencia de autoridades del Ministerio Público, para garantizar el respeto a los derechos humanos” (“Diez muertos deja motín” front page).

The insistence on respecting human rights appears in almost every article about the revolt, undoubtedly due to the severe repression that occurred in the 1986 jail revolt, which Fujimori himself admitted after the revolt had ended: “Lo que se ha querido evitar es que después se critique que se han violado los derechos humanos. Pero aquí se han cumplido todos los pasos previos para evitar lo que ocurrió hace algunos años” (“Cabecillas terrororistas acribillaron” front page). In addition, Fujimori gave proof of the military’s good behavior: “El presidente de la República mencionó luego que el dirigente terrorista Osmán Morote Barrionuevo, que resultó herido pero sin mayor gravedad, se encuentra entre los rendidos, ‘lo que prueba de que se dio una orden clara de no disparar contra aquellos que se habían rendido. Se han respetado todas las normas sobre derechos humanos’” (“Policía Nacional busca armas” Política A 4). Nonetheless, the government decided to censure the news about the revolt: “Resulta criticable que a lo largo de estos días de tensión y hasta de angustia general, se haya limitado a cada momento el libre ejercicio de la prensa. Se entiende que pueda haber algunas restricciones por razones de seguridad; pero ni el maltrato ni la falta de acceso a las
fuentes informativas se pueden explicar” (La intervención en Canto Grande” Opinión A 2). The government’s attitude towards the press is an apparent contradiction; if the military’s actions were being carried out with the utmost respect for the human rights of the prisoners, then there should have been no issue with the press covering all of the details.

The disparity between the government’s statements about human rights and their attitude toward the media is understandable if you are aware of Fujimori’s “dirty war” strategy of fighting terror with terror. Given the backlash for the repression in the 1986 revolt, Fujimori was almost obliged to insist on protecting the prisoners’ human rights. But, in reality, the main objective of Fujimori at all times was to defeat the Shining Path, whether human rights were protected or not. And since the media had restricted access, one could surmise that human rights were violated. In addressing the country on May 8th, a day before the revolt ended, Fujimori emphasized again the necessity to regain control of the jails in order to move forward with the reconstruction of the country: “El principal objetivo es acabar con la extraterritorialidad que habían alcanzado esos elementos, ‘por la falta de decisiones de gobiernos débiles y pusiláminos y con la complicidad de algunos ex parlamentarios irresponsables. […] Los terroristas se estaban burlando del país, pero eso se acabó con mi gobierno’” (“Cárceles ya no serán escuelas” Política A 5). Fujimori clearly demonstrated that his strategy differed radically from that of Alan García, his being strong while García’s being weak. And again, Fujimori showed that he was in control; the Shining Path would not make a mockery of his government. On May 11th, two days after the rebellion was quashed, *El Comercio* announced: “En debelamiento de
motín murieron cabecillas de Sendero Luminoso” (Policial/Nacional A 12). Thus, not only did Fujimori stop the rebellion while protecting the inmates’ human rights, but it just so happened that the most powerful Shining Path cadres were the ones who were killed, with, of course, the exception of Osmán Morote. This was a major advancement for the government. Since the Shining Path organized attacks from within the jails, if their most important leaders were dead, it would be much more difficult for them to continue planning and executing attacks.

Though the media never knew of the actual strategy of Fujimori, Santiago Martin Rivas explained all of the details of the events of Canto Grande to Umberto Jara. In *Ojo por ojo*, Rivas says that the killing of the Shining Path leaders was planned from the beginning:

> En la última reunión –dice—cuando ya todo estaba establecido, Montesinos vino con una idea. Propuso que al efectuar la toma del penal, en vista de que se iban a dar enfrentamientos porque los terroristas tenían armas, un equipo especial debía ingresar al pabellón donde estaban los dirigentes para darles vuelta allí mismo. […] Si Sendero se quedaba sin cuadros de mando, Abimael se quedaba solo, aislado, sin su Estado Mayor. […] Entonces, le digo, en una reunión en el SIN se evaluó el planteamiento, se vieron las ventajas y desventajas y se aprobó. Ese plan se le llevó a Fujimori para su conocimiento y autorización. (Jara 163-164)

According to Martin Rivas, even the survival of Osmán Morote was planned:
En la reunión final antes de llevar el plan completo donde Fujimori se tomaron dos decisiones. Una fue dejar con vida a Osmán Morote. Era el enemigo de Abimael porque su propio jefe lo había delatado y enviado a la cárcel por disentir con él. […] Murieron todos los dirigentes menos él. […] Esa vez el mensaje fue muy claro: ‘Estamos en guerra total, así como me tumbas a mis cuadros más altos, te volteo a tus históricos, a tu columna vertebral, pero dejo vivo a tu disidente; Morote ahora es mi amigo.’ (Jara 168)

Based on Martin Rivas’ version of the events, it is clear that Fujimori approved of the military strategy, and it is also clear that human rights were violated. The Shining Path leaders were strategically killed; they were not simply caught in the crossfire. Therefore, Martin Rivas’ narrative explains why so many restrictions were placed on the media. The Peruvian people could not find out that prisoners were purposely killed because if they did, there could be another backlash similar to that of the 1986 revolt. Fujimori wanted to have the support of the Peruvian people and the international community in his efforts to finally defeat the Shining Path.

Only four months after the Canto Grande rebellion, Fujimori’s government achieved its greatest accomplishment by capturing Abimael Guzmán. On September 12th, 1992, Guzmán was captured at a residence in Lima by a special police division, DINCOTE (Division against Terrorism), headed by General Antonio Vidal Herrera. The headline on the front page of the September 13th edition of El Comercio proclaimed: “Abimael cayó con cúpula de Sendero.” In response to his detention, Guzmán admitted
that he had lost the war: “Inmediatamente el general, respaldado por sus hombres armados, le dijo: ‘Abimael, en la vida hay que saber ganar y perder. Esta vez te tocó perder.’ ‘Me tocó perder’, respondió Guzmán” (“En una celda de alta seguridad” front page). Though the Shining Path, as an organization, had not been defeated, the fact that Guzmán admitted defeat was a major achievement for the government. This acknowledgment also showed the Peruvian people that Guzmán was no longer the indestructible myth but a broken down leader. In Villa El Salvador, on the outskirts of Lima, people congregated in the very place where María Elena Moyano was killed: “Previamente los infantes, acompañados de sus padres, se concentraron en el grupo 23 del sector 1, lugar donde fuera asesinada por las hordas senderistas de Guzmán su teniente alcaldesa y luchadora social, María Elena Moyano, a quien rindieron sentido homenaje” (“Hubo júbilo” Locales A 3). Obviously, the people of Villa El Salvador felt that the capture of Abimael Guzmán was the first, and most important, step towards the peace the María Elena had fought so long for.

The sense of hope that Peruvians felt was fueled by Fujimori in his message to the country on September 13th: “‘Compatriotas: tengo el compromiso de derrotar a los grupos terroristas antes de 1995. […] Debemos ser realistas en todo momento, pero tenemos que estar convencidos que con esta nueva estrategia y con nuestra firme voluntad de vencer, vamos a derrotar a un enemigo que ahora se hace cada vez más visible’” (“Captura de Guzmán se produjo” Política A 4). Another impetus for hope came from the surrendering of Shining Path cadres due to the Law of Regret (Ley de Arrepentimiento). These terrorists who surrendered would get reduced punishment and
would provide valuable information to the government about the Shining Path. The law turned out to be very effective; in the two days after Guzmán’s capture, many terrorists were turning themselves in: “En los últimos días otros cien dejaron filas del terrorismo” (front page). Again, this achievement did not mean the end of terrorism, but it did give continued momentum to the government in its fight.

This momentum would only grow when, a year later, in October of 1993, Guzmán asked Fujimori for a peace agreement: “Abimael Guzmán pide un acuerdo de paz en carta a Fujimori” (front page). Next to the article, there was a picture of Fujimori holding up the letter and a copy of the first page of the letter. Though Fujimori refused to have peace negotiations with the Shining Path, he was encouraged by the letter: “En declaraciones a El Comercio, el presidente señaló que la carta de Guzmán e Ippraguirre […] implicaría la primera manifestación implícita de la derrota de Sendero Luminoso” (“Abimael Guzmán pide un acuerdo de paz” front page). Seeing Fujimori holding up the letter on the front page of the newspaper must have left Peruvians with the sensation that there was, in fact, an end in sight. Though the development of society’s trauma was still in process, there had to be a sense of relief knowing that, most likely, the violence would soon come to an end. And Fujimori, pictured on the front page, was the hero of the war. “HE” had defeated terrorism when no one else could, and “HE” had been able to bring Abimael Guzmán to his knees. The grateful Peruvians recognized Fujimori’s achievements and were willing to overlook any wrong that Fujimori may have authorized.
One of the events that many people overlooked at the time was the killings at the Universidad La Cantuta in Lima which I mentioned in the previous chapter. The killings actually took place on July 18th, 1992, but, in *El Comercio*, there was no immediate coverage of the incident because the military tried to cover up their actions by burying the bodies in a clandestine site and because Fujimori was trying to avoid claims that he was violating human rights. Though the military said that the nine students and professor were suspected of Shining Path involvement, they could have been detained rather than killed. Nevertheless, news of the killings eventually did get out. It was in May of 1993 that General Rodolfo Robles denounced the government’s and military’s actions: “El general intentó infructuosamente exigir justicia en el caso de los desaparecidos de La Cantuta, que –siempre según ese documento- es de absoluta responsabilidad de un destacamento especial del Servicio de Inteligencia bajo las órdenes del comandante general del Ejército, Nicolás Hermoza Ríos, y del jefe del SIN, Vladimiro Montesinos” (“Cambio de general Robles” front page). In the May 7th edition, there was an article which reprinted an official report released by the army, refuting Robles’ claims: “De otro lado, el General ROBLES ha lanzado en un documento manuscrito, gravísimos cargos contra el Comandante General del Ejército y otros Oficiales de la Institución, sin pruebas que los sustenten” (“Ejército aclara y precisa hechos” Política A 5). The government/military were trying to discredit Robles, questioning his knowledge and also his motivations.
In reaction to the conflict between Robles and the military/government, the media did not make any definitive conclusions, neither condemning Robles nor the military, but Robles’ accusations did spark a renewed interest in the clarification of the events: “Por lo pronto, tal como lo hemos venido sosteniendo en esta misma columna, no puede ser posible que en La Cantuta hayan desaparecido, sin dejar rastro, un profesor y nueve alumnos, en un local que estaba custodiado por un destacamento del Ejército” (“Consecuencias de un grave incidente” Opinión A 2). Due to the increased pressure, Fujimori announced in an interview published in the May 9th edition that “‘Se debe profundizar todas estas investigaciones, indudablemente’” (“Fujimori niega existencia de grupos” Política A 4). However, it later became clear that Fujimori did not, in reality, want to clarify the events because he did not accept responsibility for the killings once the bodies were found.

On July 9th, 1993, El Comercio reported the discovery of burnt human remains found near the highway on the way to Cieneguilla: “Un anónimo, que precisó la ubicación de los cadáveres, manifestó que serían de los 9 estudiantes y un profesor de la Universidad La Cantuta, desaparecidos hace casi un año” (“Hallan restos óseos humanos calcinados” front page). The reaction of the government, specifically the agency DINCOTE (National Direction Against Terrorism), was to blame the Shining Path for the cadavers found:

El 13 de julio, cinco días después del desenterramiento, la Dincote, en una conferencia de prensa, anunció que había detenido a 8 terroristas a quienes se les incautó un plano igual al que recibiera la revista “SI”, que estaba
dirigido al congresista Roger Cáceres Velásquez y listo para ser impreso en “El Diario”, órgano de Sendero Luminoso. Tales declaraciones implicarían que el operativo de secuestro, desaparición, asesinato, calcinación y enterramiento clandestino serían obra de S.L. (Miro Quesada Opinión A 2)

The author of a July 9th editorial, Luis Miro Quesada G., did not believe the government’s/military’s explanation for the human remains from the very beginning: “Si el propósito de S.L. fue asesinar al profesor y los nueve estudiantes de La Cantuta, lo hubieran hecho de inmediato y en público, como es usual en sus operativos de terror, pero de no ser así menos sentido tendría hacer desaparecer las huellas; todo acto terrorista tiene la intención de crear y patentizar el terror, no de generar duda” (Miro Quesada Opinión A 2). He also mentioned that the anonymous tip probably came from someone who had to participate in the killings and later felt regret, something that a Shining Path cadre would not feel since the party believed that killing was necessary to advance their cause and win the war. The hypothesis of the government/military certainly seemed weak, especially since the man to whom the map was supposedly sent, Roger Cáceres, never received it. In an interview with el Comercio on July 13th, Cáceres remarked: “En los últimos días de junio me llamaron hasta dos veces para informarme que tenían pruebas importantes y trascendentales para la investigación, pero nunca me las hicieron llegar” (“Capturan a ocho senderistas con plano” Policial A 11).

In addition to their weak argument, the government/military did not seem to be doing very much to advance the investigation. For example, four keys were found along
with the bodies, but family members of the missing students were not allowed to see the keys: “La señora Raída Cóndor de Amaro, madre del estudiante Armando Amaro Cóndor, informó que cuando quiso ver las llaves, el jueves 8 durante la excavación de las tumbas en Cieneguilla, la fiscal adjunta Cecilia Magnallanes Cortez, se lo impidió” (“Por qué no muestran” Policial A 16). Given that the keys were the strongest evidence found, it would make sense that the first step in the investigation would be to show the keys to the family members to find out if, in fact, the remains were of the students of La Cantuta. But, as of July 16th, 8 days after the excavation, nothing had been done with the keys. Anyone following the story would have to know that the government/military were covering something up. But they were not willing to tell the truth because they would have to admit that human rights violations were committed. However, in the end, the government would have no choice. It was eventually determined that the keys belonged to Armando Amaro Cóndor and another student, and the government/military had to admit that the Colina Group, a special military unit, had perpetrated the killings.

Based on his interview with Martin Rivas, Umberto Jara explains that Montesinos’ goal was to protect himself, Fujimori and general Hermoza Ríos: “Su idea [la de Montesinos] fue concreta: como los nombres de algunos integrantes del Grupo Colina ya eran de dominio público y la prensa empezaba a indagar por ellos, había que inculparlos para dejar a salvo a los jefes” (192). During the interview, Martin Rivas told Jara that he, himself, was convinced to admit his culpability: “Me reuní con Hermoza. Me pidió que como jefe diera el ejemplo asumiendo responsabilidad, además mi nombre ya se manejaba en la prensa, y me prometió que me iban a encontrar una salida” (Jara
193). Obviously, Fujimori and Montesinos were looking for any way possible to disconnect themselves from the situation; if the Colina Group committed excesses, it did not have to be their fault. By putting La Colina on trial, Fujimori tried to show that he did not order the human rights abuses. Given the fact that he would be running for election in a year, it would be important for him to have a clean image. As history has shown, Peruvians continued to support Fujimori by reelecting him to office. Many Peruvians had to have known that a military unit would not simply act on its own; according to the nature of the military, they follow orders. However, it did not seem to matter to the majority of the Peruvian people that Fujimori was responsible for human rights abuses. Guzmán had been captured, and the Shining Path seemed to be losing strength day by day. Fujimori had, for the most part, put an end to the violence, at least the Shining Path’s violence, so the Peruvian people showed through their unwavering support of him that they felt that he would know best how to reconcile the country. It is possible that Peruvians thought that Fujimori was their path to overcoming the trauma that they were beginning to suffer from as a society.

As a result, Fujimori continued on his path of deceit, making good on his promise to Martin Rivas and the rest of the Colina Group serving time in jail. After assuring his reelection, in June of 1995, Fujimori proposed the General Amnesty Law, which was ratified by Congress on June 14th. The law freed military, police and civil personnel of charges brought against them from 1980 until the present. Specifically, the article stated “Esto beneficia al grupo de militares que actualmente cumple condena por el asesinato de un profesor y nueve estudiantes de la Universidad de La Cantuta.”
(“Principales miembros de bancada” front page). One of the congressmen in favor of the law, Gilberto Siura “mencionó la necesidad de la reconstrucción y reconciliación nacional y de perdonar los errores cometidos” (“Principales miembros de bancada” front page). On the other hand, one of the congressmen against the law, César Fernández Arce, emphasized that “nadie está por encima del orden jurídico, porque se estaría contra la justicia” (“Principales miembros de bancada” front page). What many people did not know was that this law was proposed to comply with the favor that the government had asked of La Colina. Unquestionably, Fujimori did not care whether La Colina was set free, but if he had not proposed the law, then the members of La Colina in jail would have eventually spoken out against the government. Fujimori had to save himself. Thus, his only recourse was to make the law seem like a step toward the new future of Peru, a step toward reconciliation. A June 17th article informs the public about an address given by Fujimori the day before, when he insisted that the purpose of the law was “sentar bases ciertamente dolorosas de una verdadera reconciliación” (“Primeras explicaciones oficiales” front page).

Despite promises of reconciliation, many people were opposed to the measure. In a June 15th editorial, a journalist spoke out against impunity: “Los crímenes cometidos en el caso de La Cantuta, en la matanza de los penales de Lurigancho y el Frontón, y otros muchos, como el de Barrios Altos, así como de aquellos que se perpetraron en las zonas de emergencia bajo responsabilidad de elementos policiales, civiles o militares, no pueden simplemente borrarse” (“La amnistía no implica” Opinión A2). In addition, another article on June 15th mentioned that many of the victims’ family members of the
La Cantuta and Barrios Altos killings publicly expressed their anger over the law ("Familiares de víctimas" Lima A9). Likewise, general Robles, who returned to Peru upon hearing the news, denounced the law, saying that it will prevent wounds from healing: ‘No contribuirá realmente a la reconciliación nacional porque siempre quedarán heridas abiertas, familiares dolientes, injusticias flotando.’ En sus primeras declaraciones, apenas llegó a Lima, dijo que se han visto en otros países, como Argentina y Chile, que después de 20 años de leyes de amnistía siguen las protestas y el dolor de familiares pidiendo justicia” (“Amnistía puede originar manto” Lima A9). Initially, General Robles’ perspective would be ignored. Though people may not have been in agreement with Fujimori, they were still grateful that the terrorism was coming to an end, and most people really did want to forget about the past. Thus, no action was taken against Fujimori. Nonetheless, in the long term, after Fujimori had fled the country in 2000, many Peruvians, still suffering from the Shining Path revolt and civil war, were looking for justice to be enforced. They began to wake up from the sleep imposed by the Fujimori regime, and especially once the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was formed, they became interested in remembering the past once again, hoping that their country would be able to overcome the trauma. One way to do so would be by punishing all those who had committed human rights violations, including Fujimori himself.

Conclusion

Throughout the conflict, the Shining Path portrayed themselves as a party acting in the best interests of the oppressed lower class Peruvians. They were following the example of José Carlos Mariátegui, who was the founder of the Socialist Party, which
was converted into the Communist Party after his death. Mariátegui saw how the indigenous people suffered, their access to and ownership of land being one of the most contentious issues, and he worked to help them. In his interview with Arce Borja and Talavera Sánchez, Guzmán recognized the work of Mariátegui, which would later provide the foundation for his own ideology: “El problema campesino en él es sustantivo, es el problema de la tierra y en esencia el del indio como bien lo dijera. […] Mariátegui ha desarrollado pues su labor ligado a las masas dándoles camino, estableciendo sus formas orgánicas y actuando decisivamente para el desarrollo orgánico del proletariado y del pueblo” (“La entrevista del siglo” 30). Guzmán, like Mariátegui, realized that there was a fracture in Peruvian society and that this division was due to the oppression of the indigenous peoples since colonization. Both men were aware of the layers of trauma that the indigenous peoples struggled against on a daily basis, and they knew that rectifying the relationships between the classes in society, making the classes more egalitarian, was the key to the future success of the indigenous population and Peruvian society as a whole. In the same interview, Guzmán specifically said that they needed to break down the relationship of exploitation existent between the classes: “Apuntamos a destruir relaciones semifeudales de explotación, apuntamos contra el gamonalismo que es la base del poder del Estado y lo será en tanto no la barramos. […] Lo que aplicamos es la destrucción de las relaciones semifeudales de explotación y la entrega de la tierra a los campesinos pobres principalmente” (“La entrevista del siglo” 17, 37). Guzmán felt that by providing peasants with land, they would be able to earn their own living and not be forced to labor for and enrich upper class Peruvian landholders. He then criticized past attempts to address the land issue: “En el Perú se han dado en la década del 60, tres leyes
agrarias que han tratado de atenuar el problema pero que en esencia no han hecho sino mantener la concentración. […] Si se hace un estimado del número de campesinos ‘beneficiarios’ sería alrededor del millón ochocientos mil, pero el censo del año 81 dice que hay seis millones doscientos cuarenticinco mil campesinos” (“La entrevista al líder máximo” 124).

Since oppression of the lower classes had not been rectified in society, Guzmán and the Shining Path felt that it was necessary that a new strategy be taken to bring about change. Guzmán had learned from life experience and from communist teachings that violence could be used to fight against wrongs and force changes to take place. Thus, Guzmán and the Shining Path embarked on their path to a new egalitarian Peruvian society. Believing that their goal of changing society was worth any cost, they committed excessive acts of violence against representatives of the military and government, as well as peasants, and condemned the government for acts of genocide, in attempts to gain support for their cause. They believed that they would end the layers of trauma built up in Peruvian society, but, in the end, their efforts were not successful, and their actions contributed to the formation of memories in the population which would deposit new layers of trauma.

Consequently, the way that these acts of violence by the Shining Path and the military from 1980-1995 were portrayed in the media had a profound effect on the Peruvian people’s increasing awareness and fear of the conflict, which would result in the initiation of the development of trauma in Peruvian society and its clear manifestation after the conflict had ended. First of all, Peruvians were initially not prepared for the
violence. The government was not taking the Shining Path seriously, thus resulting in almost no press coverage of the acts of violence. The subsequent onslaught of violent acts by the Shining Path, consequently, frightened the Peruvian people. What did this terrorist group represent? Would the violence escalate? The shock of the “sudden” violence made its effects more severe. Over time, when Peruvians remembered the violence that they had read about, they would remember their confusion and inability to process what was happening. These memories inhibited their ability to cope with the present Peruvian reality, in which society continued to be in conflict. This was the foundation for the development of trauma, though no one was yet aware that this process was taking place. In the media coverage, the focus was on the severe threat which all Peruvians now knew that the Shining Path posed. Neither Belaunde nor García had strong strategies to fight the Shining Path, which was very apparent in the press coverage of the time. The journalists were demanding that these governments take a strong stand against the Shining Path. However, when they did try to confront the Shining Path, they did so ineffectively. The clearest example of this ineptness is the 1986 jail revolt. García did, in fact, quell the rebellion, but in the process, many inmates were killed, and the press crucified García for not respecting the human rights of these prisoners. In addition, the economic crisis that all of Latin America was experiencing in the 1980s became exacerbated in the late 80s in Peru due to the failure of García’s heterodox economic policy, resulting in a severe recession and uncontrollable inflation. The outcome was that many Peruvians did not respect the president or his strategy, and they continued to see an intensification of the violence. Not seeing a quick resolution to the conflict between the Shining Path and the government, the Peruvian people started to panic and they
experienced an increased difficulty in coping with their everyday lives. Especially once
the violence began to increase in Lima, Peruvians began to fear that they could be the
next victim.

Once Fujimori took office, Peruvians saw a clear change in strategy starting to
emerge. The press’ coverage of Fujimori’s self-coup showed Peruvians that Fujimori
was committed to defeating the Shining Path, no matter what the cost. Given the failure
of Belaunde and García, the people accepted Fujimori’s strategy even though it was not
democratic. They were afraid and desperate for any possible solution to the conflict, and
Fujimori provided that possibility. Fujimori’s violations of human rights were not
discussed by the press at the outset because his team was covering them up. When some
of the violations finally came to light in the media in 1993, Guzmán had already been
captured, and the terrorist threat was declining. Peruvians were relieved that the end of
the violence seemed to be near; Fujimori had saved them. As a result, he was not held
accountable for the violations.

However, once the terrorist attacks dwindled, the process of the development of
trauma accelerated as Peruvian society exited the survival mode phase and remembered
the violence. There were no longer constant threats of new attacks, but Peruvians did not
know how to begin their lives again. Their inability to deal with the events of the past, in
addition to the continued state violence, impeded them from trusting others and believing
in an optimistic future for Peru. As we have already seen, it takes a long process to
overcome trauma, especially when violence was perpetrated for two decades. During the
end of Fujimori’s regime, Peruvians, led by Fujimori, wanted to forget the violence, a
common reaction to the onset of trauma. However, since Peruvians were not confronting their trauma, they also were not overcoming it. Thus, once Fujimori resigned in 2000, resulting in the end of state violence and in increase in freedom of speech, Peruvians began a new strategy of dealing with the past: remembering. They have been trying to remember the horrors of the acts perpetrated by both the Shining Path and the state. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Fujimori trial have been two vehicles for confronting their trauma. In addition, the literature published and films produced regarding the events have been another attempt to remember and overcome the past. It is these efforts at truth, justice and reconciliation which will be analyzed in the final two chapters of this study.
Chapter 3: The Portrayal of Trauma in Peruvian Short Stories, Novels and Films

Peruvians have created many artistic expressions to represent their country’s experiences both during and after the Shining Path revolt and civil war of the 1980s and 1990s. In this chapter, I will analyze these expressions, specifically the attempts to represent trauma in short stories, novels and films. Though there are other types of artistic expressions of trauma, I will be limiting my analysis to these three forms due to the number of sources available and the variety of perspectives which they represent. In order to carry out the analysis, I have organized the materials according to certain themes, which are particularly representative of the main manifestations of trauma among the Peruvian population, Shining Path activists and sympathizers, and military personnel. Even though trauma is a reality for many individuals and societies, it is not something that can be easily represented. In literature and films, we can see expressions of trauma rather than representations, and, as a result, the use of themes is a way to clarify and understand that which is almost never explicitly stated. The short stories for these themes include “Ñakay Pacha” by Dante Castro Arrasco, “Hacia el Janaq Pacha” by Óscar Colchado Lucio, “En el vientre de la noche” by José De Piérola, “El cazador” by Pilar Dughi, “Sólo una niña” by Mario Guevara Paredes, “Vísperas” by Luis Nieto Degregori, “El júbilo de las sombras” by Juan Alberto Osorio, “Sonata de los caminos opuestos” by Feliciano Padilla Chalco, “El canto del tuco” by Jaime Pantigoso Montes, “Los alzados” by Julián Pérez, “En el final del camino” by Alfredo Pita, “Por la puerta del viento” by
Enrique Rosas Paravicino, “En la quebrada” by Walter Ventosilla Quispe, “Castrando al buey” by Zein Zorrilla and “Ayataka” by Sócrates Zuzunaga Huaita. The novels include *Lituma en los Andes* by Mario Vargas Llosa, *Abril rojo* by Santiago Roncagliolo and *La hora azul* Alonso Cueto. Finally, the films include *La vida es una sola* directed by Marianne Eyde (1992), *La boca del lobo* directed by Francisco Lombardo (1988), and *Coraje* directed by Alberto Durant (1998).

My aim is to show all aspects of Peruvian trauma; though I will not reveal the points of view of the Peruvians who have suffered, I will elaborate on expressions which attempt to represent trauma. First of all, trauma was the motivating factor in the initiation of violence in 1980. For this reason, one of the themes will encompass an analysis of how the layers of trauma present in society before the conflict influenced characters to join or sympathize with the Shining Path and how their inability to deal with the oppression of the past influenced the characters’ reactions to the conflict’s violence. Conversely, I will also discuss the fact that some real-life Peruvians, represented in the literature and films, decided to rebel against the violence that was occurring because they did not believe that violence was the answer to confronting the layers of trauma in society. Instead, they believed in creating change through aiding individuals and groups and respecting human rights. These characters believed in reconciliation and wanted to prevent any future trauma.

Another theme that I will discuss is fear. The fact that a person experiences fear does not imply that he or she will suffer from trauma; nonetheless, it can be a precursor or reaction to trauma. Fear is one of the reasons why people experiencing traumatic
events cannot understand the events while they are taking place, thus inhibiting their ability to create a coherent narrative later. At the same time, fear can also develop or continue long after the violence has ended when flashbacks or dreams plague an individual, causing him or her to think that the violence could return. A related theme is the remembering/forgetting of the past. Besides flashbacks or dreams, individuals or societies can also consciously attempt to remember or forget the past. In my analysis, I show how governments mandate collective amnesia with intentions to help society move forward and how individuals either try to remember their past in hopes that confrontation will enable them to overcome their trauma or forget the events in attempts to avoid the pain that the memories would cause. In another theme regarding confronting trauma versus the inability to overcome it, I will show the effects of attempting to forget the past. When an individual is suffering from trauma, he or she may want to forget, but at the same time, the memories remain as subconscious fixed ideas which can affect their present lives. But even though their past affects them every day, they may be unable or unwilling to give new meanings to the memories in the present, thus resulting in destructive reactions such as suicide. However, some people who suffer from trauma are able to assign new meanings through conscious attempts to remember and talk about how their memory is unable to deal with past events. Likewise, artistic expressions and reenactments are another way of confronting trauma. Some people have difficulty finding words to express their pain, but they are able to express it through their actions, which, like words, enable them, in the present, to give new meanings to their memories. In these efforts to confront trauma, many people search for the truth of the past, which can aid in solidifying their own memories and allow them to begin to accept the
consequences of what occurred. This search is extremely important to analyze since it has been the goal of many of the victims of violence and their families and the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Although many characters choose to resolve their trauma in a peaceful manner, some see revenge as the answer to their pain. Cycles of violence are initiated when people confront trauma by trying to defeat the enemy with the same tactics which have caused them to suffer. The Shining Path believed that violence would erase the layers of trauma in society by creating a new historical memory which would include the cultural memories of the indigenous peoples and by creating a society in which oppression would no longer exist. On the other hand, some victims and their families reacted in violent manners because they believed that they were exacting justice. They believed that if perpetrators of violence were punished, society would be a safer place, and they would experience some form of relief for their losses. However, their perpetuation of the cycle of violence did not lead to their recovery from trauma or to the reconciliation of society.

While many members of the Shining Path represented in the sources did not feel remorse because they believed in their cause, some, especially those forced to join the organization, felt remorse after seeing innocent people killed. The same was true for some military characters, who realized that some of their violence was excessive. The fact that these perpetrators of violence are experiencing remorse shows that they are suffering from trauma. Their memories of events in the past can be triggered by many events, including current violence, encounters with the victims or their families or trials, the result being their inability to effectively cope with the present. In order to avoid
remorse, some characters who perpetrate violence attempt to rationalize their actions. They may think that if they were ordered to commit the actions or if they had good intentions, then they were not truly responsible for the violence they had perpetrated. It is a defense mechanism, an attempt to avoid the pain of trauma.

I have chosen these themes because I believe they demonstrate the entire process of trauma that Peru has experienced. In order to understand trauma, one must realize that it is contextual; that is, trauma manifests itself differently in every country where it may occur. Therefore, to understand Peruvian trauma, one must understand the history and culture of Peru and how it influenced the development of trauma. To achieve this goal, the themes I have chosen will give the reader insight into the causes of the initiation of violence, the immediate reactions of different sectors of society represented in the sources, the eventual formation of trauma and how characters reacted differently depending on their social class or ethnic group and their personal experiences, and how some characters sought to overcome their trauma and/or work towards individual or societal reconciliation.

Artistic expressions / reenactments of traumatic events

Many Peruvians have struggled with how to overcome trauma. We know that when a person witnesses a traumatic event, he does not really understand what is happening and thus cannot create a coherent narrative later. The person, then, needs to find a way to make sense of the events of the past and combat them. One way of achieving this is by representing these events visually. In La hora azul by Alonso Cueto,
Guiomar tells the main character, Adrián Ormache, about a dance called the “danza de tijera,” or the scissor dance. According to her, the dancers dance to confront and eventually defeat their pain: “La danza es el modo de mirar de frente el dolor. […] Toda la danza es un desafío al dolor. Los danzantes bailan sin cansarse, se ponen agujas en los labios, se atraviesan la piel. Es la derrota del dolor. […] Aquí han conocido la muerte siempre. Si no han podido rebelarse contra ella en la realidad, se han rebelado en la música, en los retablos, en la danza” (181-182). Ayacucho has always been a site of contention, situated between the original Inca capital, Cuzco, and the Spanish capital of Lima. Throughout the history of Peru since colonization, the indigenous people have been oppressed and/or killed by Spaniards or upper class Peruvians. The violence of the 1980s and 1990s is just one more layer of this violent history. The constant deaths suffered by Ayacuchans have caused pain in current generations which remember the deaths and struggle to create new lives for themselves in the present. Thus, by defeating pain in their dance, they attempt to defeat trauma and start life anew: “Cuando el mundo se termina, nuestro deber es volverlo a crear. El baile lo crea. La música lo crea. El cuerpo es cada uno de nosotros. Si los dioses han perdido su cuerpo, entonces hay que darle el nuestro. Los danzantes de tijeras fueron los primeros en rehacer el mundo” (187). Throughout history, then, the scissor dancers have attempted to overcome trauma by creating a world different than that of the past. This new world is one in which the oppressed classes are no longer defeated. By resisting the pain that they inflict on themselves in the dance, they show that their new world still contains violence, but, at the same time, the victims have agency. They are able to resist the perpetrators’ attempts to make them puppets to their desires. Of course, since, in the real world, violence has
continued to negatively affect the population, causing them to suffer from trauma, the
scissor dancers must continue to perform their dance. Each new crisis creates a new
opportunity to perform the dance and confront and overcome trauma. The dancers not
only become empowered within the dance but can also carry that empowerment outside
of the dance, influencing the viewers to do the same. For those people feeling
overpowered by their trauma, the dance is a way to initiate their dialogue about the past
and attempt to bring coherence to events which have eluded their comprehension. It is
also a way to give them the hope and courage necessary to continue to confront their
trauma through other methods.

Visual representation is not only useful once trauma has set in, but it can also be
useful during the process of the development of trauma. The memories of the violence
which assuage someone in the aftermath of an event can be overwhelming, and the
person does not know how to react. By visually representing his or her memories, the
person tries to understand the event or events that he or she had witnessed. This is the
case for the children in the film Paloma de papel. One can see the Shining Path’s and
military’s influence on the town and the violence committed by both. Due to violence
such as the popular trials, or “juicios populares”, where townspeople are tortured and
killed in front of the community, the people live in a constant state of fear and want, more
than anything, for the violence to stop. The reaction of the children in the town surfaces
while they are playing. One scene shows the children outside, all with toy guns,
pretending to kill. Juan pretends to be a Shining Path militant, his friend Rosita pretends
to be a “rondero”, or community watchman, and his friend Pacho pretends to be a soldier
for the military. Pacho says to Juan: “¡Alto! Oye, terruco, detente!” Then, Rosita says to Juan: “¡Estoy en la Ronda, y no te quiero en mi pueblo!” In response, Juan shoots Pacho and tells him that he will die. Though many children may pretend to play with guns, in this game, each child has a defined role which mimics the violence that has occurred in their community and surely others nearby. This game is a manifestation of the development of trauma. Daily life is becoming more and more restricted, and the community is having difficulty negotiating between the violence and threats from the military and the Shining Path. By pretending to kill each other, the children reveal their desire to be able to live without fear. In real life, the children do not commit acts of violence, but their play allows them to create an alternative space where they can make sense of what is happening to them. They are experiencing latency, and in their play, it is as if they were talking about everything that they had seen. Thus, we can see that visual representation can be both a defense mechanism and an active attempt to combat trauma. People who have witnessed violence, like the children in the film, unknowingly look for a resolution to their unresolved memories. Though there are many possible methods, visual representation is a less painful way to remember than actually speaking about the events, especially for children, who may not even know how to verbalize actions which are new to them. On the other hand, years after the violence occurred, when the trauma is fully developed, as is the case with the scissor dancers, individuals, fully aware of their suffering, may turn to visual representation to not only understand the events from the past but also to confront them and work towards recovery.
Confronting Trauma Versus the Inability to Overcome Trauma

In Peru, some individuals are having success in their attempts to overcome trauma and some are not. Those people who are experiencing success have been able to alter the meanings of their memories in the present. The fact that they are able to do so depends on a variety of factors. First of all, it depends on whether the person recognizes that change is necessary. The person may be suffering but unwilling to admit this fact in order to preserve an exterior appearance of strength. On the other hand, the person may admit that he or she is suffering from trauma but not be willing to concede that giving new meanings to his or her memories would allow him or her to cope better with the present and begin the process of overcoming trauma. The person may think that overcoming trauma is a passive process, simply requiring the passing of time in order to heal. Overcoming trauma also depends on whether the person has the desire to change. Those people who are not willing to let go of their past life, even though it is no longer viable, will certainly not be able to overcome trauma. This is often the case for people who have suffered extensive losses. Being a victim yourself or witnessing family members be victimized can act as a heavy weight, impeding a person from seeking change. Finally, previous trauma can also be a factor. In the case of Peru, those people of the lower classes, plagued with trauma their whole lives and unable to believe that a life without trauma could possibly exist, may not feel that they have the strength to keep fighting or that it is even worthwhile. For them, it may not seem reasonable to give new
meaning to their memories if the government and upper classes will continue to oppress them.

This variety of factors influencing recovery is exhibited by the characters in the films and literature. In *La hora azul*, we can see two completely different reactions to trauma within the same family. Miriam, a young woman of the lower class from the Ayacucho region, is able to escape after being a victim of military violence. Upon arriving to her uncle’s house, she found out that her family had been killed by the Shining Path, in the very same Luricocha attack that I mentioned in chapter 2: “‘Oigo sus lágrimas en mi hombre de ese día. Oigo su llanto. Todos muertos. A mi hermano mayor lo mataron los de Sendero porque estaba con los soldados, y mis papás y mi otro hermano se habían muerto en una noche de balacera, cuando Sendero atacó Luricocha, mis padres y mis hermanos muertos’” (237). What is telling about the story is that Miriam not only remembers the events but her uncle’s emotions. That she hears and feels his pain is an indication of the fact that she lives every day with this pain inside of her; she is traumatized. And certainly, the trauma that she experiences is more severe than that of many other Peruvians since both she and all of her immediate family members had been victimized. The first overt sign of the severity of her condition is when she questions her desire to keep living: “‘¿Cuánto tiempo crees que es bueno vivir? […] Yo pienso en eso siempre. Todo el tiempo’” (246-247). Given this statement, it is easy to see that Miriam is aware of her trauma, but she does not want to or think that she is able to make a change in her life. Although she does have a son to live for, she does not believe in the possibility of life without the rest of her family or her former self: “Ella [Miriam] nunca
había salido de ese corredor de su última noche de Huanta a Haumanga, no había podido
apartarse de la delgada línea que sus ojos creaban para persistir. […] Iba a estar bien
mientras corriera. Pero ahora se había detenido” (272-273). Since she cannot recover her
prior life, she feels that her time has expired. Certainly, Miriam has the ability to try to
confront her trauma, but she seems to think that the confrontation would not truly resolve
her pain. Is it possible that one’s trauma is so great that it is impossible to overcome it?

Since trauma recovery is such a personal matter, it is difficult to know whether
someone like Miriam could have recovered or not. However, another event in the novel
shows that the tragedies of the conflict were but one difficulty in impeding her possible
recovery. At one point in the novel, Miriam attacked Adrián, member of the upper class
and son of the man who held her captive, with a fork: “De pronto [Miriam] había cogido
el cuchillo de la mesa, había dado un grito corto y me lo estaba enfilando hacia la
garganta. Pude mover la cabeza a un costado, pero ella logró rasparme y algo de sangre
me cayó en la camisa. Volví a atacarme con el cuchillo, pero para entonces yo había
logrado cogerla del brazo” (248). Later, Miriam cries and apologizes to Adrián.
Through his kindness, Adrián had proven to be a good friend to Miriam. He was not his
father, and he would never have tried to hurt Miriam. Nonetheless, they do come from
completely different social classes. This exchange between Miriam and Adrián shows
there was an accumulation of trauma in Miriam. Her experiences during the conflict
were the ultimate motive for her sudden outburst. However, the oppression of the lower
classes by people like Adrián, of the upper class, was also an underlying motive. Adrián
would never be able to understand Miriam’s life and the suffering that the people of the
lower classes had gone through. Miriam could share her story with Adrián, and he could try to appreciate it, but only she could truly understand what it meant to live with the life of loss and the frustrated ambitions of her people.

Due to the events in Peru both before and during the conflict, it is apparent that Miriam can no longer cope with living in the present. Miriam clearly understands what has happened to her and makes the following admission to Adrián: "¿Puede [Miguel] tener una familia y una vida normal? ¿Y yo no le doy sino la pena que tiene? ¿No tengo la pena que se me sale todos los días? Yo estoy obligada a tener esperanzas, ¿no crees?, tengo que pensar que sí, y tengo que hacerlo pensar que va a poder, pero no sé si puedo, no sé. La esperanza es difícil cuando una tiene tantos muertos que te hablan” (253). Her dead family members are weighing her down, and her lack of ability to live life is becoming inevitable: “Ahora ya no tengo las piernas para seguir, o sea me falta el corazón, no sé lo que es, pero, o sea, es como un gran cansancio, como un cansancio de bien adentro los huesos: levantarte, moverte, caminar, trabajar, hablar con la gente, hacer las cosas, ya no me aguanta el cuerpo para eso, porque extraño tanto a mi familia” (255).

Although it is never confirmed, when Miriam dies at the end of the novel, Adrián believes that she committed suicide. While not all Peruvians in situations similar to that of Miriam have committed suicide, her reaction does contain logic. Before the conflict, Miriam had the support of her family in confronting the trauma of the lower classes. But now, Miriam did not have the support that she needed to attempt a recovery. In addition, she feels that she is passing on her trauma to her son. Certainly, Peruvians today do not want the next generation to suffer from yet another source of trauma. In Miriam’s eyes, a
way to avoid this is by not being there to negatively influence her son. Thus, some think that suicide can be more than just an end to suffering but also a resolution to the collective trauma of the nation. Miriam definitely feels, according to Erikson’s definition of collective trauma, that her bonds with both her son and the community have been damaged. Since she feels that these bonds cannot be fixed, it appears that she believes it to be her duty to not cause any further damage to the bonds and allow the community to find hope in the future. Although one could argue that suicide itself damages the bonds of community by showing other citizens that trauma cannot be overcome, it is true that having a negative presence in society is undoubtedly worse than having no presence at all.

Nonetheless, for her son Miguel, there does seem to be another answer. Miguel, like Miriam, is suffering from trauma. Miriam tells Adrián about Miguel’s social problems: “Va [Miguel] al colegio y regresa y está tan solo, tiene pocos amigos, y está tan molesto conmigo. Y sólo tiene trece años” 252). Though Miguel was not alive when the violence occurred, he must live with Miriam’s memories of the events that occurred to her and her family. Since Miriam cannot cope with everyday life, she transmits to him her pain and anxiety. She knows that he must live by her example. Once Miriam dies, a psychologist analyzes Miguel’s mental state: “‘Lo que tiene Miguel es un repliegue hacia el fondo de sí, es como un ser que no quiere salir de su cueva. […] Lo de la muerte de su mamá por supuesto que ha empeorado las cosas’” (286). Miguel does not interact with the world because, experiencing his mother’s trauma vicariously, he learned from her how to live with it. Interacting with the world is painful because it triggers his memories
of his mother’s death and her inability to deal with the past, and at the same time, it can result in the transference of pain to others, contributing to the development of collective trauma. Nevertheless, Miguel was able to recover. At the end of the novel, the reader sees the progress of Miguel after going to the psychologist for three years:

Los progresos de Miguel con la doctora María Gracia durante estos años han sido evidentes. Ahora Miguel tiene más amigos en el colegio, conversa mucho más conmigo, ha sacado mejores notas. Este año va a terminar el colegio y posiblemente el próximo entre a la Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería. Sus facciones se han endurecido y es un muchacho afianzado creo en su edad, dieciséis años. (301)

It is obvious that Miguel is not only coping with his everyday life but flourishing. The trauma is no longer impeding him from living. Talking about his problems was effective in helping him to recover from the trauma because, unlike his mother, he was open to recovering and having a future. In addition, since he never met his family with the exception of his mother, he did not have a past to cling to, making it easier for him to give new meaning to his mother’s memories. While her struggles to process the past did create trauma, his perception of life in the present is more positive without her, which, in turn, provides him with the strength to confront the past. Therefore, while his mother gave up because she could feel the weight of the dead holding her back, Miguel was able to imagine a possible new future and was willing to talk to a psychologist.
In the novel *Abril rojo*, one of the characters, like Miriam, suffers from an increasingly debilitating mental breakdown due to trauma, though his reaction to this trauma is substantially different. Flashbacks from the Shining Path revolt and civil war plague Commander Carrión constantly. He admits this to Félix when he says that the dead forced him to plan the murders that were committed: “‘Yo no quería que fuese así. Ellos me obligaron.’ […] Ahora el comandante se retorcía a un costado del escritorio, se desparramaba hacia el suelo y los ojos se le llenaban de lágrimas. Temblaba. ‘No los ves, Chacaltita? ¿Acaso no puede verlos? Estaban por todas partes. Están aquí siempre’” (316). Due to the severity of the events in Ayacucho and the disproportionate number of people who died, Carrión feels that the dead have never left the city. In addition, Carrión’s participation in the acts of violence certainly affected his state of mind. Not all perpetrators of violence suffer from trauma. Some, like many of the Shining Path members, believe that their actions will create a better future. However, if the perpetrator believes that his or her actions were excessive, then trauma could possibly develop. This is the case of Carrión, who, witnessing violence in the present, is constantly reminded of the events from the past. However, Carrión does not feel that he can confront his personal trauma. The investigator of the murders, Félix, thought that Carrión was trying to kill him, but, in reality, Carrión was seeking his own death: “Cuando se acercó a revisar el cuerpo, constató que no llevaba un arma. El comandante Carrión no había estado tratando de matarlo en ese duelo final. Sólo había caminado hacia su muerte, igual que todos los demás, igual que hacemos todos. La cabeza de su monstruo era la suya. Ahora su obra estaba terminada” (322). Though he did not commit suicide, Carrión wanted to die in order to end his pain. He was accosted by the memories
of the people killed by the military, under his command, and this proved too much for him to bear. While some members of the military believed that the Shining Path needed to be defeated at all costs, others believed that human rights could and should have been respected. While military policy could be changed in the future, which was certainly the attempt of the Alberto Fujimori trial, the past could not be changed. Carrión could have decided to live for the future, but, in order to do so, he would have had to have come to terms with his prior actions. He could have accomplished this by publicly recognizing his mistakes and asking the victims’ families for forgiveness. Nonetheless, it seems that Carrión felt that his sins were too egregious to be wiped away through repentance, leaving death as the only option. Carrión’s attitude does not appear to be common among the actual Peruvian military, however. Some of the military have adopted an unapologetic attitude due to their commitment to their cause, showing that they have never suffered from trauma. And others, especially during the Fujimori trial, have admitted the mistakes of the military and apologized to the victims’ families, showing that they may be suffering from trauma but that they are attempting to overcome it and contribute to healing the collective trauma of the nation.

In “El Final del Camino” by Alfredo Pita, we can see an expression of a Shining Path activist’s reaction to being a victim of violence. The main character narrates his experience of being questioned and tortured by military personnel, who cause him to break down and question his own resolve. First, while being tortured, the narrator starts to cry: “Un puntapié lo derribó entonces sobre los excrementos que rebalsaban la taza rota. […] Con gran esfuerzo mantuvo levantado el trasero, mientras las hormigas
acuáticas le subían por las piernas. Sintió que estaba orinándose y avergonzado, turbiamente, sintió también que lloraba, mientras escuchaba sus risas” (62). The narrator starts to realize that he is not as strong as he once thought he was; he is afraid to experience pain: “Él, el fuerte, el duro, el puro, el revolucionario de hierro, el héroe que estaba dispuesto a que lo fusilasen o a meter la mano al fuego sin pestañear ni hacerle ascos a la carne chamuscada, no resistía un baño de mierda, no quería ensuciarse, estaba descubriendo el miedo. [….] Mátame, carajo, pero que sea de una vez, rápidamente” (63). In his mind, due to his cowardly reaction to the torture, he is just as weak as others that he used to criticize: “Bastaron dos patadas en el culo y un baño de orina y mierda para que supieras quién eres. Sí, sólo bastó eso para ponerlo en el estado en que estaba, desarmado y casi quebrado. Como todos esos personajes débiles que un día había pretendido despreciar” (66). Unlike Miriam and Carrión, the narrator of this story does not break down due to his memory’s inability to deal with the past. He wanted to live up to the ideology propagated by the Shining Path and be a martyr for his cause; he wanted for the pain to mean nothing to him. The Shining Path believed in the quota, which according to Gustavo Gorriti in his book The Shining Path: A History of the Millenarian War in Peru, means that members of the organization had to have “not just the willingness but the expectation of giving up their own lives” (99). His failure to cope with the memory of his weakness, then, creates a sense of trauma in the narrator. During the conflict, many Shining Path militants were subjected to the same conditions as the narrator of the story, and many did not act valiantly, even giving away intelligence to the military. It is difficult to know whether other militants have suffered from trauma as a result of betraying their cause or not achieving the desired changes in society, but it is
certainly a strong possibility. The Shining Path wanted to help society overcome past trauma by ending oppression. But, in the end, most of the militants showed their weakness and gave up the cause even though they had not eliminated oppression. Thus, they could construe their weakness as contributing to the fortification of trauma in the country, though, in reality, it was their violence that increased Peru’s collective trauma.

Fear

Being exposed to violent events can certainly cause an individual to experience fear, fear of being the next victim or fear for the safety of his or community or country. After witnessing a traumatic event such as those common during the 1980s and 90s in Peru, the fear of future traumatic events can be so debilitating that a person is unable to carry out his or her everyday life. This is the case with characters in the novel Lituma en los Andes by Mario Vargas Llosa. The novel is set in the town of Naccos, which, given its proximity to Ayacucho, is caught in the middle of the conflict between the military and the Shining Path. It is common news when a bus is assaulted in Andahuaylas, two French tourists being killed by the Shining Path with rocks. But, for some reason, the townspeople do not discuss it: “‘Todas esas muertes les resbalan a los serranos’, pensó Lituma. La noche anterior, en la cantina de Dionisio, había escuchado la noticia del asalto al ómnibus de Andahuaylas y ni uno solo de los peones que bebían y comían había hecho el menor comentario” (35). And later, when Lituma, a military man in Naccos to investigate disappearances, thinks about it even more, he realizes that the townspeople never talk about the Shining Path at all: “¿O estaban muertos de miedo? Miedo pánico, miedo cerval a los terrucos. Ésa podía ser la explicación. ¿Cómo era posible que, con
todo lo que pasaba cada día a su alrededor, nunca los hubiera oído hasta ahora hacer un solo comentario sobre Sendero Luminoso? Como si no existiera, como si no hubiera esas bombas y matanzas” (37). The reaction of the people of Naccos undoubtedly demonstrates the fear gripping the community. Whether the townspeople are already suffering from trauma or not, it is impossible to know. Nevertheless, it is evident that the foundation is being created for the development of trauma. Prompted by their fear, the townspeople have dissociated their memories of the violent events from conscious awareness. They are aware of the violence that is occurring, but to consciously remember the violence of the past would impede them from carrying out their day to day activities. Certainly, the memories of the violence still exist in their minds as subconscious fixed ideas, affecting the way they react to each new event or conflict that occurs, but the dissociation allows them to function at a basic level and prevent the fear from completely enveloping them.

A more straightforward manifestation of fear can be found in the short story “El júbilo de las sombras” by Juan Alberto Osorio. In the story, the narrator owns a store. At the beginning, there are shadows in the back of his store: “Levantó sus ojos hacia esa parte postrema de la tienda: una densa bruma había quedado establecida” (118). Then, one day, he felt that the shadows had expanded in the store, resulting in his inability to sleep: “Esta vez su caminata se hizo más lenta y preocupada, y un insomnio lo asoló con piedad toda la noche” (118). The more that the shadows advance, the more that the narrator becomes a prisoner of them: “En los días siguientes, las sombras seguían avanzando implacable, y él, cada mañana, tan pronto como llegaba, alejaba las cosas de aquel
peligro voraz, y disputaba febrilmente cada centímetro de espacio. [...] Y a cada momento, levantaba la cabeza y extendía una mirada contundente sobre esa oscuridad que avanzaba y lo tenía ya acorralado” (120). Finally, when his counter disappears, swallowed up by the shadows, he decides to leave the city: “Los gruesos maderos de ese mostrador hecho para durar eternamente, ya no aparecían: habían sido devorados por el tiempo. [...] Hoy, por última vez visitó este lugar, pues mañana me marcharé para siempre de esta ciudad” (120-121). The clear analogy of the story is the shadows representing the growing presence and violence of the Shining Path/military in the city. At first, the violence is tolerated. The narrator is somewhat afraid, but he is able to live his life. But by the end, when he feels surrounded and cannot see the counter anymore, the fear overtakes him. This fear is different from that of *Lituma en los Andes* because the memories have not been dissociated. On the contrary, they are triggered every day by the new events in his store, plaguing him and increasing the amount of fear that he experiences, which prohibits him from combating the new threats and convinces him that he must move away from the violence in order to continue his life. Consequently, the removal of fear from his life could allow him to assess his mental condition and confront the development of trauma. Although it is easy to make the judgment from the outside that the narrator is running away from his problems, if we remember the perspective of Judith Herman on treating trauma, we realize that the individual suffering must feel that he or she is in safe environment with the support of friends and family in order to begin the process of confronting the past. For this reason, during the conflict, many Peruvians either moved to a safer area of the country or fled to exile. Of course, eliminating the immediate threats of violence does not necessarily eliminate all fear; there is still the
apprehension that the violence will return to them in the future. For this reason, it is important for individuals to not only attempt to overcome personal trauma but also to contribute to national reconciliation.

A similar fear invades the town of Rayopampa in the film *La vida es una sola*, directed by Marianne Eyde. The town in the film is caught between the Shining Path and the military. Both groups demand the cooperation of the town, which places the townspeople in an impossible situation which they cannot possibly win. The result is that the town is invaded by fear and confusion. Towards the beginning of the film, the Shining Path hangs their flag in the town and writes propaganda on the walls of the buildings in the town. One of the community leaders, don Teodosio, tells the town that they need to take the Shining Path flag down and paint over the graffiti of the Shining Path propaganda. But one of the community members voices the fear of the whole town: “Los compas [compañeros] matan a los bajan a sus banderas.” Don Teodosio goes to talk to the military, specifically the military leader “el Tigre,” or the Tiger, and asks for the help of the soldiers. When el Tigre tells him to take the flag down himself, don Teodosio expresses his fear of being killed: “Pero los terrucos me van a matar, jefe.” Don Teodosio returns to the community and takes the flag down at the insistence of El Tigre, the result being his death at the hands of the Shining Path. The community is afraid to bury don Teodosio after seeing that the Shining Path has threatened them with the following sign: “Así mueren los soplones.” Noting the fear of the community, El Tigre questions their loyalty: “¿Obedecen a los terrucos o no? ¿Qué les pasa? ¿Les tienen miedo?”
The actions of el Tigre and the Shining Path create an unsolvable predicament for the community, one faced by many communities during the conflict. Both the Shining Path and the military demand their total allegiance, and they use the threat of violence to assure that the community obeys them. As a result, at the end of the film, the community members feel that they have no options and must live in fear. One of the women in the community feels that fear is worse than dying: “Es ser como condenado. Vivir así con miedo es peor que la muerte. Ya no se sabe quien es quien.” Unlike the narrator in “El jubilo de las sombras,” this woman and the rest of the community members have not been able to leave in search of a safe environment. Thus, each new threat triggers the memories of the prior acts of violence, which, in turn, triggers fear. The woman feels that she is suffering a fate worse than death because, in the community’s situation, there is no hope. There is no escape from the memories that are suffocating them, and, as a result, the development of trauma becomes more likely, and there is no way for the members of the community to heal if, in fact, they do develop trauma. The woman herself recognizes the irreparable damage that has been done to the community: “Si nos hubiéramos organizado antes con otras comunidades, haciendo saber que no dejamos entrar a nadie, capaz no hubieran venido. Ya es tarde. Ya ahora todo es silencio. Ya no hay más que salvar solo la vida.” The town is silent because the residents feel unable to continue on with their everyday lives. The community members have been physically and psychologically affected by the conflict, and the woman realizes that it is now impossible to reverse the damage. They only measure that they can take at the time is to save their lives physically; the psychological damage will have to be attended to in the future. Many Peruvians today are faced with the effects of this type of situation; some
must confront individual trauma while all must confront the collective trauma that has
developed. Finally, these Peruvians are in a safe environment in the sense that the
constant threat of violence has disappeared; however, the extended and severe nature of
the violence that they witnessed, in addition to the fact that many have suffered the loss
of family members, affects the way that they live life in the present. Thus, while a
recovery is now possible, it is complicated by these other factors, making the process
even longer and more arduous.

Layers of trauma

In the previous chapters, I spoke of the layers of trauma that exist in Peruvian
society. These layers influence how Peruvians cope with the most current trauma caused
by the inability to process the events of the conflict and can be seen in the literature and
films. For example, in the novel Lituma en los Andes, Paul Stirmsson, an engineer from
Denmark working in one of the mines, comments on the resurgence of violence: “Yo me
pregunto – murmuró el ingeniero rubio, completamente abstraído, hablando para sí
mismo—si lo que pasa en el Perú no es una resurrección de toda esa violencia empozada.
Como se hubiera estado escondida en alguna parte y, de repente, por alguna razón, saliera
de nuevo a la superficie” (178). Though Stirmsson is speaking of violence, not trauma,
his reference can be extended to understand trauma. Many indigenous peoples were
killed by the Spaniards during colonization, and one subsequent reaction to Spanish
oppression, as I have already mentioned, was the Tupac Amaru II rebellion. This
rebellion and other acts of resistance were not successful and have suffered the fate of
being repressed from the dominant historical memory of society. As explained by
Žižek’s concept of monads, present rebellions are influenced by past failed rebellions, thus bringing to the surface the repressed past. This is exactly what Stirmsson is referring to. Since the lower classes have never been successful in changing society, another form of rebellion was inevitable. This becomes even more apparent when we realize that the previous oppression by the Spaniards and then by the upper class Peruvians in Republican Peru stayed with the indigenous peoples, building up with each generation and causing the indigenous peoples to experience trauma. This resulted in the violence of the 1980s and 90s. Thus, in reality, it is not the past violence which provokes current violence but the people’s incapability to confront the present, influenced by unresolved memories of the past, which incites it. Historical trauma has always been there, layer upon layer, and thus what seems to be a surprise outpouring of violence is actually an unavoidable one, simply waiting for the right context.

This trauma due to the oppression of the indigenous peoples can be seen in the short story “Los alzados” by Julián Pérez. Salustio Mallki was a mistreated peasant who was not willing to put up with abuse from the upper class: “Salustio era fuerte, Prudencia era buena y buenomoza; nunca habían hecho mal a nadie. Sólo que Salustio no le gustaba abusar menos que abusen de él” (16). Salustio and his wife Prudencia wanted to live in peace, but generations of oppression would guarantee that they could not be treated fairly. After losing his house, which was converted into a church, Salustio joined “los alzados”, or those who rebel, who had come by and killed don Juan, a member of the upper class who had oppressed the indigenous peoples: “Lo [don Juan] balearon como a taruka. Los alzados limpiaban de ese modo los pueblos de principales, mandones y
poderosos. Salustio supo oficiosamente sus razones y no pensó dos veces, se agenció un viejo rifle y se fue con ellos. Era un alzado” (20). Was Salustio really a violent person? I do not think that he saw himself as being violent. He believed in the Shining Path ideology that in order to create change in Peru, violence was a necessity. For this reason, though his personal life had fallen apart, Salustio is happy with his decision to join the Shining Path; he sees it as his way to start a new life and put an end to his traumas:

Salustio está imperturbable como si ya hubiese acostumbrado a mirar las cosas más allá de los horizontes. No hace otra cosa que recordar y luego soñar con el futuro. En el lugar donde muchas veces se amaron o se peleaban con Prudencia ‘estará un local escolar del pueblo’ –piensa él, proyecta—‘y ya no se oirá de cofradías, ni la capilla habrá, ni principales, ni tagarotes’; y él, a pesar de no ver su casa allí, se sentirá contento después de muchos años. (21)

For Salustio, the importance of being a Shining Path militant is that the ruling class will no longer be in control if the Shining Path is successful. By making the cultural memory of the indigenous peoples part of the historical memory of the state, society will recognize their suffering and establish measures to prevent the development of a new layer of trauma. Though Salustio is unapologetic for the harm that he has inflicted upon others, this harm was destined to have negative consequences regardless of the success of the armed struggle. The death of such a large number and wide variety of Peruvians was undoubtedly going to affect all the cultural memories of the population, scarring them with the effects of collective trauma. Therefore, in the end, even a modified historical
memory and more egalitarian policies could not prevent trauma from developing and affecting society. Of course, the fact that the armed struggle failed means that this trauma is compounded by the fact that inequality and oppression still exist among the social classes in Peru.

In another story, “Sonata de los caminos opuestos” by Feliciano Padilla Chalco, we can see not only motivations for and effects of the Shining Path’s rebellion but also the influence that they exercised over the population. Generations of the families of the community of Khero had been oppressed by the upper classes, and they are currently suffering the same fate. Nonetheless, they had never felt motivated to act on their emotions, not until “los alzados”, the Shining Path, arrived to their town. The Shining Path cadres talked to them about how the upper class land owners had used them to get rich: “Los alzados nos hablaban de los gamonales y de la forma cómo se habían enriquecido” (144). This talk was all that was necessary to bring to the surface a sense of anger and indignation in the community members. Manuel started to remember all of the injustices that his family had suffered over the years:

Todas las injusticias que cometieron estos desalmados eran absolutamente ciertas: nos habían robado las tierras, nos habían hecho llorar en la puerta de los juzgados, todo era cierto. Mi padre murió viejo y tuberculoso en la cárcel. Así pagó su delito de ser presidente de la comunidad de Khero. Mi hermana Rosaura fue violada por don Rodolfo; mi mujer y mis hijas violadas también por este maldito, y por sus hijos. Los alzados los
There was no one in Manuel’s family who had not been subjected to some form of oppression. However, Manuel had never done anything to remedy these injustices. Surely, Manuel, like so many indigenous people, did not think that there was any way to combat them. The historical memory of the state not only negated past oppression but also justified and normalized a system of inequality. The attitude of the upper classes was to be expected, and the lower classes were born to be submissive and to serve. In other words, the historical memory validated discrimination. It is for this reason that indigenous people like Manuel either did not question the oppression that they had suffered or did not know how to rebel. They needed to be educated about the unfairness of the Peruvian social hierarchy and be convinced that there was a way to create change. It is for this reason that when the Shining Path spoke to Manuel and his fellow community members, they felt a sense of revenge: “Venciendo el miedo y el respeto que no enseñaron desde siempre, gritamos: ¡Muerte a los gamonales! Y yo repetí lo más fuerte que pude, desde el fondo mismo de mi alma: ¡Que los maten!” (145). In reality, the community members were not violent individuals. Nevertheless, the Shining Path, unearthing their latent resentment and anger, was able to incite them to become violent. This was the tactic that the Shining Path used to its advantage during much of the conflict and which led to their downfall. Since the indigenous peoples have, in most cases, used peaceful methods to achieve change, many of them eventually realized that the Shining Path’s violence was causing harm to many of their own social class. They did not believe
that this harm was warranted, and thus they began to question the Shining Path ideology and its ability to put an end to the development of trauma in Peru. This is exactly what happens in the story when Manuel realizes that the Shining Path does not have any more compassion for their fellow citizens than the upper class does: “Se enfurecieron cuando el Sabino, mi hijo menor, quiso detenerlos, y lo mataron de diez balazos, sin piedad, a quemarropa, como a un perro sin dueño. […] Quise gritar, pelear, matar a los terrucos, pero me derrotó la impotencia, y solamente pude llorar y odiar en silencio” (145). For Manuel, the Shining Path did certainly educate him about the realities and injustices of Peruvian society, but he eventually realized that the Shining Path was not the answer to his problems.

Finally, in the film *Paloma de papel*, directed by Fabrizio Aguilar, we can see, in detail, the motivation for the Shining Path ideology. When the main character, Juan, is captured by the Shining Path and made to join the organization, he hears people singing about the Communist Party: “El Partido Comunista conduce a nueva vida, esfuma todo el humo la duda del temor.” The cadres believe that the lower classes have suffered for so long because they have been afraid to rebel. But, with the communist party, Peruvians can begin a new life. They can do this by making all social classes economically equal. One of the Shining Path cadres asks Juan if he wants to be hungry and then shows him how he can help society avoid the problem of hunger in the future: “Lo que debes hacer es no cobrar por tu trabajo. […] Si nadie cobra nada, todos tendremos todo. […] Queremos cambiar para mejorar.” Nevertheless, according to the Shining Path, in order to achieve this change, the people who do not believe in change must be killed, like
Pacho’s father, the mayor. Juan says that Pacho’s father is a good man, but this fact is irrelevant to the militant. Unlike Manuel, this Shining Path member does not distinguish between harmful and harmless actions. For him, harmful actions become harmless when they create change; casualties are a necessary evil, and, as a result, his actions become justified in his own mind, clearing any conscience that he may have had. These militants in the film believed that they were the saviors, the men and women who would prevent the layers of trauma from continuing to develop through implementing policies of economic equality. In their intentions, they were certainly concerned with how the indigenous peoples were affected by the oppression of the past, but they misjudged how their actions could affect the future. They thought that changing the historical memory to include all sectors of society would be enough to eliminate trauma, but they did not realize that their actions could be viewed negatively by the population, who preferred nonviolent change, creating negative cultural memories in all sectors of society, and thus increased collective trauma.

Remembering/Forgetting the Past

As I discussed in chapter one, individuals and society often attempt to either forget or remember the past in order to overcome their trauma. In an overt attempt at forgetting, in the novel *Abril rojo* by Santiago Rocagliolo, some of the characters in the book want Peruvian society to forget the past because they see remembering as damaging to the development of society in the present. In the novel, military officer commander Alejandro Carrión Villanueva orchestrates the killing of lieutenant EP Alfredo Cáceres, and subsequently, five others, in order to hide the past from the public. Carrión tells
Félix that during the Shining Path revolt and civil war, Cáceres killed a lot of people, who were then discarded in common graves. Due to his excessive violence, Cáceres was sent away to a military detachment in another location. They had asked him to stay hidden, but recently he came back to Ayacucho and was working with the “rondas campesinas,” or peasant crime fighting units, in order to combat the Shining Path. Cáceres himself was evidence of the extreme violence of the 1980s and 90s, and the government did not want that evidence either to be a constant reminder to the Peruvian people or to cause any further problems. Though Carrión would not admit it until the end of the novel, that is precisely the reason why Cáceres was killed, or more accurately, why he killed Cáceres.

Carrión explains to Félix: “‘No nos dejó más remedio. Estaba resucitando los viejos fantasmas. La población lo estaba reconociendo. Los senderistas de Yawarmayo estaban más agitados que nunca. No tardaría en aparecer algún opositor de mierda para denunciar a la prensa que el teniente había vuelto a Ayacucho. O peor aún, un atentado terrorista en elecciones y Semana Santa’” (313). For Carrión, the ghosts of the past could not come alive again because they would only serve to worsen the trauma that Peruvians were suffering from. Carrión felt that Peruvians were overcoming their trauma through the government’s and military’s attempt to conceal the past from them, and if they witnessed a new upsurge of violence, their flashbacks to the 1980s and 90s would reverse their progress in recuperation. For him, Peru could only move forward without the Shining Path. Nevertheless, was Peru overcoming collective trauma? According to Avelar’s concept of “reflexive, active forgetting,” one cannot forget until one has first remembered and confronted the events that occurred. In other words, you cannot overcome trauma by forgetting; on the contrary, you must overcome trauma in order to
be able to forget. This surely seems to be the case for Peru during this time period. The
novel is set in the year 2000, when Fujimori’s unofficial policy of collective amnesia was
still in place. However, only one year later, after Fujimori had fled Peru, the Peruvian
Truth and Reconciliation Commission was initiated, a clear sign that society had not
overcome trauma through this induced amnesia. Peruvians were still suffering and had
come to the conclusion that a new strategy had to be implemented, the core of which
would be to remember the past.

In the case of the short story “Visperas” by Luis Nieto Degregori, the goal of the
main character, Amadeo, is the opposite of that of commander Carrión, even though the
story was published in 1989, eleven years before the end of the period of violence.
Amadeo was a professor in Ayacucho, and one of his co-professors and friends,
Grimaldo, was sent to jail and revealed to be a Shining Path activist, thus inspiring him to
write a story about the conflict. However, since he neither believed in the Shining Path
ideology nor supported the actions of the military, Amadeo did not know how to finish
the story. Several years later, after hearing a speaker talk about Grimaldo’s writing and
how it gave the Andean speaker a voice, Amadeo understood, though did not agree with,
Grimaldo’s perspective, which was to “plantar la semilla de una vida nueva, de dignidad
y justicia” (116). As a result, Amadeo realized that he did not have to understand
everything that happened in order to write a story; he just needed to write his perspective
of what happened: “Hablaria, luego, para dejar la crónica, su crónica, por más
incompleta, parcial e insignificante que resultase, de los acontecimientos que estabai
viviendo Ayacucho, la tierra de Grimaldo” (116). Amadeo’s story writing process is very
similar to the psychological struggle facing many Peruvians during and after the conflict. As I showed in Chapter 2, over the years, Peruvians became more and more aware of the problems being caused by the violence in the country. However, many Peruvians did not understand the events while they were taking place because they were so unexpected and traumatic. As a result, their extremely fragmentary memories made it difficult for them to understand the conflict as a whole. They did not really know who had committed which offenses, and they certainly did not understand why such violence was being committed. Even though many Peruvians were opposed to the violence, they did not necessarily know how the problem could be resolved. In the end, though, like Amadeo, many Peruvians are realizing that their memories of the events, however partial or disorganized, do have meaning. For Amadeo, telling his story through writing validates his presence as a Peruvian writer and allows him to confront the events of the past, which can help society make strides in overcoming collective trauma. Outside of the story, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has enabled many Peruvians to tell their partial stories and confront their own personal traumas. All of the stories together help to form a more complete narrative for Peruvian society which has aided them in dialoguing about the collective trauma of the country and renewing or initiating the construction of bonds between the different sectors of society.

Finally, in the film *Paloma de papel*, there is also an attempt to remember, but it differs from that of Amadeo. The character remembering, Juan, was directly involved in the violence, being forced to join the Shining Path and kill a member of the military, and we can see that later in life, after his incarceration for participation in terrorist activities,
with the use of paper doves, he remembers to confront his own personal trauma. At the beginning of the film, the blacksmith that Juan is working with tells him a story about doves:

Un día la niña enfermó. Tanto enfermó, ella no podía echarse en las retamas a mirar las palomas y murió. Las palomas que recién se levantaban veían que el sol no quería salir. El día todo triste estaba, todo oscuro. Sabían que la niña ya no las iba a mirar nunca más. Pero la reina de las palomas, la más grande, tuvo mucha pena y le regaló sus alas. Entonces la niña revivió. Ahora la niña convertida en paloma vuela feliz.

After telling him the story, the blacksmith gives Juan a paper dove. Then, years later, you see Juan in a room filled with paper doves. Juan uses these doves to remember those who were killed and how he witnessed and participated in acts of violence. However, like in the story, the doves help him to convert death into hope by allowing him to come back to life, or to initiate the process of overcoming trauma. In the case of individuals who were wrongfully jailed, like Juan, the effects are highly detrimental. Juan did not believe in the Shining Path ideology, and so he did not believe that the killings were justified. As a result, being in jail and knowing why he has been incarcerated acted as a constant trigger for flashbacks regarding the violence, which made the development of trauma a likely outcome. Though Juan may have wanted to forget the past, his punishment prohibited him from doing so. Nonetheless, remembering through flashbacks would only cause further damage to him given that he was having difficulty coping with his present reality. It is only through active remembering, or remembering with the
intention to understand, work through and give new meaning to the events of the past, that an individual can overcome trauma. Though many wrongfully convicted Peruvians, like Juan, have finally been granted amnesty, their years of incarceration robbed them of the life that they could have had. Thus, while starting over is still possible, their anger over their present situation could continue to trigger their unresolved memories of being in jail and of the conflict. For this reason, it is even more important for these individuals to participate in active remembering and attempt to overcome their trauma.

Remorse

Perpetrators of violence and individuals who have caused the perpetration of violence can react in many ways to their own actions. While some of them believe in their cause, and thus are not affected by trauma, others remember what they and others did in the past, and, realizing the unjustness of the actions, have trouble moving on with their life in the present. Many times, they feel that unless they make amends for the past wrongs, they will never be able to overcome the trauma that they are suffering from. In the case of Abril rojo, a perpetrator of violence, the Catholic Church, does not feel remorse, but Commander Carrión believes that it should and attempts to instill remorse in the institution and make amends for its sins. Knowing that the priest Sebastián Quiroz Mendoza helped the military burn bodies in the church’s crematory oven in order to destroy evidence of the excessive violence, Carrión writes him a note which is, in reality, directed toward the Church in general: “estás todo lleno de pecado. todos te recordamos aquí por eso. los cuerpos que te quemaste te recuerdan por eso” (255). Through his note, Carrión shows us that to purify the sins of the priest, as the Church prescribes, his body
must be burned: “el agua santa te tiene que tocar todo. es como un bautizo ¿lo entiendes? un sacramento. un bautizo de fuego para ti. eso aprendimos contigo. el fuego limpia” (256). Carrión sees the collective trauma that has developed, and he also sees that society has not achieved reconciliation because many groups have not admitted their role in the perpetration of violence or attempted to remedy the damage that they caused. Certainly, he is right in asserting that remorse must be felt in order to initiate the reconciliation process because if perpetrators of violence do not feel responsibility for the repercussions, they will not be motivated to repair their damaged relationships with other sectors of society. The question remains, though: Can society inculcate in them this awareness? I believe that society can lead through example, initiating projects such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but it is up to the perpetrators to actively listen to their voices. Teaching through revenge, as Carrión does, will not stimulate remorse but rather anger on the part of the targeted group, especially when he mocks the religious practice of burning away sins in order to do so. Therefore, while Carrión had positive intentions in carrying out his actions, it was doubtful that he would achieve the desired effect of instilling remorse in the Church.

Whereas Abril rojo attempts to arrive at remorse to combat the collective trauma of society, in other sources, we can see how members of the military deal with individual journeys of remorse. In La hora azul, Adrian’s father, a military officer, felt remorse for how he treated Miriam: “Mi padre enfrentado a la muerte se había arrepentido (<<hay una mujer en Huanta, tienes que buscarla>>). Ese día me había dado el encargo. ¿Cómo podría llamarlo? ¿Un encargo de su culpa, de su nostalgia, de sus remordimientos?”
On the other hand, in the short story “En el vientre de la noche” by José de Piérola, we can see the antecedents to the development of remorse. In the story, an indigenous person, or “el indio,” begins to converse with Ubilluz, a soldier in the military who is watching over him while he digs his own grave. Due to this initiation of a sort of friendship, when Ubilluz’s captain tells him to kill the Indian, he is unable to do so: “El dedo de Ubilluz se había quedado apoyado sobre el gatillo pero no se movía. Dedo de mierda, no se movía un milímetro, se había congelado con el frío de la noche” (56). In the end, after receiving an ultimatum from his captain, Ubilluz kills the Indian, thus creating a memory which could lead to future remorse: “Ubilluz apuntó a la estatua de piedra negra que lo seguía mirando. Tomó una bocanada de aire. Su dedo buscó el gatillo y lo jaló a fondo” (58). Finally, in “Ayataki” by Sócrates Zuzunaga Huaita, Cornelio, a military officer, feels or will feel remorse not because of something that he was forced to do but due to his belief and participation in the violence, which indirectly lead to the death of his brother. The military comes to Cornelio’s hometown and kills his brother Modesto and many other peasants in the plaza without questioning them or proving that they were terrorists. Cornelio arrives a short time later, shows his contempt for the peasants by spitting on and cursing at them, and then is suddenly overtaken by an emotional outburst upon finding his brother’s dead body: “Ese soldado jefe se cayó de rodillas en el suelo, gritando como una fiera herida, queriéndose arrancar los cabellos con las manos sacudiéndose en un llorar harto feo. […] Cornelio […] ahora está llorando harto, bramando como un torillo herido, bien abrazado al cuerpo de su hermano Modesto…” (187-188).
In all three of these cases, we see how members of the military change their perspectives based on personal experiences with violence. All three men had performed their duties without worrying about the effects of their actions. The military’s job was to defeat the Shining Path, and these characters, like many military personnel during the conflict, were committed to achieving this objective. They did not see the people that they were killing as human beings with families and feelings. Their victims were criminals that needed to be punished. It was not until they got to know some of these supposed criminals that they realized that the military violence was not, in fact, black and white. Adrian’s father realized that Miriam was not a terrorist but an innocent peasant with a virtuous personality. Though he continued committing acts of violence after meeting her, the relationship that he formed with her eventually made him understand that his actions had caused unnecessary damaging effects which he wanted to remedy by helping her. In the case of Ubilluz, we do not yet know if he will want to make amends for killing the Indian, but by getting to know him, the Indian and the supposed enemy, in general, became humanized. The Indian was a university student who missed his five-year-old daughter who liked to draw. Ubilluz realized that he was not so different from himself; he also had a wife and child. For Cornelio, his personal experience was the most difficult because he had felt such an intense disgust towards the peasants that used to be his neighbors, which was called into question with the death of his brother. Cornelio knew that his brother was a good man, which made the pain that he felt that much deeper. He had been wrong; innocent people were being killed. Although Cornelio may not be going through this thought process at the time of the story, it is apparent, given the emotion evoked in him upon seeing his brother, that the remorse will set in once the
moment has passed. We can see, then, that in the case of the military, the strategy of committing indiscriminate violence was one that, in most cases, was simply followed and not questioned. It was only when military personnel could see the effects of their actions firsthand that some of them really started to question what they were ordered to do. They began to understand what the violence meant through the trauma that they were experiencing. Specifically, they all recognize that some of their actions have been unwarranted and have or will result in painful memories for individuals and society.

In “El cazador” by Pilar Dughi, it is not the military but rather the Shining Path who feels remorse. The main character of the story, Darwin, a young boy, is a Shining Path cadre in the Principal Force, or “Fuerza Principal”. Originally a true follower of the Shining Path cause, when his friend Shoreni was killed, he became convinced that the Shining Path ideology was cruel and flawed. Shoreni had not done anything, but his father had fled the camp. Darwin simply did not understand the logic of what had occurred: “Por la noche, apretado contra la manta, lloró de rabia. Shoreni era su amigo y era combatiente de la Fuerza Principal como él. Recordó lo que le había dicho su padre: los mandos se equivocan” (89). In the end, Darwin flees with the knowledge that he has made the correct decision: “Había terminado por aceptar que era un traidor. Ya había traicionado al partido con sólo desear huir. Pensaba en Shoreni y todavía la rabia lo invadía. Recordaba que los hombres se equivocaban y juzgaba que los mandos estaban en un camino incorrecto” (73). While the Shining Path is willing to accept casualties for the greater good of the cause, Darwin is not if it means that innocent people are killed. Darwin had previously believed in the Shining Path cause because the organization had
taught him to believe from a very young age, which was the case for many children during the conflict. These children were never given the chance to form their own opinions about society and the Shining Path, and, consequently, they could not truly understand the nature of the trauma that Peruvians had suffered from and what measures should be taken to combat it. As a result, in most cases, they followed what they were told. For Darwin, it took an extremely traumatic event for him to contradict his education, an event that struck the core of his being, awaking his conscience of what was right and wrong. For those children who eventually had that awakening moment, society would tell them that they should not feel remorse because they did not know any better and were simply following the example of their elders. For this reason, in the story, the army does not consider Darwin to be repentant, “arrepentido”, but rather a presented, “presentado.” Nonetheless, Darwin and children like him may still feel remorse because after killing human beings, they would be unable manage the memory of these deaths. They may know technically that they are not at fault, but killing under any circumstances can create feelings of guilt, especially for a sensitive person. As a result, today, children like Darwin suffer from trauma, the pain of their victims still impeding them from processing the events of the past and, thus, coping with their present reality.

In “Por las puertas del viento”, Nivardo feels remorse not for his own violent actions but for the influence that he has exerted over his son. He always talked about the need for social change in Peru to his son Edmundo, and now he regrets those talks because his son has joined the Shining Path, and he does not feel that armed rebellion is
the way to achieve that change. In addition, Nivardo feels that he should have been
stronger in opposing Edmundo:

Me arrepiento una vez más de no haberlo retenido a mi lado. Fui
ineficiente, demasiado débil para permitir que se vaya, conociendo que
estaba ya embarcado en esa aventura desde antes, mucho antes que
estallara el primer dinamitazo en la Cuenca del Vilcanota. Fui el único
que pudo disuadirlo, pero fallé. Y ahora no podré absolverme de su
sangre, ni siquiera poniéndole este cajón de primera. (166)

This is the guilt that any parent could have felt during the Shining Path revolt and civil
war upon learning of the death of their child. It is a displaced remorse because
misinterpretations of good intentions are inevitable, and it is difficult to dissuade grown
children from participating in an activity that they believe in. Nonetheless, it is a remorse
that Nivardo feels because he has lost his son and wants to think that he could have
prevented his death; Nivardo is not willing to give new meanings to his memories of the
past. In his mind, the unresolved memories of the violent events coexist along with his
recent memories, thus enabling the remorse to remain current and inhibiting him from
overcoming trauma. Of course, remorse is not the only possible reaction to the loss of a
loved one. But we can see that in the case of Nivardo, he believed that he was a role
model to his son, and his inability to carry out the duties of this responsibility, guiding his
son to make sound decisions, resulted in the unavoidability of his experiencing remorse.
Cycles of Violence

Violence often begets violence because revenge is a common reaction to loss and trauma. In *Abril rojo*, a character uses violence as a way to avenge prior violence against a family member. Liutenant Cáceres had Edwin Mayta, the brother of Justino Mayta, arrested for suspicion of terrorist activity in 1990. Even though Cáceres supposedly let Edwin go after questioning and torturing him, Carrión confirms that Cáceres killed him, and Edwin’s family never saw him again until common graves were uncovered during the course of the novel, ten years after Edwin’s disappearance. As a result, when Carrión asked Justino to kill Cáceres, Justino took advantage of the opportunity: “Justino, en cambio—siguió el militar [Carrión]--, recordaba bien la entrada de la policía en su casa. Y quería vengar a su hermano. Consideraba… consideraba que su hermano actuaba a través de él, que era como la mano de Dios” (314). Justino and his mother constantly thought about Edwin. His mother was always searching for Edwin’s grave, which eventually prompted the military to move his and other bodies to a common grave. And, according to Carrión, Justino felt Edwin’s presence inside of him. It is apparent that both Justino and his mother were suffering from trauma. Their failure to confront past was influenced by their desperation in the present. They could not let Edwin go, and, consequently, the memories of the violence continued to plague them. Justino’s reaction to this trauma was to feel rage towards Cáceres; if it were not for him, Justino would still be by his side. Thus, though Justino had never committed violent acts in the past, his trauma pushed him to seek justice. In his mind, if he could not return to life in the past with Edwin, then Cáceres did not deserve to live life in the present. Nonetheless, even
though exacting personal revenge can bring some form of initial relief to the perpetrator of violence, the long-term consequences are all negative. First, the individual can be incarcerated for his or her crime. Second of all, it will not enable the individual to overcome trauma. In order to recover, the individual must give new meaning to his or her memories, but killing does not accomplish this goal. It will satisfy the symptom of rage, but it will not address the loss itself. One must learn to understand and accept the past in order to work towards change. Finally, personal revenge does not promote reconciliation. Of course, not all of society is affected by one act of revenge, but many individual acts of revenge collectively can result in further damaging the relationships between different sectors of society that the initial violence put in jeopardy.

Another character in Abril rojo clearly shows us the implications of the problem of collective trauma in Peru. Carrión can still hear the people who died in Ayacucho speaking to him in the present: “Pero los muertos no mueren, Chacaltita. Se quedan gritando para siempre, reclamando un cambio” (321). Carrión believes that those who died seek justice against the perpetrators of violence, including the Shining Path and the military. His solution to this problem was to kill, teaching a lesson to all of the sectors of society that committed acts of violence: “‘Me pedían que la sangre no fuese derramada en vano, Chacaltana, y yo lo hice: un terrorista, un militar, un campesino, una mujer, un cura. Ahora todos están juntos. Forman parte del cuerpo que reclaman todos los que murieron antes. ¿Comprende usted? Servirán para construir la historia, para recuperar la grandeza’” (317). Thus, he believes that excessive violence warrants the use of additional violence in order to create a society in which all citizens are treated with
respect and oppression ceases to exist. By successfully completing his mission, could Carrión help to create that egalitarian society? In the case of the internal struggles of Peru, violence to avenge the deaths of the conflict could only result in the worsening of the trauma because the greatness that Carrión speaks of never existed. Peru is saddled by layers of trauma because violence has always been used to solve problems. It is true that the violence often had negative motivations, oppressing the lower classes in order to maintain the divisions in society. However, even if the dead demand positive change, Peru’s collective trauma ensures that the perspectives which motivated each group’s initial acts of violence remain intact. Violence can only achieve forced change of actions rather than voluntary change of attitudes. For this reason, Carrión’s actions are misguided. Carrión could have taken steps towards peacefully reconciling the country by asking for forgiveness for the military’s violations of human rights and initiating dialogue with other members of the military to discuss the events of the past. It is true that alone, he cannot change the military perspective, but his words and his actions could influence others to reevaluate their roles in carrying out the violence.

In another story, “Ñakay pacha” by Dante Castro Arrasco, we can see how the Shining Path ideology motivated them to initiate misplaced violence. Demetrio is angry about recent injustices that occurred in the town of Santiago, and, as a result, he decided to kill one of the offenders, Alejo: “Me acordé entonces de todos sus abusos [de Alejo], de mis últimas cabezas de carnero y hasta de las gallinas que le quitara a mi mujer el muy desgraciado” (26). And in general, Demetrio is angry about everything that was stolen from the Shining Path militants to give to the army: “Hasta ahora sueño las caras de los
difuntos devolviéndonos todo lo que nos robaban para entregárselo a los uniformados” (27). He feels a sense of vindication making the peasants suffer for taking the side of the military. Though the Shining Path was known to take food and supplies by force, this Shining Path militant does not accept that others steal from him. If the Shining Path takes supplies, they believe that they do so in order to secure a better future for the country. But if others do the same, they do not have the same pure motivations; they are simply perpetuating a system which promotes inequality and oppression. Therefore, for the Shining Path, it is not the actions which determine the crime but the long-term goal of those actions. It is for this same reason that Demetrio resorted to killing; he wanted to teach the peasants the lesson that by helping the military, they were aiding a corrupt cause. And, in turn, the fact that he killed did not matter because it was in the interest of increasing the strength of the Shining Path. This is a strategy which was often employed by the Shining Path during the conflict; we have seen how Guzmán condoned the Shining Path’s massacres of peasants in order to educate society while labeling the military’s killings as genocide. Nonetheless, this strategy did not always work to the Shining Path’s favor. We can see in the story how they incited the anger of the military and the peasants, which resulted in the death of all of the Shining Path militants in the movement and contradicted their goal of achieving a movement by the people. In the end, this is exactly what happened to the Shining Path during the conflict. By committing excessive acts of violence, the people began to become disillusioned with their cause, not believing that the Shining Path cared about them or really wanted to change society for them.
The Shining Path militants in “Castrando al buey” by Zein Zorilla show us specifically how their long-term goals influence every act of violence that they commit. At the end of the story, Antonio, a Shining Path militant being hunted down by the military, proclaims: “‘Recién comienza’ –sonrió–. ‘Pero triunfaremos al final, te acordarás’” (140). Before making this statement, Antonio, with the help of Rosa and Nicanor, kills two military agents working undercover. The violence of Antonio is somewhat different from that of Demetrio. Both acts of violence are motivated by the Shining Path ideology, but Antonio’s violence is carried out not to teach a lesson for a specific offense but to advance the Shining Path’s overall cause. The military represent the oppression of the government and upper class, and thus killing them only contributes to the eventual defeat that Antonio affirms will happen. He is consciously perpetuating the cycle of violence because of the layers of trauma that he feels weighing on his people. Every day, lower class Peruvians live with the knowledge that they have been marginalized from society. The fact that the state and the upper classes do not recognize or work to change the past suffering of the lower classes, then, can cause resentment to build up. The mistreatment in the present can trigger their memories of the oppression of the previous centuries, validating and adding to the layers of trauma. While some members of the lower classes, unmotivated to act, appear to have dissociated these memories due to the effects of trauma and their education by the upper classes, some, including members of the Shining Path like Antonio, have realized the origin of the lower class’ pain and want to create change. The Shining Path expects the military to react to their violence and is willing to accept the casualties, as Antonio hints at in his statement that it is only the beginning. The idea of a utopian society drives Antonio and other
Shining Path militants to fight as long as it might take to overthrow the oppressive government of Peru. What Antonio does not realize, however, is how the Shining Path’s actions will actually affect the Peruvian people, increasing rather than decreasing the trauma in society.

Manuel, in “Sonata de los caminos opuestos,” differs from Antonio in that he does eventually realize the danger of the Shining Path’s actions. He and the other community members believed in the Shining Path at first: “Creíamos que la justicia había llegado al fin” (145). In other words, they believed that violence would impede future violence and oppression. When he sees his son killed by the Shining Path, however, he realizes that they are not really on the side of the indigenous people, that they are willing to kill even the oppressed if it serves their cause. It is at this point that he understands the cycle of violence that he has helped to perpetuate. By initially joining the Shining Path, he instigated military violence towards the community members. Nevertheless, once his son was killed, and he no longer supported the Shining Path, then they could kill him. The indigenous peoples who were suffering from the trauma of the past, then, were again the subject of oppression. Manuel really had no way to survive the violence surrounding him on all sides. It is for this reason that Manuel says at the end of the story that he does not have any reason to live. The circle of violence had left him with no hope. Even if he were not killed, he knew that society would remain divided and that another layer of trauma would be added to the indigenous people’s suffering.

In “Hacia el Janaq Pacha” by Óscar Colchado Lucio, a Shining Path cadre does not commit violence because he believes in the Shining Path ideology but because he is a
victim of the cycles of violence. The narrator, a young boy, tells the story as he is dying, on his way to the Janaq Pacha, or the world above. The reader learns that no one in the narrator’s family wanted to join the Shining Path, yet his mother and uncle were forced to join and were subsequently killed in the conflict. Consequently, when a Shining Path militant invited the narrator to join the fight, he agreed: “Te toparse con el pelotón guerrillero que dizque estaba yendo al pueblo a vengar la muerte de tu madre, de tu tío y de los demás combatientes caídos, y te pidieron incorporarte al Ejército Popular, compañero…” (193-194). The narrator was obviously confused by all the events that were occurring. His family was his life, so he must have felt lost without them. When the Shining Path militant arrived, he may have still been in a state of shock from the news of the violence, the disorganized, fragmentary memories overwhelming him and impeding him from analyzing the situation and knowing how to react. He acted without thinking, not seeing any other options open to him but to avenge their deaths. But even though the military had killed his family, it was actually the Shining Path that had betrayed them, forcing them to fight for a cause that they did not believe in. Thus, even though the narrator should be angry at the Shining Path, the only idea that he can assimilate is that his family has died. Like many Peruvians, he got caught up in a cycle of violence that had victimized him and his life, and, in the end, eventually killed him. After he dies, he sees his mother, calling him to the world above: “Allí está ella, tu madre, avanzando, como flotando nomás entre las cortaderas que ondulan con el viento. […] ¿Hacia el Janaq pacha, el mundo de arriba?, piensas, ¿por allí?” (194). It seems that the narrator is the lucky one who will now live in peace, while the indigenous people below must continue to suffer: “Tristes y solas parecen quedarse las casitas del pueblo,
ahora que los comunrunas, bajo el bosque de alisos, están cargando sus muertos más allacito nomás al cementerio…” (194). This final description to end the story shows that the narrator realizes that the cycle of violence has only caused destruction to the indigenous peoples. They have lost many loved ones, and it does not seem that they will have a better future. Their trauma from the past will only be more severe in the future. They will not be able to forget about the family and community members that they have lost; they are and will be alone.

During the 1980s and 90s, the military perpetuated the cycle of violence by perpetrating excessive violence in response to the Shining Path’s violence. They wanted to send the Shining Path a message and instill fear in them so that they would stop committing acts of violence. Nevertheless, using excessive violence, rather than just defensive violence, only served to incite others to become involved in the cycle. In the story “Sólo una niña” by Mario Guevara Paredes, a military man stops a truck, analyzes the passengers’ voting cards and realizes that a little girl has another family member’s voting card. When the girl is unable to respond to the man’s questions, he reacts in violence: “El golpe impactó con fuerza el rostro de la niña, que cayó pesadamente de rodillas. […] El militar viendo que la pequeña sollozaba de rodillas tapándose con las manos el rostro ensangrentado, le dio un furibundo puntapié en la cadera” (125). After the truck left, the little girl was killed: “No se habían alejado mucho del lugar, cuando el eco de una ráfaga de metralla se esparció por toda la serranía” (126). While it is possible that one of the girl’s family members was a Shining Path member, the military knew that the little girl was not a threat. Nevertheless, they wanted to prove a point: to hide a
Shining Path militant is a crime. The military was using the Shining Path strategy mentioned above in trying to cause a reaction of fear. They knew that their actions were excessive, but, even so, they did not feel that they were committing a crime because they thought that the only way to defeat the Shining Path was by showing them the military’s strength and letting them know that the military would not back down. Fighting terror with terror was a tactic which was used throughout the conflict but especially during the Fujimori regime; as we have seen, a child was actually killed during the Barrios Altos killings. However, it was the gathering of intelligence which proved to be the most successful tactic in defeating the Shining Path. On the other hand, the use of terror was instrumental in the future development of trauma. The victims’ family members of military massacres such as La Cantuta and Barrios Altos have suffered from trauma, living with the unresolved memories of the events every day and being unable to create a new life. This is the same pain that the family of the little girl in the story would undoubtedly suffer, the girl being just an innocent victim of a ruthless strategy. In the end, these families can work to overcome their trauma, but they need society’s help to do so. In the case of the victims’ families in the La Cantuta and Barrios Altos’ cases, the Fujimori trial would be one of society’s initial steps in recognizing their pain.

In “El canto del tuco” by Jaime Panigoso Montes, we are presented with another innocent victim of violence, though he is not seen as being innocent by the Shining Path. Living in a small town, Apolinario is a mestizo who was abandoned by his upper class father, only learning Spanish later in life when a prostitute decided to teach him. In addition to being a farmer, he also represents the town as a local official. It is this last
role which condemns Apolinario in the eyes of the Shining Path militants in the town; he represents the oppression of the government/upper class. Apolinario says that he has always tried to help the community members and that they respect him for his efforts. This assertion may or may not be true, but it is irrelevant to the Shining Path. Apolinario’s captors accuse him of being abusive and of being a thief. He tries to defend himself, but his captors have already made up their minds: “No le dejaron continuar, a una orden de su jefe, entre nerviosos y temerosos, le dieron de golpes, puñadas, patadas, hasta tirarlo sin aliento al suelo” (155). While it is probably true that Apolinario inherited land and legally bought other plots, what Apolinario does not understand is that it is not his specific actions which make him abusive or a thief; it is the system. A major factor in the oppression of the indigenous peoples was the usurpation of their land during colonization. Ever since that time, indigenous peoples have fought in courts to regain their lands, and some have carried out land invasions based on the belief that their land was stolen from them. As a result, the Shining Path took up this indigenous cause and committed violence against those people who represented the oppressive system. Apolinario was both a government official and a landowner, which meant that he was a doubly repressive figure. Therefore, although Apolinario may not have caused any specific harm to the community, other Peruvians in his position had done so, and he could not be separated from them. The Shining Path was using violence to make amends for the effects of past violence. Unfortunately, this was another tactic that was not understood by all Peruvians. As was demonstrated by the newspaper coverage in Chapter 2, like Apolinario, many Peruvians could understand the violence against people who had committed specific acts to oppress the lower classes, but they did not understand why
people were being killed who had not directly caused any suffering. Had Apolinarío lived, his inability to understand the Shining Path’s excessive violence could have resulted in his memory’s difficulty to cope with the past. In turn, this could have affected his relationships with other members of society, thus contributing to the development of collective trauma.

Search for Truth

Many people who suffer from trauma want to know the truth of what happened in the past. They may feel that by uncovering the truth, they will be able to let go of the past and continue on with their lives. This reaction is very common for people who lose loved ones due to acts of violence, like the mothers in Argentina who formed the organization Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo in order to find out more information about their children’s disappearances. In the case of Adrián in La hora azul, however, his father participated in the violence, and Adrián began to feel the guilt of his father weighing him down. Adrián and his father did not have a good relationship, and it embarrassed him to think that his father had treated others even worse than he had treated him: “Esa voz áspera con la que me ordenaba seguir estudios en el extranjero o ver a los hijos de sus generales amigos era la misma voz con la que había ordenado matar a las mujeres a las que acababa de follarse. Al hacerlo quizá las había golpeado con esos nudillos gruesos y pelados que yo recordaba. Me sentía terriblemente acalorado” (40). Although Adrián tells his friend Platón that he does not feel guilty, Platón does not think that this is possible: “‘Todos tenemos la culpa de nuestros padres, y de nuestros hijos también’” (149). It becomes apparent that Platón’s statement holds true for Adrián.
because guilt is the motivation of his search: “Quiero que ella me diga si mi papa fue tan desgraciado como dicen. [...] También me siento mal, la verdad” (149). Although Adrián will not admit his guilt outwardly, his words demonstrate that he is suffering on the inside. During the conflict, Adrián lived in Lima, and being from the upper class, was somewhat isolated from the violence that was occurring. He could see news of the violence on the television, and he could witness certain acts of violence such as the blackouts. But his role was, for the most part, that of a superficial observer whose everyday life was not greatly affected. However, after the conflicted had already ended and Adrián learned of the atrocities committed by his father and other military personnel in Ayacucho, he became interested in learning the truth about the past. There were no memories that were plaguing him as was the case with many of the other characters. Nonetheless, the thought that his father was guilty of human rights violations would not let him live his life in the present. Adrián needed the memories of others to enable him to understand his father and absolve the guilt.

However, the search for truth is just the first step in overcoming guilt; it is only the reconciliation of society which will truly allow Peruvians to live in peace. In the case of Adrián, he looks to contribute to the reconciliation process by helping a victim of violence; he gives money to Miriam, and he also helps Miguel after Miriam’s death, at the same time, developing a strong relationship with him. Thus, though Adrián has not erased his father’s actions, he has helped to heal the bonds between the different social classes, contributing to Peru’s efforts to overcome collective trauma. Even more importantly, Adrián realizes that his search for truth is not a fleeting whim but has caused
him to change fundamentally as a person. Thus, in addressing the effects of the conflict, he was opening himself up to the possibility of addressing the divisions in society which motivated the conflict: “Las palabras de Miriam resucitaban a mi padre, que ahora se me presentaba de pie, en la sala, con sus galones y su uniforme verde y negro. Ella había reconstruido su fantasma y me lo había devuelto. Yo sólo se lo podía agradecer. La llegada de Miriam había abierto las puertas del palacio de la indiferencia en cuyos salones hasta entonces yo me había acomodado” (271). Adrián was now recognizing the suffering of the lower classes in society, and this is a step towards arriving at true reconciliation.

Rationalization

In order to avoid guilt and trauma, one reaction is to try to rationalize participating in the perpetration of violence. One may rationalize because he or she is not directly perpetrating the violence or because he or she was forced to execute the actions. In the case of the narrator of “En la quebrada” by Walter Ventosilla Quispe, he is a member of the military who is holding people in his hometown prisoner. At the beginning of the story, he reminisces about his childhood in the town, remembering a game that he used to play with his friends. However, at the end of the story, the reader realizes that the narrator is keeping watch over his former friends and townspeople, who have been killed or are about to be killed by the military for being Shining Path terrorists. The narrator does not want to accept his culpability:
A mí me dijeron que me parara aquí, hermanos, no es nadita mi culpa, desde aquí los veo y harta pena que me da. No me miren de esa mala manera, les pido, yo no sé quién los puso así, además quién los mandó a meterse en eso de andar jodiendo al gobierno; no es mi culpa, les digo, el que yo esté aquí en la quebrada cuidándolos sobre esta piedra con este uniforme que me sancocha el alma y ustedes allí, tiesos, hinchados como reses pujadas mosqueándose al sol y amotinados como borregas despeñadas. (43)

While it is true that the narrator was ordered to stand guard, he is still a participant in the perpetration of violence. Inside, he certainly knows that he is partially at fault for the fate of his former fellow community members. His rationalization is proof of this subconscious admission. Although he is not yet suffering from trauma, the event has made an impact on him, and he fears that his memory will be unable to face it in the future. At this moment, he thinks that the only way to prevent trauma from developing is by absolving himself of responsibility. It is unclear, though, whether this could be a successful strategy. If he comes to truly believe in his innocence, it seems likely that he would not suffer from trauma because he would have no difficulty in reflecting on the event in the future. However, if this rationalization remains a cover-up for subconscious guilt, any questioning of the military’s actions in the future, such as trials, could trigger his unresolved memories of and the guilt associated with the event, which would result in the development of trauma. In Peru today, we have seen this process occur with the military personnel involved in the La Cantuta and Barrios Altos killings. Whereas the
military officers still seem to believe in their innocence, many of the soldiers admitted their guilt during the Fujimori trial and apologized to the family members of the victims. They had to have rationalized their actions during the conflict, and now, with the forced remembering of their participation, they have realized that though they were ordered to commit the crimes, they are still guilty of violating the human rights of their victims.

Rebel against Violence

In contrast to the narrator of “En la quebrada”, there are characters who refuse to take part in acts of violence. Although they still may suffer from trauma in the future, with their actions, they try to minimize society’s collective trauma. Both of the sources that I will be analyzing in this section, La boca del lobo (1988) and Coraje (1998), are based on true events from the Shining Path revolt and civil war, which show the commitment of many Peruvians to affecting change in society. In the film La boca del lobo, directed by Francisco Lombardi, the main character, Vitin Luna, who is a soldier in the military, does not agree with excessive military violence. At the beginning, Vitin simply witnesses violence and does nothing about it, even though he shows his disapproval. Later, when his friend Quique, another soldier, falsely accuses the townspeople of being terrorists, the lieutenant orders all of the townspeople to be killed after he unintentionally killed a peasant during questioning. When the lieutenant asks the soldiers to shoot the peasants, they all shoot except for Vitin. When Lieutenant Roca insists again that he shoot, he screams: “¡No quiero! ¡No voy a disparar! ¡No quiero!” After being put in jail, Vitin hears Roca justify the violence: “Nosotros hemos venido con una responsabilidad. Acabar con la subversión. Este es nuestro deber. Hemos actuado
por el bien del país y nadie puede juzgarnos por eso.” From his jail cell, he says that the lieutenant ordered the men to shoot in order to save his job and then yells “asesino.” At the end, we see Vitin taking off his uniform and deserting the army. We can see that Vitin never believed that committing excessive acts of violence was necessary to defeat the Shining Path. Nevertheless, he faces an internal struggle between what he knows is morally right and carrying out his duties as a soldier. Vitin initially tolerates the violence because he is not the one who is carrying the actions out. However, once he is put in the position of perpetrator, he realizes that he cannot continue to be complicit. By calling the lieutenant a murderer, it is clear that he understands that the violence is a violation of human rights. And when he deserts the army, it is apparent that he realizes the possible consequences of the military’s actions, the development of collective trauma. As a soldier, Vitin does not have the ability to change the overall military strategy, but he knows that at the very least, he is not participating in the perpetration of excessive violence, and he has made these soldiers stop and think. His situation is one that many soldiers faced during the conflict, and unfortunately, most of them, not strong enough to resist authority, made the same decision as the other soldiers in the film who fired at the townspeople. Nevertheless, Vitin serves as an inspiration to future soldiers and to the military institution, which have the ability to make a different decision in other circumstances. In addition, it gives soldiers who committed human rights violations during the conflict the chance to make amends for their actions and contribute to the reconciliation process.
Another person who made Peruvians stop and think was María Elena Moyano, the woman I discussed in the second chapter that rebelled against and was killed by the Shining Path. Due to her actions, a film, directed by Alberto Durant, was made about her life entitled Coraje, or courage. In the film, the Communist Party asks María Elena, the director of the Women’s Federation in her town, to contribute food and money to the Shining Path cause, but she refuses to do so because she prefers to carry out non-violent work for social change: “Los pocos alimentos son de las madres y de sus hijos. […] Esa plata es para nuestra revolución. […] Sendero no tiene derecho de pedirle plata a la Federación. Nadie tiene derecho, menos Uds. que están bañando en sangre al país.” Despite the bombing of her headquarters, she organizes a march against the Shining Path and gives a speech on achieving change: “En nombre de la revolución, ¿Se puede destruir lo que el pueblo ha construido con su propio esfuerzo? En nombre de la revolución, ¿Se puede matar de hambre a los niños? En nombre de la revolución, ¿Se puede simplemente matar? Porque la verdadera revolución es construcción, no destrucción. […] No le tenemos miedo a nadie. ¡Coraje! Yo les pido coraje en estos días difíciles.” After María Elena dies at the hands of the Shining Path, the film shows the townspeople chanting during her funeral procession: “María Elena no ha muerto. Vive con su pueblo. Hoy, mañana y siempre. Siempre María Elena.” Thus, María Elena, even more than Vitin, inspires the people of Peru. The film shows that María Elena is aware that by giving into the Shining Path, she would be contributing to the violence and the destruction of society. María Elena’s work for social change, instead of contributing to the future trauma of Peruvian society as a whole, as the Shining Path’s project did, contributed to better the lives of the poor and break down the divisions in society. According to the film, María
Elena was and continues to be a role model for Peruvians, a role model for true change in society. While many Peruvians let their fear control them, refusing to stand up for their beliefs, María Elena believed that while fear could save individual lives, it prolonged the violence against Peruvians and hindered or reversed positive change. Through this attitude, she gave Peruvians a sense of power which would help them in the future to combat trauma in society and work towards reconciliation. Based on the character portrayed in the film, we could say that María Elena, if she were alive today, would be involved in exposing the truth of what happened and would be continuing to grow organizations that aid in the progress of society in the present. The film shows María Elena receiving a prize for her work, the Courageous Mother Prize, or Premio Madre Coraje. Courage is, in the end, what María Elena represents, courage to face the unjust and courage to continue on even when no one believes that it is possible to do so. Though María Elena’s courage did not impede trauma from affecting Peruvian society, it has provided an impetus for change.

In conclusion, the reader has seen that many Peruvians have written short stories or novels or been involved in films which document expressions of the Shining Path revolt and civil war and the effects that the unresolved memory of these years has had on society as a whole. Though not all of the sources show how the Peruvian characters have suffered from trauma, they all give us insight into a facet of the writers’ and producers’ expressions of personal or collective trauma. For example, many of the short stories were written earlier and thus document the actual events themselves. They show how the Shining Path militants, the military and the Peruvian characters reacted to the events as
they were happening and what the motivations were for participation in the events. Many Shining Path militants portrayed in the sources were reacting to the layers of trauma built up in lower class society due to past oppression; though they hoped for a better future, they actually helped to create another layer of trauma. Like the Shining Path characters, the military characters contributed to the cycle of violence, perpetrating excesses that would result in a massive number of casualties and negative memories for many Peruvians in the future. If we look at each individual character in the sources documenting the events themselves, we see a variety of motivations and reactions. For instance, not all of the soldiers believed in committing excesses, as can be seen by the actions of Vitin in *La boca del lobo*, and some Shining Path militants became disillusioned with their cause, like Darwin in “El cazador.” These differences are important to note because they demonstrate an aspect of the reality of the events of the 1980s and 90s. The Shining Path was not a uniform organization: many peasants were forced to join, many were caught between the Shining Path and the military, and many had personal reasons for joining. Likewise, the military was not homogenous. While some soldiers appeared to believe in killing at any cost, the strategy of Fujimori, others appeared to believe that their role was simply to defend their country. The result of the non-coherence of both the Shining Path and the military was an extended armed conflict, society’s inability to deal with the memories of which caused them to suffer from trauma in the future.

This suffering is also apparent in many of the sources that I have analyzed. The characters in the sources manifest trauma in a variety of ways depending on their
personal experiences during and after the Shining Path revolt and civil war. Some characters suffering from trauma cannot cope with their everyday lives, and thus experience breakdowns or commit suicide, as is the case for Miriam in *La hora azul* and commander Carrión in *Abril rojo*. The characters suffer these breakdowns because the unresolved memories of the past invade their present lives, making it impossible for them to start a new life. Another reaction of many of the characters is to attempt to remember or forget the past. Characters who remember the past, like Juan in *Paloma de papel*, are trying to overcome trauma and move forward in their lives by confronting past events. On the other hand, characters that decide to hide the past, like the government and Commander Carrión in *Abril rojo*, want to avoid a repetition of the past and think that a clean break from what happened is necessary for society to move forward. Though most of the sources do not show how the characters cope with trauma in the long-term, *La hora azul* does show that, individually, there can be positive effects from confronting trauma through seeking professional help. Overall, though, what the sources show is that the effects of individual trauma are based on many factors. How someone’s memory influences his or her present depends on what happened to him or her and how much this is connected to the person’s every day present routine. In addition, we have seen that the characters’ methods for confronting their trauma also vary substantially, depending on individual personality and the influence of those around them. These cases of individual trauma function as a teaching tool. They show Peruvians how the individual traumas have created collective trauma by damaging relationships both within and among social classes and the negative consequences that have resulted by not fully recognizing or dealing with the problem. The sources are society’s memory and truth, and,
consequently, they contribute to the reconciliation process. They also recognize that the divisions in society still exist and, as a result, the underlying layers of trauma have still yet to be addressed. Adrián in *La hora azul* wants to make amends with Miriam and her family, but even he realizes towards the end of the novel that a very marked division continues to exist:

La línea que nos separa a nosotros de ellos está marcada con el filo de una gran navaja. Es obvio que yo no voy a hacer nada por remediar esa injusticia tan enhebrada a la realidad, no puedo hacer nada, no voy a ayudarlos, a lo mejor tampoco me interesa. Y sin embargo haber sabido sobre tantas muertes y torturas y violaciones ahora me entristece tanto, y también me avergüenza un poco, no sé por qué. No voy a olvidarlos. Aunque sólo me lo diga a mí mismo, y a ella. (274)

Thus, as Adrián admits, reconciling this most recent layer of trauma in Peruvian history is but one small step in overcoming the layers of trauma that have been built up for so many years. Who is going to rectify the injustices of the past? Is it possible?
Chapter 4: The Present Day: Efforts to Overcome Trauma

Since 2000, there have been many efforts to attain truth, justice and reconciliation. Three important projects have been the work of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the documentary *State of Fear* and the trial against former president Alberto Fujimori. These three endeavors are reactions to the trauma that Peruvians have been suffering, their memory unable to deal with the events of the Shining Path revolt and civil war. By developing a TRC, Peruvians were attempting to search for the truth of what happened during the conflict and aid in the reconciliation of the country. To achieve reconciliation, it is necessary to overcome trauma; the TRC facilitates this process by allowing Peruvians to share in the experiences of the victims. In addition, the TRC has made suggestions for reparations to victims and for changes to the justice system. In response to the TRC’s work, the judiciary has been taking steps to prosecute high ranking military and government officials. Secondly, the documentary *State of Fear* has disseminated the truth by showing the perspectives of both victims of violence and perpetrators, all of these actors coming from different groups and social classes in society. Finally, the Fujimori trial has been a defining moment in Peruvian history. It has attempted to uncover the truth of what happened during the Fujimori regime to emphasize that impunity is never acceptable and to provide Peruvians, especially the victims and their families, with a sense that justice has been served in the name of all who died as a result of government/military violence.
In this chapter, I want to specifically show how the TRC, *State of Fear* and the Fujimori trial have attempted to attain truth, justice and reconciliation for the Peruvian people. First, I will analyze the general conclusions of the TRC and the recommendations that they made to help achieve reconciliation. I will subsequently look at how successful Peru has been in implementing these recommendations. For *State of Fear*, I will provide the reader with an analysis of the variety of speakers who participated in the making of the documentary. Have the speakers experienced trauma? What have been the effects of trauma on their lives? How do their testimonies contribute or not to Peruvian reconciliation? Lastly, I will analyze the coverage of the trial in the newspaper *El Comercio*. As I stated in chapter 2, this is a conservative newspaper published in Lima which came to be critical of the Fujimori regime after the self-coup took place. While the *El Comercio* journalists demonstrate a critical perspective of Fujimori throughout the trial, they do write stories from the perspective of the defense. The newspaper represents Lima residents and the middle/upper classes who supported Fujimori’s efforts to end the conflict, which influenced them to present a more balanced perspective than other more liberal newspapers and on-line sources that were more focused on condemning Fujimori. It is for this reason that I have chosen to use *El Comercio* as the basis for my analysis, in addition to the fact that the newspaper is one of the most respected and widely disseminated in Peru and now in the world due to its extensive on-line coverage. In analyzing the coverage, I will divide the chapter into sections based on the actors participating in the trial. First of all, how did Fujimori present himself and his actions? Secondly, what contributions did the witnesses and lawyers make in uncovering the truth and achieving justice and what perspectives did the
The Peruvian TRC: Confronting Trauma through Truth and Reconciliation

The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, formed on June 4th, 2001 by Interim President Valentín Paniagua, was comprised of members of the academic, religious, human rights, military and legal communities, thus representing a variety of analytical perpectives: Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres (president of Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú), Dr. Beatriz Alva Hart (ex Congresswoman), Dr. Rolando Ames Cobián (Sociologist, political researcher and analyst), Monsignor José Antúnez de Mayolo (ex apostolic administrator of the Ayacucho Archdiocese), Air Force Lieutenant General Luis Arias Grazziani, Dr. Enrique Bernales Ballesteros (Executive Director of the Andean Jurists Commission), Dr. Carlos Iván Degregori Caso (anthropologist), Father Gastón Garatea Yori (Sacred Hearts priest), Minister Humberto Lay Sun (leader of the Assemblies of God), Sofía Macher Batanero (ex Executive Secretary of the Human Rights National Coordinator), Engineer Alberto Morote Sánchez (ex President of Universidad San Cristóbal de Huamanga) and Engineer Carlos Tapia García (political researcher and analyst). The issue of human rights had been a key component in establishing Paniagua’s provisional government, in large part due to the influence of the Peruvian human rights coordinating board CNDH (Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos) and the IACHR’s (American Court of Human Rights) efforts to prevent the
state’s attempts to achieve impunity (González Cueva 56-57). The result was the creation of an inter-institutional working group in December 2000 that drafted a decree which would serve as the basis of the Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM that created the TRC (González Cueva 57-58). In Chapter 1, I discussed the goals of the commission to achieve political, social and interpersonal reconciliation. For the TRC, establishing the truth about the Shining Path revolt and civil war was one of the main components in achieving this reconciliation. Of course, defining the truth can be a difficult endeavor since all Peruvians may have a different idea of what it is, thus tainting their stories. In addition, the truth is also subjective for institutions which use their ideologies to guide their search; they may be interested in bringing to light certain truths but not others. In the introduction to the Final Report, the TRC explains the objectives of the Supreme Decree related to the search for truth:

a) Analizar las condiciones políticas, sociales y culturales, así como los comportamientos que, desde la sociedad y las instituciones del Estado, contribuyeron a la trágica situación de violencia por la que atravesó el Perú; b) contribuir al esclarecimiento por los órganos jurisdiccionales respectivos, cuando corresponda, de los crímenes y violaciones de los derechos humanos por obra de las organizaciones terroristas o de algunos agentes del Estado, procurando determinar el paradero y situación de las víctimas, e identificando, en la medida de lo posible, las presuntas responsabilidades. (26)

We could say, then, that the TRC was attempting to uncover the truth of the oppression which motivated the Shining Path to initiate the armed struggle, specifically, the cultural
memories of the lower classes which had been suppressed. They also planned to discover who had committed human rights violations during the conflict and the details of their actions. Thus, the TRC not only wanted to expose events previously unknown to the public but also wanted Peruvians to understand why they had occurred and what their ramifications were.

In order to discover the truth, the TRC analyzes how each group in society participated in the armed struggle. According to the report, the Shining Path “was responsible for 54% of victim deaths” (TRC general conclusions). Overall, the TRC finds the Shining Path leadership most at fault for causing damage to society: “For the violent practices of occupation and control of rural territories and peasant communities, with a high cost in lives and human suffering; for their genocidal policy that involved acts to provoke the State” (TRC general conclusions). Through their analysis, the TRC shows that they did not take into account the end goal of the Shining Path. Unlike the militants themselves, the TRC did not feel that trying to change society justified their excessive violence; maintaining democracy is essential, and the Shining Path was breaking down democracy: “The PCP-SL and the MRTA unilaterally excluded themselves from the democratic system, and through their armed actions, actually undermined the democratic political regime installed in 1980” (TRC general conclusions). Therefore, according to the TRC, Peru must protect human rights in their attempts to confront the layers of trauma in society.

The next groups analyzed by the TRC were the police and the military. The TRC found that both groups were responsible for executions, disappearances, tortures and
rapes (TRC general conclusions). They then explain the reason for the consistent violation of human rights: “During the first years of their intervention (1983-85), they lacked adequate intelligence on the organization, military profile and strategy of the PCP-SL. By decision of civilian authority, their objective was to rapidly end the conflict without taking into account the cost in human lives” (TRC general conclusions). The TRC says that towards the late 80s, there was a change in strategy: “At this stage the human rights violations were less numerous, but more deliberate or planned than in the previous stage. Moreover, death squads appeared whose actions made Peru the world leader in the forced disappearance of persons in those years” (TRC general conclusions). For the TRC, the police and military were able to defeat the Shining Path for two reasons: the police unit DINCOTE’s capture of Abimael Guzmán and the increasingly more efficient fighting strategy of the military (TRC general conclusions). Thus, the TRC believes that the police and military learned from their mistakes, though they should have protected the rights of their citizens throughout the process.

According to the TRC, the successive governments should have been more committed to the protection of human rights. The first government to deal with the conflict was that of Fernando Belaunde. The TRC applauds Belaunde for his attempts “to preserve the democratic system, local and general elections, and freedom of the press in the context of a difficult transition to a democratic regime, and in the middle of the worst internal armed conflict in the history of the Republic” (TRC general conclusions). However, the TRC later criticizes him for “the intention and expectation of eliminating subversion in the short term, with no consideration for the cost in human lives” (TRC
general conclusions). Like Belaunde, Alan García, in the TRC’s estimation, also tried to maintain democracy in Peru, and while he respected human rights in punishing the military personnel responsible for the Accomarca massacre, with the economic crisis in the second half of his presidency, he was not able to control the fight against the Shining Path (TRC general conclusions). Finally, the TRC notes that during the Fujimori regime, the death squad Colina was formed, which was responsible for “assassinations, forced disappearances and massacres” (TRC general conclusions). In addition, the TRC says that Fujimori suspended democracy, and “in the last years of the Fujimori government, the internal armed conflict was manipulated with the goal of keeping the regime in power” (TRC general conclusions). Through their analysis of the successive governments, the TRC shows that Belaunde, García and Fujimori were all responsible for human rights violations, and thus all contributed to the increased anxiety of the Peruvian population and the swelling of memories which have resulted in the trauma of society as a whole, though they saw Fujimori’s infractions as being the most severe.

According to the TRC, the judicial and legislative branches of government aided in slowing the reconciliation process. First of all, from 1980-1985, Congress was negligent in its duties: “During this period, in which the largest number of Peruvians died or disappeared because of the war, Congress did not undertake any investigation of the mounting human rights violations that both the PCP-SL and the security forces were committing with impunity” (TRC general conclusions). Then, during the Fujimori regime, negligence became active crime:
The post-coup official majority in Congress, despite the brave attitude of opposition members of Congress, not only abdicated its constitutional function of oversight but also endorsed and promoted cover-ups and impunity. An especially noteworthy moment in the institution’s participation in the process of affirming impunity was the passage of Law 26479, the General Amnesty Law (June 15, 1995). (TRC general conclusions)

Similarly, the judiciary did its best to carry out Fujimori’s wishes even if it meant violating human rights: “The TRC has established that strict and uncritical application of the 1992 antiterrorist legislation undermined the guarantee of impartiality and accuracy in trials of detainees. Not only did hundreds of innocent persons have to endure long sentences, but due process violations cast a heavy shadow of doubt over the trials that took place” (TRC general conclusions). The goal was to achieve the incarceration of as many Shining Path militants as possible, even if that meant the imprisonment of innocent people. Conversely, when it came to the military, the opposite strategy was employed: “They abstained from bringing members of the armed forces accused of serious crimes to justice, systematically ruling in every case of contested jurisdiction in favor of military jurisdiction, where impunity held sway” (TRC general conclusions). As a result of the actions of the Congress and the judiciary, Peruvians would suffer the consequences. Many victims and their families were upset that nothing was done to rectify the harm caused to them, and many Peruvians were disconcerted that the military was not held accountable for its excesses. All of these immediate consequences would later become
magnified after 2000 when Peruvians suffering from trauma clamored for truth and justice.

Overall, the conflict had many negative effects on the Peruvian population, according to the TRC. Most importantly, they saw the conflict as deepening the divisions in society rather than attenuating them, as the Shining Path had hoped to accomplish: “The breadth and intensity of the conflict accentuated serious national imbalances; destroyed the democratic order; worsened poverty and deepened inequality; aggravated forms of discrimination and exclusion; weakened social and emotional networks and fostered a culture of fear and distrust” (TRC general conclusions). In essence, the TRC is saying that the conflict had added yet another layer of trauma to society. Specifically, they affirms that Peruvians today are having even more difficulty living together than before the violence began: “The extreme suffering has caused resentment and has colored social coexistence and interpersonal relationships with jealousy and violence” (TRC general conclusions). Consequently, the violence of the 80s and 90s resulted in collective trauma, thus engendering acts of revenge and distrust among the population. At the same time, individual traumas have developed: “The TRC has established that broad sectors of the population affected by the violence suffer from one form or another of effects on their mental health, which weakens their ability for self-development and for overcoming the wounds of the past” (TRC general conclusions). We could say, then, that individuals and Peruvian society as a whole have been stifled in their attempts to move forward due to the damage that the Shining Path revolt and civil war has caused to them mentally, socially and economically.
For this reason, the TRC made recommendations to help Peru repair the damage and achieve reconciliation. First of all, the TRC focuses on the peasants: “Since the vast majority of the victims were poor, indigenous, peasants, traditionally discriminated against and excluded, they are the ones who should receive preferential treatment from the State” (TRC general conclusions). Second of all, the TRC recommends implementing both symbolic and economic reparations to individual and collective victims:

The TRC presents the country with a Comprehensive Plan for Reparations in which individual and collective, symbolic and material forms of compensation are combined. […] It places emphasis on: i) symbolic reparations, the recovery of memory and the return of dignity to the victims; ii) attention to education and mental health; and iii) individual and collective economic reparations (programs for institutional reconstruction, community development, basic services and income generation). (TRC general conclusions)

The reparations plan of the TRC is very important because it recognizes not only that victims need economic help to restart their lives but also mental and emotional assistance. Since the victims are suffering from trauma, they are unable to reconstruct a coherent narrative about the past. Some of the events that they can remember may appear to them in a disjointed order, and many of the details may be incomplete or absent from their conscious memory. As a result, by receiving help in organizing and clarifying their memories, they will be taking the first step in confronting their pain and overcoming
trauma. In addition, the fact that society is recognizing their pain validates the excessive nature of the past events, establishes a safe environment for them to speak freely and shows the victims that they are working to create change.

As part of and in conjunction with the reparations program, the TRC feels that the judiciary must allow victims to understand that their suffering has been addressed: “The TRC believes that justice is an essential part of the reparation process. No path toward reconciliation will be passable if it is not accompanied by an effective exercise of justice in terms of reparation for the damages incurred by the victims, as well as the fair punishment of the perpetrators and, as a consequence, an end to impunity” (TRC general conclusions). Of course, as the reader saw in the first chapter, there are scholars believe that the pursuit of justice is contrary to the reconciliation process because it does not foster communication on the part of the perpetrators of violence; in other words, they will not incriminate themselves if the information can be used against them (Rigby 184-185). Nonetheless, the Peruvian TRC believes that by not punishing perpetrators, society will be sent the message that there are no consequences to committing excessive acts of violence. The perpetrators could commit crimes again in the future, and victims may have increased difficulty in overcoming their trauma.

In addition to specifically addressing the effects of the conflict, the TRC makes recommendations which concentrate on the divisions existing in society since colonization. Their first recommendation is to provide all Peruvians with full citizenship (TRC general conclusions). We know that the lower classes in society have been exploited and oppressed by the State, and this recommendation seems to be an attempt to
address this problem. In combination with this initiative, the TRC hopes that Peru can reduce discrimination: “An overarching goal: building a country that is positively recognized as multiethnic, pluri-cultural, and multilingual. That recognition is the basis for overcoming the discriminatory practices underlying the multiple discords in the history of our Republic” (TRC general conclusions). The TRC believes that the oppression before the conflict is the underlying factor for the current problems, and thus it must be addressed in order to truly overcome the most recent layer of collective trauma. Therefore, if the Peruvian people can acknowledge the plurality of ethnic groups and cultures in their society, it is a step towards including oppressed groups in the decision-making processes and providing them with the respect that they deserve and increased professional opportunities. Nevertheless, recognition and the diminution of discrimination will not take place through recommendations but through the education of the population, by including the cultural memories of the lower classes in the historical memory of the state, which could be initiated by changing the curriculum in schools and universities. Though education will certainly not influence all upper class Peruvians to change their perspective, it could influence a small percentage, who could lead through example, treating the oppressed groups as equals. In conjunction with these measures, the quality of public education would need to improve, especially in rural areas, and lower class Peruvians would need to have greater access to university education, thus giving them the preparation necessary to run their own businesses more effectively and be competitive in the workplace. If this were to happen, Peru could achieve a true reconciliation, in which the divisions in society are drastically reduced or eliminated. The fact that the divisions have existed for centuries, however, means that this
recommendation is a long-term project. To attain this goal, the TRC recommends working at reconciliation at all levels, “at the personal and family level, in social organizations and in the recasting of the relationship between the State and society in its entirety” (TRC general conclusions). Reconciliation, therefore, is both an individual and collective process; the needs and concerns of individuals, families and groups all need to be addressed in order for growth to be realized.

Since the TRC report was presented to President Alejandro Toledo on August 28, 2003, there have been attempts to implement the recommendations. In regards to the judiciary, there has been positive change: “Since the founding of Peru’s TRC, amnesty laws have been voided, human rights cases have been taken to court and the judiciary has reasserted its role through the creation of a special prosecutor’s office charged with investigating human rights violations” (González Cueva 59). González Cueva specifically mentions that the TRC was interested in bringing to justice the higher officials involved in ordering the violation of human rights (64-65). Although there are still many officials to be tried, we can see that the strategy has been effective in that during the Fujimori trial in 2008, Julio Salazar Monroe, former director of the SIN, Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional or National Intelligence Service, was sentenced to 35 years in jail for his participation in ordering the death squad Colina’s activities. Of course, the most important conviction of all was that of Fujimori in April of 2009, who was sentenced to 25 years in prison for ordering the kidnappings of businessman Samuel Dyer and journalist Gustavo Gorriti and the killings perpetrated by the Colina group, specifically for the cases of Barrios Altos and the University La Cantuta.
In addition to these judiciary successes, Peru has also achieved a legislative accomplishment. According to the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), “The Peruvian Congress passed reparations legislation in 2005” (“The Truth and Reconciliation Commission”). Nevertheless, the distribution of these reparations has been a slow process:

In early 2004 Peru’s president created a High-Level Multisector Commission (CMAN) to provide follow-up on actions and state policies regarding peace, collective reparations and national reconciliation. [...] This body is widely known as the follow-up commission to the CVR. During its first two years, however, its impact was limited because of lack of funding and its subordination to the Council of Ministers (PCM). The CMAN received some funding from the national budget in 2007 and implemented a collective reparations program. In early 2008 the National Reparations Council started registering individual victims and communities affected by violence. This process will ultimately lead to the granting of individual reparations. (ICTJ)

We could say, then, that Peru is taking steps in the right direction in its pursuit of national reconciliation, but the government has not been efficient in carrying out the recommendations. Victims have already waited eight years since the reconciliation process began, and even longer since the acts of violence took place. More perpetrators of violence need to be convicted, and reparations need to be distributed to all victims. In addition, the TRC’s recommendation that all groups be acknowledged and respected has
still not come to fruition, though reparations and justice will enable the government begin
to establish a relationship of trust with the peasants in society. However, the government
must continue to support anti-discriminatory and anti-racist attitudes, so engrained in
Peruvian society.

*State of Fear: Confronting Trauma through Truth and Reconciliation*

*State of Fear*, a 2005 documentary based on the findings of the Peruvian TRC,
directed by Pamela Yates and produced by Paco de Onís of Skylight Pictures in New
York, allows all sectors of Peruvian society to talk about their experiences during the
Shining Path revolt and civil war, thus allowing Peruvians to learn some of the truths of
what happened during those years. Carlos Ivan Degregori, a Truth Commissioner,
underscored the importance of memory in regards to the conflict during the inauguration
of the Truth Commission Museum: “La Comisión de la Verdad y la Reconciliación
considera que Perú necesita memoria y necesita recordar los años terribles que vivimos.
[...] Un país si no tiene memoria y no sabe de dónde viene, si no sabe qué le pasó, va a
volver a repetirlo y va a poder ser manipulado fácilmente.” Thus, those involved in the
making of this documentary believe that in order to recover from the trauma that they are
suffering from, live life in the present and make changes to avoid the repetition of the
past, Peruvians must remember and talk about the events that occurred. This seems to be
the underlying thesis for the documentary as a whole, which discusses a wide range of
events of the Shining Path revolt and civil war through testimony.
The first person mentioned in the documentary is Vera Lentz, a photojournalist who documented the conflict. Vera discusses one particular event, the massacre in Socos, where she took photos. The documentary shows Vera returning to Socos to show the villagers those photos. As the villagers take her back to the site of the massacre, she explains that they had told her that the sinchis, or the counter-terrorist police, were responsible for the massacre, which resulted in the death of 34 people. Then, Vera gives an account of exactly what happened that day: “The sinchis went to investigate an engagement party at the home of the groom. The sinchis forced the 34 people out of their house at gunpoint. They marched them into this gorge. They shot them all right down in the gorge. Then, they dynamited the mountain to cover up the massacre.” The event obviously affected Vera very deeply. She returned to Lima and showed the pictures to people. However, the pictures did not impact them emotionally, and they thought that the victims must have been guilty. First of all, they lived far away from where this violence had taken place. And second of all, they were affected by the divisions between social classes. Since the victims were peasants, and thus seen as inferior, there was less sympathy towards them, and they were considered to be less honorable than representatives of the military. In addition, peasants had been victims of state violence since colonization, making these events seem less out of the ordinary. Despite this initial reaction, Vera allows all Peruvians today to remember what happened in Socos and think about how this event and others have affected them. The acknowledgement of trauma is the first step in the recovery process; for Vera, Peruvians have to admit that the horrors of the past were real and that the memories of these events are still affecting Peruvians in the present. Although they did not want to do this before, now that the state is
acknowledging its responsibility and mistakes, the suffering of the peasants has become legitimized, making it more feasible for all Peruvians to recognize the truth of the events and their consequences. Like Vera’s photos, *La boca del lobo*, which was based on the same set of events, was also an attempt to achieve recognition in society. Though it was released in 1988, in the midst of the conflict, it impacted both the public and critics. Nonetheless, although Peruvians could appreciate the excessiveness of the violence at the time, they were either not yet suffering from trauma or not ready to confront it. As a result, today, both Vera’s photos and the film hold different meanings for the public. They are not simply records of violence but truth-revealing sources which stimulate society to dialogue about the effects of the conflict on relationships among society, confronting their collective trauma.

Another Peruvian who speaks in the documentary is Beatriz Alva Hart, a lawyer from the upper middle class who worked for Fujimori during his regime, hoping that she could help change society for the better. Beatriz admits that she and others of her social class did not realize the suffering that lower class Peruvians were experiencing: “Siempre [a las personas indígenas] las considerabas menos. Los blancos son los que tienen el dinero, los que están educados, los que tienen las posibilidades, los indígenas no.” The Peruvians in the middle and upper classes do not suffer from constant exploitation, and therefore, the suffering and trauma of the indigenous peoples is beyond their reality. As a result, for many years of the conflict, she says that middle and upper class Peruvians were not really aware of all of the violence occurring. Certainly, as I demonstrated in Chapter 2, they knew that the violence was occurring, but, as was the case with Vera’s photos,
they did not care. Since their lifestyles were not affected, it was easy for them to pretend
that there were no problems. Though the Shining Path was attempting to implement a
change in the power structure, the middle and upper classes did not think that there was
imminent danger of this taking place. The violence was mainly affecting people of the
lower classes outside of Lima, which meant that life would continue on as normal: “Lo
escuché pero no lo oí. O pasó y no lo registré. En verdad estaba como ajena a esa
situación.” In other words, middle and upper class Peruvians did not want to admit the
seriousness of the conflict because they did not want to act or create change in society.
However, as you saw in chapter 2, the violence eventually did reach Lima, and the
middle and upper classes were forced to recognize it. It was at this moment, says Beatriz,
that the Shining Path and their armed struggle became real for her social class: “Como ya
entraron a la zona común, ya intentaron atacar a la gente blanca, la gente acomodada.
Allí recién existe Sendero. Antes no existía Sendero. […] Sentías ya que efectivamente
eras un blanco, sentías ya que había la posibilidad que tú seas una nueva víctima.” But
the remoteness of the violence was not the only reason for the non-existence of the
Shining Path. The other reason was that the urban Peru of the middle and upper classes
was not involved in the conflict. The world of the lower classes was completely
separated from theirs, except for being their source of cheap labor. For them, the Shining
Path only existed when their lives and power were threatened. The upper and middle
classes were experiencing the oppression of violence for the first time. It is for this reason
that today, all Peruvians struggle to live their lives, their memories prohibiting them from
understanding the past, and consequently, society as a whole must work together to
overcome trauma. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that many Peruvians, having
not been subjected to oppression and exploitation before the conflict, still do not understand the need to go beyond addressing the effects of the 1980s and 90s. Beatriz emphasizes this fact when she exclaims: “No entienden [peruanos de clase alta] porque no quieren endender o porque no le conviene entender.” Beatriz takes the first step in addressing the divisions in society by asking the victims and their families whom she met while working for the Truth Commission for forgiveness: “Por todos ellos les pido perdón. Pido perdón por todos mis amigos y gente de mi clase social que hasta ahora no entienden.” Hopefully, in the future, more people will join Beatriz in initiating dialogue and attempting to create change, but this will not occur until the power structure is changed in the country, which would require the modification of the educational system previously discussed. Only then might the government enforce anti-discriminatory legislation and the perspectives of the general population begin to transform.

Another group which was subjected to a great deal of violence was the Ashaninka Indians in the Peruvian jungle. In the previous chapter, I discussed how Shoreni, an Ashaninka Indian in “El Cazador”, was killed by the Shining Path. Likewise, the Ashaninka, Benavides Cuevas, speaks of the killing of his people. Although he was kidnapped by the Shining Path when he was only eight years old, Benavides eventually became disillusioned with the party when they killed his brother and his brother’s girlfriend, who were trying to defect. It is when Benavides explains this execution that we truly see how his struggles with his memories have affected him: “Tomaron la decisión y aniquilaron los dos. Yo he visto como estaba gritando. Siempre me recuerdo. […] Amontinado como un pollo a matar y dejarle nada más.” His immediate reaction
was to leave the Shining Path, but the image of his brother screaming and his dead body would cause him to suffer from trauma in the present. Benavides’ emotions demonstrate this trauma; almost in tears, he says: “Siempre me hace falta porque él ha sido mi hermano mayor.” Benavides’ life in the present will never be same. Although, like Darwin in “El cazazador,” he eventually realized the flaws of the Shining Path ideology, specifically that changing society does not justify the killing of innocent people, this did not prevent the onset of trauma. Certainly, making a change in his life was a positive step; however, Benavides needed to speak of his experience to truly begin his recovery process.

Unlike Benavides, Magdalena Monteza was not only a witness to but a victim of violence. She was a nineteen-year-old student who was on her way to enroll in college. But Magdalena was never able to enroll; she was abducted by the Peruvian military and taken to a military base where she was interrogated. Magdalena describes her experience at the base:

Me preguntaban por nombres, [...] estudiantes dirigentes de la Universidad La Cantuta. Yo aún no conocía porque no estudiaba allí. Yo era inocente. Me empezaron a dar golpes en la cabeza. No sabía lo que pasaba. Eran unos monstruos. [...] Me pusieron sobre una silla, empezaron a romper la ropa, a desvestirme. Me pusieron una inyección. Empecé a caer. Es cuando ellos abusan sexualmente de mi persona. No fue una vez. Lo volvieron a hacer como tres veces. Después me levanté y
As a result of the incident, Magdalena became pregnant and had to spend six years in jail. In this case, it is very apparent that Magdalena is suffering from trauma. In tears, she exclaims: “No me importaba los veinte años de prisión que me daban. Si me hubieran dado la pena de muerte, no me importaba. Era mejor. No quería vivir. […] Lo que me dolía más era lo que habían hecho conmigo. […] Mató mi juventud, la mejor etapa de mi vida, y mi futuro, la carrera profesional. Moralmente me afectaron.” Magdalena could not fulfill her dreams and she does not seem to know how to deal with the fact that she lost so many years of her life. She is still alive, but she has yet to confront the past; telling her story seems to be the first step in this process for both her and her daughter Carla: “[Carla] Me entendió muy bien. […] Para que conozca su origen, su madre y la verdad.” In her heart, Magdalena feels that Carla must know how she was born in order to understand herself and her family and be able to start anew. By knowing the truth, Carla can also fight against the reoccurrence of these types of abuses. In addition, Magdalena’s story makes Peruvians realize the true reality of the conflict stated in the documentary and emphasized by the narrator, who says that Fujimori ruled by military law and that anyone could be detained, tortured and held indefinitely without any rights. Peruvians need to understand this so that they can change the face of government and prevent similar actions from happening in the future.

To show the perspective of the military, the documentary portrays marine Carlos Sánchez talking about his own experience. He says that when they interrogated activists,
they would not talk, resulting in violence. For example, once, after they captured six militants, they tied their feet together and hung them from helicopters. While in the air, they cut some of the ropes “para generar temor a los otros. Cuando llegaba el turno del último, […] ‘tienes que decir quiénes son las cabecillas y donde están.’ Para salvarse, empieza a contar todo. Al final lo dejamos caer.” From the way Carlos Sánchez tells his story, it is evident that he knows that their actions were excessive; he seems to feel regretful that even the terrorist who confessed was killed, although he uses the difficulties facing the military as a justification for perpetrating the violence. However, while it is important to know why the excesses were committed, justifying them does not contribute to the reconciliation of society. I think that his testimony would be more beneficial for Peruvians if it had been accompanied by an apology.

A validation of the excessive nature of Fujimori’s strategy comes from Benedicto Jimenez, the Chief Detective in the anti-terrorist police division. The narrator explains how Jimenez’s unit gathered intelligence about the Shining Path leaders, and after close surveillance, they found Guzmán’s safe house. Once Guzmán was captured, says Jimenez, the Shining Path began to weaken: “Cuando cae el líder, lo ven como un ser humano. Rompe la parte mitológica y muchos dejan las armas y se van de la organización.” The narrative told by Jimenez proves that excessive violence was not needed for the military/police to make advances in the fight against the Shining Path. It was intelligence that had won the war, not violence. Jimenez, then, highlights the gratuitousness of Fujimori’s strategy, and his greed for power, making Peruvians aware
of the truths of the conflict and why their memories of the excessive violence continue to plague them today.

In addition to the military/police and society perspectives shown in the documentary, we are also able to see the Shining Path perspective. A female activist, Fany Palomino, explains her belief in Guzmán and his project: “Lleva adelante este movimiento el Dr. Guzmán. El Dr. Guzmán se atrevió a conducir una rebelión de personas que creen en él. Creen que de esta forma van a construir un nuevo mundo. Y yo respeto eso.” Later, Fany reiterates her support of the Shining Path: “Pienso que para cambiar una sociedad necesariamente tiene que haber un enfrentamiento y eso implica violencia. […] Si tienes que morir por una causa, a morir, se ha dicho. Porque es una causa noble, es una causa justa que vale más que la propia vida.” Fany, then, believes that the violence they perpetrated was justified because they were trying to change society, breaking down the divisions and putting an end to the developing layers of trauma. She does not regret her actions, which, in turn, means that she does not regret the effects of her actions. The fact that Peruvian society has been traumatized does not seem to matter to her since they had made efforts in confronting the injustices.

We have seen in the variety of testimonies presented in State of Fear that most of the participants contributed, in one way or another, to the process of reconciliation. They wanted to present their truths to the Peruvian people, whose unveiling would contribute to a better understanding of the 1980s and 90s and would serve as a stepping stone to dialogue among the different parties involved in the conflict. This dialogue could then lead to the diffusion of tension among the groups. They were aware of how Peru as a
nation was suffering from trauma. They knew that Peru needed to avoid being stagnated by the conflict, and by telling their stories, they were enabling society to face both the past and the future. In addition, though the participants did not openly say that they were suffering from individual trauma, some of them undoubtedly were, like Magdalena Monteza and Benavides Cuevas. For them, speaking out could serve as the beginning of their talking cure. Overall, we could say that State of Fear is a catalyst of memory and an aid in the development of the reconciliation process. Yates and De Onís were trying to take a step toward a better future for Peru.

The Fujimori Trial: Confronting Trauma through Truth and Justice

The Fujimori trial has, indeed, helped to contribute to the reconciliation process in Peru. As I have discussed previously, justice has been achieved in the conviction of Fujimori, providing many Peruvians with a sense of relief that the violence perpetrated against them, their friends and families has resulted in some form of resolution. Their loved ones may still be dead, but knowing that Fujimori has been punished could facilitate their recovery. The conviction also gives many Peruvians the feeling that similar violence will not occur again in the future. Other leaders, knowing that they too could be incarcerated, will most likely think about other strategies to resolve conflicts before resorting to excessive violence. In addition, Peruvians’ faith in the state will increase knowing that even the president, who seemed so powerful and indestructible, is not above the law, which will, in turn, allow them to confront their collective trauma and believe that change is possible. Nonetheless, it is not only the sentence against Fujimori which contributes to national reconciliation but also the trial process itself. The trial was
an attempt to seek truth which could lead to reconciliation. However, while some participants contributed to the reconciliation process, others detracted from it. In this section, I will show the reader how each group of actors aided or hindered the trial process.

Alberto Fujimori

When Fujimori spoke at the beginning of the trial in December 2007, I believe that he mainly detracted from the reconciliation process. The headline of an article on December 10, 2007 exclaims: “Alberto Fujimori: ‘Rechazo los cargos totalmente, soy inocente y no acepto esta acusación fiscal.’” According to the article, Fujimori did not feel that he had done anything wrong: “El ex mandatario defendió los logros de su Gobierno y negó haber ordenado la matanza de Barrios Altos y La Cantuta y las torturas en el SIE” (“Alberto Fujimori: ‘Rechazo’ 12-10-07). While Guzmán was captured during the Fujimori regime, the Shining Path was defeated and the economy was revived, these achievements do not justify the violation of human rights. Like the Shining Path, Fujimori uses the argument that the ends justify the means. The only difference is that while Fujimori admitted that violence occurred, he would not admit that he had ordered it.

Along with justifying his regime and its accomplishments, Fujimori also justified the amnesty law passed by Congress in 1995 to shield military personnel involved in the actions of the Colina group: “‘Esa ley (de amnistía) era para llevar al Perú a la paz y buscaba una solución política (para los militares)’, reveló el extraditado en la última
audiencia pública dedicada al interrogatorio del fiscal Peláez.” (12-20-07). In analyzing Fujimori’s justification, one could question his logic. How would the amnesty clause lead to peace if the military personnel were not forced to tell their story and if no Shining Path members were granted amnesty? In addition, what political solution did they seek: to maintain supposed perpetrators of violence in positions of authority?

According to Santiago Martin Rivas in his interview with Umberto Jara in *Ojo por ojo*, Fujimori was facing increasing political pressure to punish someone once the La Cantuta cadavers were found, and therefore he asked the Commanding General, Nicolás Hermoza Ríos, to resolve the problem: “‘Cuando el problema político siguió creciendo, apenas empezó noviembre, Fujimori le pidió a Hermoza una salida y nombres para hacer frente a las presiones.’” (Jara 193). Santiago Rivas’ narrative makes it clear that Fujimori was not looking for peace in granting the amnesty but in making good on promises made to the military personnel. If the promises were broken, those jailed would certainly implicate Fujimori, Montesinos and Hermoza Ríos. In fact, Santiago Rivas told Jara that he had threatened the three leaders: “‘Si esto no sale, vamos presos todos, incluido el Presidente’” (Jara 207). Therefore, Jara’s declarations cement the insincerity of Fujimori’s justifications. If Fujimori had honestly wanted to contribute to the reconciliation process, he would have admitted at least partial culpability. However, saving himself seemed to have been his priority.

In April of 2008, Fujimori intervened in the trial again, continuing with his justification and denial strategy. During the April 7th session, Umberto Jara was
presenting a video to the court of an interview that he had taped with Martin Rivas which proved that human rights violations had been sanctioned by the State:

En el video, presentado por el testigo Umberto Jara, Martin Rivas aseguró que la guerra sucia contra el terrorismo formó parte una política de Estado que se plasmó en manuales que eran de uso obligatorio para las Fuerzas Armadas que combatían el flagelo terrorista. Para que estos manuales se apliquen -indicó- tenían que tener el visto bueno del alto mando de las Fuerzas Armadas y la autorización de la máxima autoridad del Estado y Jefe Supremo de las FF.AA, es decir, el presidente de la República.

(“Fujimori reitera que no conoció planes” 4-07-08)

The declarations made by Santiago Rivas in the video clearly implicate Fujimori, and for this reason, at the end of the session, Fujimori asked for the opportunity to defend himself against these accusations. Fujimori said that he did not know anything about the dirty war: “‘No he conocido planes de una guerra de baja intensidad, no he conocido ni he tenido contacto con el plan Cipango’, señaló en referencia al supuesto plan de guerra sucia aplicado en su Gobierno” (“Fujimori reitera que no conoció planes” 4-07-08). The Cipango plan was the supposed founding document of the Colina group, which was responsible for the Barrios Altos and Cantuta killings. By denying knowledge of the dirty war and the Cipango document, Fujimori was also denying the charges that he was accused of in relation to Barrios Altos and La Cantuta.
In December 2008, Fujimori again intervened in the trial, and again he tried to justify his actions and deny any wrongdoing. In a December 17\textsuperscript{th} article, \textit{El Comercio} reported on Fujimori’s new declarations. First of all, Fujimori admitted to mistakes, though justified his policy: “‘Yo nuevamente reitero, no me equivoqué (en relación a la política antiterrorista), con excepción de estos lamentables crímenes (Barrios Altos y La Cantuta), dijo Fujimori en la audiencia durante la cual se mostraron un vídeo y un audio vinculados a las referidas matanzas” (“Alberto Fujimori admite que se equivocó” 12-17-08). Fujimori then attempted to justify the anti-subversive strategy written in the military manuals, which Martin Rivas had mentioned in his video: “Insistió en que cuando en la ‘nueva estrategia’ plasmada en manuales y directivas de las Fuerzas Armadas ‘se dice eliminar a ellos (terroristas) y su veneno’ no se alude al acto de matar, si no ‘a desaparecer el terrorismo de la faz del Perú’” (“Alberto Fujimori admite que se equivocó” 12-17-08). Even though Martin Rivas, a member of the Colina group, had said in the video that “eliminate” did mean to kill, Fujimori insisted that it had a more generic meaning. Though it is possible for the word to have more than one meaning, why would Santiago Rivas insist that the strategy was a dirty war if “eliminate” really only meant to say that the military needed to defeat terrorism?

At the end of December, Fujimori augmented his denials: “También negó haber conocido la existencia del mayor Santiago Martín Rivas, sindicado como jefe operativo de Colina, y quien vivió un tiempo en las instalaciones del Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército (SIE), en donde también residió Fujimori por unos meses en 1992” (“Fujimori niega coordinación” 12-31-08). Martin Rivas was a key member of the anti-subversive
strategy and lived in the same building at the same time as Fujimori, but Fujimori supposedly did not know who he was. This assertion must be questioned since Martin Rivas had mentioned meetings with Fujimori in his interviews with Jara.

Finally, in his closing argument in April of 2009, Fujimori declared his innocence: “Dijo que esta vez se encuentra fortalecido porque ninguna de las pruebas presentadas lo han podido incriminar. ‘Las palabras de los testigos han reiterado lo que siempre manifesté: nadie ha podido manifestar ninguna prueba porque soy inocente’, dijo y luego realizó la primera pausa para beber agua mineral” (“Alberto Fujimori reitera: ‘Ninguna prueba’ 4-01-09). Fujimori, then, based his innocence on the fact there were no written documents signed by him which ordered the kidnappings and killings, even though there were plenty of witnesses that had incriminated him:

‘No me queda la menor duda que en lugar de estar probada mi culpabilidad, está probada hasta la saciedad la inconsistencia de sus acusaciones. La fiscalía y la parte civil me acusa, y sostiene que para esta acusación hay 90 testigos, 500 documentos, 20 audiovisuales, pero en ninguno de ellos se demuestra mi participación en los delitos, ni sustenta las razones ni las motivaciones que habría tenido para cometerlos’, dijo Fujimori. (“Fujimori minimizó pruebas” 4-03-09)

Fujimori’s defense was, in the end, founded on a technicality. Why would a leader write a written execution order, knowing that it could be used as evidence against him?
While it is true that the witnesses, documents and audiovisuals did not present evidence that could directly link Fujimori to the crime, it is not true that they did not expound reasons and motivations. Belaunde’s and García’s strategies for fighting the Shining Path were not working, and a new strategy was necessary. The need to develop a more uncompromising attitude toward the Shining Path and instill a sense of fear among their ranks was a clear motivation to create the anti-subversive strategy that was used during Fujimori’s regime, a motivation which was clearly demonstrated by the witnesses and other pieces of evidence. Even Fujimori himself revealed this motivation at another moment in his argument. While Belaunde and García had not acted, he had:

“Transcurridos los años puedo decir sin ningún apasionamiento pero con total convicción que mi estrategia de pacificación fue la correcta (...) y no me arrepiento, no me arrepiento de haberlo llevado adelante”, dijo Fujimori en la sesión número 159 del juicio que se le sigue, una de las últimas de este largo proceso. El momento fue aprovechado por Fujimori para señalar que “a diferencia de otros gobernantes no se le podía acusar de inacción”. “A mí nadie me podrá acusar de no actuar, nadie me podrá acusar de haberme cruzado de brazos y menos de haber dejado en manos de otros la función de gobernante por la que me eligieron.” (Briceño Huamán 4-01-09)

Therefore, in defending himself, Fujimori again contradicted his own arguments. It seems that he did have motivation to initiate a dirty war, and he was involved in
developing an anti-terrorist strategy. Fujimori made it extremely clear in his argument that he was directly involved in the war against terror. While he did not admit to ordering human rights violations, he indirectly implicated himself by admitting participation in the direction of the conflict. In addition, by declaring that he did not regret the strategy employed to fight the Shining Path, Fujimori was showing his opposition to the reconciliation process. In his opinion, there was no reason for him to make amends for his actions because he had achieved success in defeating the Shining Path. This makes his contradiction clear; he would not admit to human rights violations because he wanted to be found innocent, but at the same time, he believed in what he had done and was proud of defeating the Shining Path. Yet what he would not acknowledge was that his actions would lead to the development of trauma because Peruvians’ memories would not allow them to deal with the events in the future.

The Witnesses

Though Fujimori believed that he should be found innocent of the executions and kidnappings he was accused of given that he did not view them as crimes, as I have already mentioned, many of the witnesses felt that they were crimes and that he should be found guilty. First of all, the two men who were kidnapped testified in the trial against Fujimori. In the January 4th, 2008 session, the journalist Gustavo Gorriti accused Fujimori of being aware of his detention: “El periodista Gustavo Gorriti relató ayer con lujo de detalles su secuestro en los calabozos del Servicio de Inteligencia del Ejército tras el autogolpe del 5 de abril de 1992 y aseguró que el ex mandatario Alberto Fujimori si
estuvo al tanto de dicha detención, versión que fue negada por el acusado” (“Gustavo Gorriti asegura que Fujimori” 1-05-08). Although Gorriti did not have any documentation to back up his assertion, he did have the word of Hermoza Ríos: “Gorriti, quien asistió como agraviado, basó su certeza sobre la responsabilidad de Fujimori en un testimonio que le dio el general Nicolás Hermoza, entonces jefe del Comando Conjunto de las Fuerzas Armadas. Este le dijo que fue obligado a rubricar las órdenes de detención porque Fujimori y su asesor Vladimiro Montesinos no quisieron firmarlas” (“Gustavo Gorriti asegura que Fujimori” 1-05-08). According to El Comercio, Gorriti said in his testimony that the government was trying to exact revenge against him for his journalistic work on Montesinos and his involvement in issues of corruption and drug trafficking (“Gustavo Gorriti asegura que Fujimori” 1-05-08). Gorriti was candid in explaining the events of his detention, and he clearly implicated Fujimori, along with Montesinos.

Another group of witnesses who testified against Fujimori was the Colina group. First, Colina member Marco Flores Albán testified that he had prior knowledge of the amnesty granted to him: “El ex integrante del grupo Colina, el suboficial del Ejército Marco Flores Albán, aseguró hoy que el capitán Carlos Pichiligüe, uno de los líderes del escuadrón de aniquilamiento, le comentó que iban a ser favorecidos con una amnistía por los crímenes que habían cometido” (“Ex miembro del grupo Colina dijo que sabía” 1-24-08). If Pichiligüe knew about the amnesty ahead of time, then that is indirect proof of a cover-up at the highest echelons of power. In addition, Flores Albán mentioned training that Colina had received: “Marco Flores también reveló que los miembros de grupo Colina recibieron entrenamiento militar de allanamiento a inmuebles y prácticas de tiro
en la playa la Tiza (sur) y quien dirigía estos entrenamientos era el capitán Santiago
Martin Rivas” (“Ex miembro del grupo Colina dijo que sabía” 1-24-08). If Colina did
actually receive this training, then it is a sign that the Barrios Altos and Cantuta
executions were not simply a mistake but rather planned. Finally, “El testigo mencionó
que visitó en cuatro oportunidades el Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional, especificando
que en la segunda visita al SIN recibió un memorando de felicitación presidencial de
Alberto Fujimori” (“Ex miembro del grupo Colina dijo que sabía” 1-24-08). The fact
that Fujimori would congratulate the Colina members means that he would have had to
have known something about their activities. It does not prove that he ordered the
killings, but it is proof of his awareness and endorsement of the strategy.

Another member of Colina, Julio Chuqui Aguirre, specifically testified to
Fujimori’s approval: “‘Teníamos luz verde para actuar. Martín Rivas (jefe del grupo
Colina) decía: tenemos luz verde del 'Chino' para actuar’” (“Alberto Fujimori sabía de los
planes” 1-30-08). According to El Comercio, Chuqui Aguirre explained in the trial that
there was a chain of command; General Juan Rivera gave the orders to Martin Rivas, and
he also informed Montesinos and Hermoza Ríos of the actions, who, in turn, informed
Fujimori. If Chuqui Aguirre’s accusations were accurate, then Fujimori did not
necessarily plan Colina’s actions, but he did certainly approve their execution. Other
Colina members, such as Pablo Atúncar Cama and Héctor Gamarra, supported Chuqui
Aguirre’s testimony, saying that Colina’s actions were approved at the highest level.
In addition to this evidence, two Colina members testified that the objective of the group was to eliminate terrorists. In his testimony, Héctor Gamarra Mamani “reveló que el mayor de Ejército Peruano Santiago Martín Rivas les indicó en una reunión que el grupo Colina cumplía una misión riesgosa aprobada al más alto nivel y consistía en capturar, destruir y eliminar a los delincuentes terroristas,” a claim which was substantiated by ex-Colina Jorge Ortiz Mantas in another sesión (“La misión del grupo Colina” 2-13-08. Then, to show that the military/government was aware of its wrongdoings, Ortiz Mantas provided information about the cover-up of the Cantuta killings:

Después de ocho meses del crimen de La Cantuta, el entonces capitán Carlos Pichilingüe convocó a diez miembros del destacamento para encargarles desenterrar los restos de los asesinados y trasladarlos a Cieneguilla por orden, presuntamente, del general Nicolás Hermoza. ‘El capitán Pichilingüe dijo que el comandante general del Ejército ha ordenado eso porque ha habido fuga de información’, sostuvo. (“Aniquilar subversivos era el objetivo” 2-09-08)

Ortiz Mantas’ statement shows that the highest levels of the military were aware of every action that the Colina group had taken and that they knew that they had committed excessive acts of violence which many Peruvians would not support. According to these witnesses, the government/military leadership felt that executing terrorists was the best
strategy to defeat the Shining Path even though they were fully aware that this would require violating some Peruvians’ human rights in the process.

These ex Colina members contributed, first, to the discovery of truth. Even though they were the perpetrators of violence, they were forthcoming about the details of the events, providing Peruvians with more information about how and why some of their fellow citizens, family members or friends were killed. In addition, they, like Gorriti, helped further the pursuit of justice. They knew that their leaders had planned and ordered the executions, and they were willing to tell the truth so that, in this case, Fujimori would receive punishment. Finally, I believe that they contributed to the reconciliation process because the family members of the victims needed to hear from the perpetrators of violence. They acknowledged that excesses had been committed and that they and their leaders were responsible for their execution.

On the other hand, not all of the ex Colina members advanced the truth and reconciliation process. For example, ex Colina member Ángel Pino denied the existence of the Colina group (“Ex militar niega la existencia” 2-19-08). He also refused to show any willingness to reconcile with the family members of the victims: “El militar además dijo que no ofrecería disculpas a ‘los enemigos’, en clara alusión a los ex miembros del destacamento Colina que ya se han disculpado con los deudos de las personas que asesinaron entre 1991 y 1992” (“Ex militar niega la existencia” 2-19-08).

Similarly, ex administrative chief of Colina, Carlos Pichilingüe, used the denial strategy in giving his testimony, avoiding all responsibility for his actions: “Pichilingüe,
quien se encuentra actualmente preso, dijo que no se ha determinado la existencia del
denominado grupo ‘Colina’ y negó haber formado parte de este, pese a que ex integrantes
del escuadrón han dicho lo contrario y admitido los crímenes de la organización”
(“Carlos Pichilingüe negó que Alberto Fujimori” 2-25-08). Pichilingüe also defended
military and government leaders: “‘Nunca en el Ejército se ha dicho u ordenado y menos
hemos tenido alguna orden de algún presidente (...) para que haya aniquilamientos de
personas’” (“Carlos Pichilingüe negó que Alberto Fujimori” 2-25-08). These
declarations directly contradict his interview with Umberto Jara in Ojo por ojo, in which
he explains how the Colina group got its name: “‘Ningún grupo operativo tiene nombre.
Es clandestino por naturaleza. Pero, como a partir del 91 se juntó a los mejores agentes, a
los que tenían más experiencia, como un grupo estable y se empezó a operar con personal
fijo, uno de los agentes propuso ponerle como nombre Grupo Colina en homenaje al
capitán Colina que murió infiltrado en Sendero Luminoso”’ (Jara 153). In the same
interview, Pichilingüe also admitted that he and Martin Rivas had participated in the
development of the “dirty war” strategy: “‘El documento que preparamos fue una de las
bases para la estrategia que se aprobó seguir. […] Después se realizó la Mesa Redonda
de junio del 91, en la Comandancia General con la autorización de Fujimori. […] En esa
Mesa Redonda se aprobó aplicar la guerra de baja intensidad” (Jara 101). Therefore,
according to Pichilingüe when he spoke to Jara several years ago, the Colina group did,
in fact, exist, and executions were an integral part of the military strategy implemented.
However, according to Pichilingüe’s testimony in the Fujimori trial, he knew nothing
about what had happened, and certainly no excesses would have ever been ordered.
The other ex Colina member who had interviewed with Jara, Martin Rivas, decided to follow the same strategy as Pichilingüe for his trial testimony: “El ex militar se presentó ante la Sala Penal Especial decidido a negarlo todo: la existencia del grupo de aniquilamiento Colina, responsable de las matanzas de Barrios Altos (1991) y La Cantuta (1992); sus vínculos con el ex jefe de Estado y las denuncias que lo sindican como jefe operativo del destacamento militar, a las que calificó de ‘patrañas’” (Isla Isuiza 2-28-08).

Specifically, Martin Rivas declared Colina an invention: “Desde hace varios años, personas interesadas han venido creando un monipodio llamado grupo Colina. Eso ha sido utilizado durante más de una década para atacar y denigrar a las Fuerzas Armadas que derrotaron al terrorismo homicida de Sendero (Luminoso) y el MRTA” (Isla Isuiza 2-28-08). However, as was the case with Pichilingüe, Martin Rivas’ testimony was a contradiction of his interview with Jara. This contradiction did not go unnoticed by the lawyers in the courtroom, who questioned him about the Jara interview on videotape. In response to this questioning, “El ex militar aseveró que la entrevista que le concedió al periodista Umberto Jara, en el año 2002, fue tergiversada y mal editada. Según dijo, el vínculo de amistad que lo unía con Jara lo animó a reunirse con el hombre de prensa con la finalidad de ‘ensayar’ su estrategia de defensa ante la posibilidad de afrontar un proceso judicial” (Isla Isuiza 2-28-08). The lawyer questioning Martin Rivas then asked him why he would have admitted responsibility in the actions of the Colina group if he was only rehearsing. Martin Rivas’ explanation was that Jara had taped him several times but was only showing one or two of the versions, and “‘en las otras grabaciones yo digo que en ningún momento soy culpable. Que soy inocente’” (Isla Isuiza 2-28-08).

Even if Martin Rivas was taped several times, it does not seem logical that he would
admit to something that he had not done. It must have seemed especially illogical to those who had read *Ojo por ojo*, in which, as we saw in Chapter 2, Martin Rivas discusses in detail the executions in Barrios Altos and La Cantuta. Why would anybody describe the intricacies of these events and then deny all knowledge of them?

These three men definitely had no intention of contributing to the truth and reconciliation process or the pursuit of justice. Pino not only denied the existence of the Colina group but also did not feel that apologies were necessary. His statement implied that he thought the victims were terrorists, and, therefore, killing them was necessary. In his mind, the families of the victims should not receive apologies because the victims deserved to die; they were perpetrating violence in the country. Like Pino, Martin Rivas and Pichilingüe denied the truth and were trying to impede justice, providing testimonies that could help free Fujimori, in the process contradicting statements that they had previously made when interviewed by Jara. They believed that the military did what needed to be done in order to defeat terrorism and any attempt to accuse them of human rights violations was an attempt to discredit their hard work. It did not seem to matter to them that the families of the victims were suffering due to their actions or that their denials would only cause the families more pain.

In response to Martin Rivas’ testimony, Umberto Jara told *El Comercio* that his declarations were incongruous: “‘Vamos a suponer por un instante ese absurdo de que fue un ensayo. Nadie ensaya su culpabilidad, sino su inocencia. ¿De qué le servía? Es ridículo. ¿Cómo va a ensayar su culpabilidad y el estar acusando a personas?’”
(“Umberto Jara calificó de absurdas” 2-27-08). Jara supported this perspective by demonstrating his inability to professionally coach Martin Rivas: “‘Tendría que ser muy bruto para pretender ese tipo de ayuda de mi parte, cuando yo desconozco el tema penal’” (‘Umberto Jara calificó de absurdas” 2-27-08). Jara’s comments to El Comercio showed the Peruvian people that Martin Rivas’ testimony was a fabrication and that he did not have any desire to help society uncover the truth of the past.

In addition to his interview with El Comercio, Jara also testified against Fujimori. In the trial, Jara asserted that Martin Rivas had previously accepted responsibility for his actions rather than denying them: “[Jara] Indicó que él [Martin Rivas] le había confesado en la entrevista que ‘tuvo el honor’ de dirigir el comando de aniquilamiento en los momentos más duros de la violencia terrorista” (“Umberto Jara: Martin Rivas me confesó” 3-28-08). Another truth, according to Jara, was that Martin Rivas had implicated Fujimori: “Tras señalar que se reunió más de 20 veces con el sindicado jefe operativo del ‘destacamento de la muerte’, Jara sostuvo que en una de estas oportunidades Martin Rivas afirmó que era imposible que los militares ‘se manden por cuenta propia’, sino que todas las ‘acciones’ contaban con el respaldo del entonces presidente Fujimori y de otras altas autoridades castrenses” (“Fiscal Guillén interroga por segunda vez” 3-31-08). However, according to Jara, Fujimori not only authorized actions but was also an integral part of developing the “dirty war” strategy. He said to the courtroom that an informant in Ojo por ojo had told him “que un alto jefe militar le había consultado en 1990 si era factible implementar una guerra sucia, pues ese, junto con la implementación de una política económica liberal, era uno de los dos acuerdos que
Fujimori había traído de su viaje a EE.UU.” (“Fujimori habría decidido emprender” 4-03- 08). Thus, according to Jara, both Martin Rivas and Fujimori were lying to the court, attempting to cover-up actions which they did not regret yet knew would result in Fujimori’s conviction. Based on his testimony, we can see that Jara wanted the truth to be heard because he did not believe that Fujimori’s successful results justified his actions or warranted impunity.

Another witness who believed in Fujimori’s guilt was General Rodolfo Robles. During his testimony, Robles denounced Fujimori’s participation in Colina: “‘El grupo Colina actuaba bajo dos líneas de mando: la Presidencia de la República y el SIN, que eran las dos caras de la misma moneda’, aseguró el ex general, quien denunció en 1993 la existencia de ese destacamento militar encubierto, por lo que tuvo que asilarse en Argentina” (“Rodolfo Robles señaló que grupo Colina” 5-07-08). According to Robles, Fujimori was part of the decision-making process: “El SIN tenía que dar cuenta ‘antes, durante y después’ de ejecutar sus misiones al ex presidente Fujimori (1990-2000)” (“Rodolfo Robles señaló que grupo Colina” 5-07-08). In addition, he affirmed that it was impossible for Fujimori to be ignorant of Colina’s actions since even the mass media was covering the crimes (“Fujimori no tenía cómo ignorar” 5-09-08). To support this assertion, Robles showed the courtroom a variety of magazines and newspapers that had provided proof of the crimes. Finally, he found Fujimori’s inaction a damning piece of evidence against him: “‘Si en un principio pensaba que la responsabilidad de las acciones’ del destacamento Colina recaía solo en Nicolás Hermoza y Vladimiro Montesinos luego cambió de opinión debido a que una vez hecha pública la denuncia, el
entonces presidente Alberto Fujimori decidió no investigar y por el contrario ‘encubrió a los responsables de los crímenes’” (“Fujimori no tenía cómo ignorar” 5-09-08). If Fujimori really had nothing to do with the crimes, then he would have had no problem seeking justice against Montesinos and Hermoza Ríos. This and Robles’ other arguments are proof that there was a chain of command in making decisions, and Fujimori authorized actions regarding the anti-subversive strategy. Though Robles did not have any direct proof that Fujimori had ordered the Barrios Altos and La Cantuta killings, he made it apparent that Fujimori did, in fact, know about killings and was involved in covering them up. Robles undoubtedly contributed to uncovering the truth about Barrios Altos and La Cantuta, both in 1993, when he denounced the crimes, and during the trial. He wanted the Peruvian public to know who was responsible for perpetrating such excessive acts of violence, and he wanted justice to be served. It is also obvious that Robles did not agree with violating the human rights of individuals in order to defeat terrorism. During the trial, Robles specifically said that the violence perpetrated was “un crimen horrendo,” thus showing his desire to contribute to the reconciliation process (“Fujimori no tenía cómo ignorar” 5-09-08).

In contrast to Robles, another important military leader, Julio Salazar Monroe, the ex chief of the SIN who was sentenced to 35 years in jail in April 2008 for his involvement in La Cantuta killings, denied having any knowledge of the events, although he did admit to following Fujimori’s orders in carrying out SIN activities (“Julio Salazar Monroe afirma que cumplía órdenes” 6-17-08). Nevertheless, Salazar Monroe claimed that the SIN was not involved in any missions against the Shining Path (“Dinero del SIN
era entregado” 6-12-08). Yet, despite being certain of the SIN’s role, in a later session, he pleaded ignorance of the events that had occurred: “‘Usted era jefe del Servicio de Inteligencia Nacional y dice que no sabe nada de nada’, dijo el fiscal Avelino Guillén al general (r) Julio Salazar Monroe; y este contestó: ‘Absolutamente nada.’ […] El militar retirado trató inútilmente de hacer creer que no estaba al tanto de una serie de hechos que se produjeron en el SIN durante su jefatura” (“Salazar era jefe del SIN” 6-21-08). Given his 35-year prison sentences for ordering human rights violations, it is evident that the Peruvian judicial system felt that Salazar Monroe did have knowledge of the SIN’s activities during the Fujimori regime. During his testimony, Salazar Monroe hindered the discovery of truth through his denials, and he caused further damage to the victims’ families by acting as if the deaths had never occurred.

Vladimiro Montesinos, even more so than Salazar Monroe, detracted from the pursuit of truth and justice. To begin his testimony, he insisted on Fujimori’s innocence: “Montesinos explicó que se presentó ante el tribunal a pesar de que hoy tiene una audiencia por un juicio que se le sigue en la Base Naval del Callao, ‘para cumplir y esclarecer que el señor Alberto Fujimori no tiene ninguna responsabilidad en los hechos que son materia de este proceso’” (“Alberto Fujimori no tiene ninguna” 6-30-08). However, as El Comercio pointed out in one of its articles about Montesinos’ testimony, this assertion directly contradicted a statement he had made in a tape recorded in 2001: “‘Señor presidente Fujimori, creo que ha llegado la hora de que usted venga al país para responder por sus actos. Un jefe responsable y valiente debe responder por lo que sus subordinados hicimos o dejamos de hacer (...)’. Como hombres, usted y yo debemos
responder ante el país por nuestros actos; usted por ordenarlos y yo por cumplirlos” (“Un desafiante Vladimiro Montesinos” 6-30-08). Besides contradicting his former statement, Montesinos chose to remain silent on matters which could have contributed to the discovery of truth: “Durante la audiencia, Vladimiro Montesinos se rehusó enérgicamente a debatir temas de inteligencia. ‘Yo no voy a hablar nada de inteligencia... No me van a sacar a mí ninguna letra’” (“Vladimiro Montesinos declaró durante” 6-30-08). Finally, after three hours of testimony, Montesinos decided that he would not continue to testify: “Montesinos Torres justificó su decisión, aduciendo que tiene una causa pendiente en la Base Naval del Callao y que su participación en el juicio al ex presidente podrían perjudicarlo” (“Vladimiro Montesinos declaró durante” 6-30-08). Although Montesinos’ testimony was not annulled:

La Sala Penal Especial de la Corte Suprema de Justicia declaró ineficaz el testimonio que brindó el lunes el ex asesor de inteligencia del régimen de Alberto Fujimori, Vladimiro Montesinos, al considerar que su declaración ‘carece de eficacia procesal.’ El magistrado César San Martín, presidente del tribunal, anunció la decisión al inicio de la audiencia del miércoles, señalando que un testigo que acepta en primer lugar declarar en el proceso y luego se niega abruptamente a continuar haciéndolo constituye una ‘conducta lesiva contra el proceso.’ (“Testimonio de Montesinos ‘carece’ 7-02-08)
Montesinos was one of the men who had the most knowledge of the events that occurred, and by refusing to talk about many of the details, he not only obstructed justice but also the Peruvian peoples’ right to the truth. Additionally, he showed his opposition to the reconciliation process by invalidating his previous admission of guilt. Protecting Fujimori and himself were unquestionably the main objectives of his testimony.

Along with Montesinos, the other important leader under Fujimori was Nicolás Hermoza Ríos, the ex Commanding General of the Army. During one portion of his testimony, Hermoza Ríos showed his willingness to contribute to the search for truth and justice by acknowledging that he had obstructed justice:

El ex presidente del Comando Conjunto de las FF.AA. reconoció haber ocultado información del crimen de La Cantuta al Undécimo Juzgado Penal de Lima. […] ‘Lo oculté y asumo mi responsabilidad’, manifestó tras explicar que lo hizo ‘porque la prensa estaba dando un tratamiento mediático terrible, y si el objetivo y la misión es pacificar el país, este tratamiento político y psicológico era nocivo para el propósito de la pacificación’, expresó. (“Hermoza Ríos reconoce que ocultó” 7-10-08)

And though Hermoza Ríos also admitted that excesses were committed, his justification was that “eso siempre sucede en una guerra” (“Hermoza reconoce que se cometieron” 7-17-08). This statement shows that he believed in the anti-subversive strategy used and accepted the consequences, even if those consequences involved human rights violations. Due to his perspective, it is not surprising that the remainder of Hermoza Ríos’ testimony
was focused on denying responsibility and contradicting previous statements. For example, Hermoza Ríos said that he had not been aware that Martin Rivas and Pichilingüe were involved in the La Cantuta killings, even though he had declared to the contrary in 2001 court testimony. When the lawyer read him his original statement, he tried to justify the contradiction: “(Hermoza primero había dicho que el ex asesor nunca le informó que Martin Rivas y Pichilingüe participaron en La Cantuta. Tras la lectura de su declaración, dijo lo siguiente) ‘Cuando declaré estaba imbuido de una situación emocional de desencanto, el nombre de Martin Rivas se conoció a posteriori, por eso declaré eso’” (“El 2001 declaró saber” 7-08-08). Could Hermoza Ríos have been affected by an emotional situation of disenchantment that caused him to answer inaccurately? Or was Hermoza Ríos simply trying to protect himself and Fujimori?

After contradicting himself, Hermoza Ríos chose to employ the strategy of denial when accusations were made against him:

El general (r) EP Nicolás Hermoza Ríos rechazó hoy las afirmaciones del ex miembro del grupo Colina Jesús Sosa Saavedra, quien lo acusó de ordenar las ejecuciones de dicho destacamento, autor de las masacres de Barrios Altos (1991) y La Cantuta (1992). ‘Es falso, absolutamente falso (…). Al señor Sosa no lo he visto nunca en mi vida. ¡Yo jamás, jamás, di una orden para matar a una persona, jamás! No sugerí ni ordené ni por escrito ni verbalmente.’ (“Hermoza Ríos: ‘Jamás sugeri’” 7-14-08)
According to Hermoza Ríos, then, even though he had initiated the cover-up of La Cantuta, he did not order or know anyone involved in the crime. In addition, he denied knowing anything about the Cipango plan used to initiate Colina’s activities: “Al mostrarle dicho documento, Hermoza manifestó que no está bien diseñado y aseguró que en él no se precisa una misión de combate” (“Hermoza Ríos volvió a defender” 7-21-08).

At the same time, he tried to defend Fujimori “al negar haber aplicado una ‘estrategia paralela’ de lucha contra el terrorismo, que consistió, según la Fiscalía, en asesinar a presuntos subversivos” (“Hermoza Ríos volvió a defender” 7-21-08). Consequently, though Hermoza Ríos made a couple of minimal concessions, his overall strategy was to deny that he or Fujimori had any responsibility in the Cantuta and Barrios Altos killings, even if it meant contradicting prior statements he had made. And, given the fact that he believed that excesses are committed in all wars, he did not regret the events of the past or believe that reconciliation was necessary.

After Hermoza Ríos’ testimony, ex Colina member José Sosa Saavedra, nicknamed Kerosene due to his propensity to burn cadavers, testified in front of the court. Kerosene remained true to his prior accusations against Hermoza Ríos: “‘Kerosene' reveló que la orden para eliminar a los nueve estudiantes y al profesor de la universidad La Cantuta el 18 de julio de 1992 la dio el entonces comandante general del Ejército Nicolás Hermoza Ríos. ‘Yo sé que fue el comandante general del Ejército quien ordenó pero quien recibe la orden directa fue el coronel Federico Navarro Pérez’” (“Matanzas de La Cantuta y Barrios Altos fueron órdenes” 7-31-08). In addition, he affirmed his commitment to telling the truth: “‘Kerosene' dijo hoy antes de iniciarse la sesión 85 del
proceso al ex presidente Alberto Fujimori que está dispuesto a contar ‘la verdad.’ ‘Aquí han venido dos comandantes generales del Ejercito -se referiría a Nicolás Hermoza Ríos y José Villanueva Ruesta-- a contar mentiras’” (“Kerosene en juicio a Fujimori: ‘Dos comandantes’” 7-30-08). Seeing that Hermoza Ríos and others had attempted to obstruct justice and deny the truth, Kerosene felt that he needed to set the record straight. Though he admitted to perpetrating violence, he wanted the court to know that he and the other ex Colina members were following the orders of their leaders.

The Lawyers

In analyzing the effects of the Fujimori trial, it is important to take into account the opinions and assertions of the lawyers for both the prosecution and defense. By looking at the lawyers’ reactions to the testimonies given during the trial, we will be able to see how they did or did not play a part in achieving truth, justice and reconciliation. First, I will analyze the prosecutions’ reactions recorded in El Comercio, followed by those of the defense. In response to the ex Colina testimonies, one of the lawyers representing the victims, Gloria Cano, told El Comercio that Marco Flores Albán’s testimony established that Fujimori, did, in fact, know about the crimes. Flores Albán testified that Colina had received training by Martin Rivas, that they had received a congratulatory letter from Fujimori and that they were told ahead of time that they would receive amnesty:

Cano indicó a elcomercio.com.pe que tales declaraciones son importantísimas, pues demuestran que para el desarrollo de las actividades
Another lawyer representing the victims, Carlos Rivera, stated that the testimony of ex Colina Jorge Ortiz Manta verified that “el destacamento Colina fue creado por los altos mandos del Ejército, con el fin de asesinar a determinados objetivos” (“Se ejerció una política anti-subversiva” 2-08-08). In addition, Rivera felt that it was important evidence that Ortiz Manta acknowledged that “los asesinatos selectivos constituían un patrón, y formaban, por tanto, parte de una política” (“Se ejerció una política anti-subversiva” 2-08-08). Given that many of the ex Colina members had incriminated military and government leadership, the prosecution wanted to highlight their most important arguments. Though their testimony did not directly prove Fujimori’s guilt, the lawyers were asserting that the witnesses had constructed a foundation sufficient to establish guilt.

However, when the higher-ranking members of Colina, Martin Rivas and Pichilingüe, testified and denied both the existence of Colina and their participation in the killings, the lawyers for the prosecution reacted in shock and anger. Cano felt that Martin
Rivas’ testimony was “irrational” since there had been so many documents and other pieces of evidence that “demuestran la existencia de este escuadrón de aniquilamiento como parte de la política contrasubversiva del gobierno de Alberto Fujimori” (“A Martin Rivas sólo le falta decir” 2-27-08). Specifically, she affirmed that Martin Rivas’ testimony was an attempt to exonerate both himself and Fujimori:

‘Martin Rivas quiere retrotraerse al señalar que nunca existió el grupo Colina y seguramente lo que va a tratar de decir es que los (alumnos) de La Cantuta se autosecuestaron y los (residentes de la quinta) de Barrios Altos se autoeliminaron. No tiene ninguna consistencia lo que ha señalado. Está tratando de cubrir sus propias huellas de un delito, (así) como las de su cómplice, el autor mediato, Alberto Fujimori.’ (“A Martin Rivas sólo le falta decir” 2-27-08)

Cano’s statement also demonstrated the absurdity of his arguments, showing that denying all knowledge of the events was simply not possible. District attorney José Peláez Bardales agreed with Cano’s interpretation of the testimony, emphasizing that Martin Rivas had made clear accusations in his interview with Jara: “‘Sostenemos que la declaración que ha podido ver todo el país, contiene una declaración totalmente clara y contundente (de Martin Rivas), que sí hubo una política de Estado que determinó la lucha de baja intensidad, es decir la guerra 'clandestina', que viene a hacer el ojo por ojo y diente por diente’” (“Descartan que Martin Rivas haya acusado” 2-29-08). Peláez
Bardales, then, did not believe that it was possible for Martin Rivas to have taped his interview as a rehearsal; he had made a completely unambiguous declaration.

As we have already seen, the testimony of Salazar Monroe followed the same strategy as that of Martin Rivas and Pichilingüe: denial. However, someone had to be responsible for the defense strategy, and he placed the responsibility on Montesinos, who was already serving time in jail. In response to Salazar Monroe’s testimony, the assistant district attorney, Avelino Guillén told *El Comercio* that his strategy to save Fujimori was a failure: “Él pretende favorecer con sus declaraciones al ex presidente, pero no se percata que al darle el rol fundamental a Montesinos en todo esto, inevitablemente vincula también a Alberto Fujimori, porque en este último radicaba el poder que tenía Montesinos” (“Salazar Monroe pretende favorecer” 6-02-08). Again, Salazar Monroe’s declarations were not direct proof of Fujimori’s guilt, especially since he did not accuse Montesinos of the crimes, but acknowledging Montesinos’ position of power was an indirect implication. And since all Peruvians knew of the close relationship between Montesinos and Fujimori, Salazar Monroe’s statement was also powerful evidence of Fujimori’s involvement in the making and executing of decisions.

Given the denials and contradictions made by Fujimori and witnesses like Martin Rivas and Salazar Monroe, from the start, the prosecution had little hope that Vladimiro Montesinos would implicate Fujimori, which Rivera affirmed to the media: “A estas alturas del juicio es poco probable que la defensa de Fujimori no haya llegado a un acuerdo con la defensa de Montesinos en términos del tono y sentido de las
declaraciones’” (“Abogado de la parte civil asegura” 6-24-08). Though Montesinos implicated Fujimori in the past, he did so when Fujimori was living in Japan to avoid detention. Now that Fujimori had returned to Peru, it was difficult for the prosecution to believe that the two would not support each other, as they had always done during the 1990s. As it turned out, the prosecution was on target with its beliefs. According to Guillén, Montesinos’ testimony showed that he did not make any attempt to contribute to the search for truth: “‘El propósito de convocar a un testigo es obtener información, pero Montesinos -con diversos argumentos- ha expresado de manera contundente y clara que no tiene la menor intención de brindar información, por lo que resulta ocioso volver a convocarlo, ya que no tiene ningún respeto por el sistema judicial’” (“Fiscal Guillén: ‘Es ocioso citar’ 7-03-08). Guillén’s statement to the press showed that he scorned Montesinos’ strategy as a witness and wanted the public to know that Montesinos did nothing but detract from the trial process.

After all of the witnesses had testified, the prosecution felt convinced that they had proven Fujimori’s guilt. First of all, they felt that the theory proposed by expert witness Felipe Andreu Guzmán supported their case. Andreu Guzmán said that Fujimori should be considered “autor mediato,” or indirect perpetrator, because he, as president, permitted the crimes to happen; thus, “autor mediato” is “la responsabilidad que tiene un individuo cuando, ubicado en una situación de poder, permite que una organización criminal subordinada cometa actos violatorios de los derechos fundamentales” (“No sólo con evidencias” 8-25-08). In addition, he refuted the defense’s main argument: “‘Muy raras veces, salvo el caso del Tercer Reich y también el caso de la dictadura argentina,
existe una especie de archivo del deshonor, un archivo donde se acumulan todas las órdenes” (“No sólo con evidencias” 8-25-08). Based on Andreu Guzmán’s testimony, Rivera asserted that it was not necessary to show written orders in order to prove Fujimori’s guilt: “[Rivera] comentó que el autor mediato goza de una variedad de formas para emitir sus órdenes, ‘con el convencimiento de que van a ser cumplidas por el aparato de poder que maneja’” (“Fujimori era el autor mediato” 8-26-08). Therefore, given that the prosecution had provided a great deal of indirect evidence, they felt that they had, in fact, proven Fujimori’s guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

During Gamarra’s closing argument, he criticized the denial strategy used by Fujimori during the trial: “‘Los responsables de estos crímenes no son entidades abstractas, sino seres de carne y hueso y tienen nombres, y el mayor de ellos, que no tiene el coraje de asumir la responsabilidad del sistema criminal que montó junto a Montesinos y Hermoza, está entre nosotros y se llama Alberto Fujimori’” (“Abogados alegan que Fujimori” 2-09-09). He wanted the court and the Peruvian people to know that Fujimori should admit his responsibility in order for the country to move towards reconciliation. But instead of accepting his responsibility, believing that his actions did not equate to crimes, he tried to protect himself. Disagreeing with Fujimori’s perspective, Gamarra insisted on the necessity of punishment: “‘Está en manos de este tribunal hacer justicia condenando crímenes de lesa humanidad’” (“Abogados alegan que Fujimori” 2-09-09). Peruvian society had to be sent a message that human rights violations would not be permitted by anyone, including the president of the country.
At the end of Peláez Bardales’ closing argument, he emphasized another key objective of the prosecution, neither impunity nor forgetting. The prosecution was hoping that by achieving justice in the case of Fujimori, they could contribute to the process of reconciliation in the country, helping Peruvians overcome the traumatic memories of the conflict:

‘Ni olvido ni impunidad. No se trata de venganza por las víctimas cruelmente asesinadas. Queremos que se cierre esta herida que aún se encuentra abierta. Pedimos sanción penal para quien ordenó el uso de métodos de guerra sucia para enfrentar la subversión. Queremos justicia".

Así, con firmeza y emoción, puso ayer punto final al alegato acusatorio el fiscal supremo José Peláez Bardales, quien ratificó el pedido de 30 años de cárcel para el procesado Alberto Fujimori, presidente de la República entre 1990 y 2000, ahora juzgado por delitos de lesa humanidad.

(“Fujimori saldría libre a los 97 años” 1-29-09)

Thus, according to Peláez Bardales, what was foremost in the prosecution lawyers’ minds was how the trial could affect Peru in the long-term. By finding Fujimori innocent, they felt that the judiciary would be proposing a policy of collective amnesia and would be opening the doors to future crimes. In addition, they would be impeding the healing process of the nation. Therefore, though justice was the immediate goal, it was not the ultimate goal.
In response to the verdict, Gamarra expressed his feelings of relief for the victims’ families: “A mí no me alegra la tragedia de un hombre, ni el dolor de una familia, pero sí me reconforta que el día de hoy hayamos asistido a la comprensión del ideal de justicia, que los familiares de las víctimas de Barrios Altos y La Cantuta encuentren algo de consuelo y que se haya reafirmado la democracia” (“La condena contra Alberto Fujimori reconforta” 4-07-09). Gamarra knew that the families of the victims were still suffering from trauma, and he knew that Fujimori’s guilty verdict would enable them to continue their process of overcoming the trauma. In addition, for Gamarra, the conviction sent the message to Peruvians that the governments must abide by democratic standards.

Contrary to the prosecution, the defense felt that Fujimori’s sentence was too severe: “César Nakazaki, abogado del ex presidente Alberto Fujimori, expresó que la sentencia de 25 años de cárcel para su patrocinado, impuesta por la Sala Penal Especial de la Corte Suprema, es bastante dura y que le ha generado frustración, pues a lo largo del juicio se estableció que no existe prueba directa sino indicios que no bastan para sustentar una sentencia condenatoria” (“Nakasaki dice que sentencia” 4-08-09).

Nakasaki’s response to the verdict was a representation of his principal argument during the trial, lack of proof, and his strategy of basing arguments on technicalities. At the beginning of the trial, Nakasaki began his defense by stating that the government did not, in fact, kidnap businessman Samuel Dyer: “Un secuestro es la privación de la libertad, como lo que cometía Momón, pero cuando en un golpe de Estado, en un gobierno de facto, se priva de la libertad, eso no constituye un delito de secuestro sino de detención ilegal, como en su momento nosotros vamos a establecer” (“Nakasaki: Los testimonios
de Dyer y Barrera” 1-11-08). Nakasaki’s argument, then, is that during a coup, if one’s freedom is taken away, it is a less serious crime than if the detention were to have occurred in other circumstances. However, regardless of whether it was more or less serious, was Dyer guilty of any wrongdoing which would necessitate his detention? In arguing his case, Nakasaki showed Peruvians that it did not matter if harm was done to Dyer; it only mattered when that harm took place.

After the ex Colina members had testified, Nakasaki continued to insist that Fujimori had not been implicated (“Nakasaki aseguró que testimonios de los ex colinas” 2-09-08). Firstly, Nakasaki based this assertion on the fact that the ex Colina members had contradicted themselves: “Resulta que tienen varias versiones. Lo que sucede es que en las noticias sale la respuesta más espectacular” (“Nakasaki aseguró que testimonios de los ex colinas” 2-09-08). In addition, he felt that the witnesses had not provided any direct proof of Fujimori’s guilt: “En el caso del testigo Chuqui Aguirre, el abogado afirmó que la única mención que hace respecto a Fujimori es que luego de la matanza de Barrios Altos el entonces presidente Alberto Fujimori los felicitó pero se mostró enojado por la muerte del niño” (“Nakasaki aseguró que testimonios de los ex colinas” 2-09-08). While it is true that neither Chuqui Aguirre nor the other ex Colina members could directly incriminate Fujimori, they provided a substantial amount of evidence to indirectly prove Fujimori’s knowledge of and participation in the crimes. Nonetheless, Nakasaki saw this evidence as insufficient proof.
Similarly, in the case of Hermoza Ríos’ testimony, Nakasaki affirmed that he had told the truth: “Lo que viene declarando el general Hermoza es lo que ha declarado, por lo menos, en 65 oportunidades. Contradicciones no hay. Por eso me sonrío cuando dicen que hay algún tipo de conflicto de interés” (“Nakasaki dice que no hubo contradicción” 7-08-08). While Hermoza Ríos surely made many of the same declarations in the trial as he had made in prior situations, the prosecution did present specific examples of his contradictions. Nakasaki unquestionably wanted to demonstrate that Hermoza Ríos was a credible witness since he had attempted to exonerate Fujimori.

In his closing argument, Nakasaki reaffirmed Fujimori’s innocence: “A Fujimori lo acusan por asesinato y secuestro y han pedido 30 años de prisión, pero para demostrar eso se necesitan pruebas, nosotros sostenemos que no las hay” (“Según Nakasaki no hay pruebas” 2-17-09). He also said that the strategy of the defense was to present the evidence and the truth: “Los abogados del presidente Fujimori luchamos porque en el proceso penal se logre la justicia, lo cual solamente se puede lograr mediante la prueba y la verdad.” […] Sostuvo que la fiscalía y los abogados de los agraviados o parte civil en el juicio se limitaron a presentar “narraciones y cuentos” (“Defensa de Fujimori dice que acusaciones” 2-16-09). For Nakasaki, then, presenting indirect evidence was the equivalent of telling stories, and it was an attempt to obstruct justice. Despite the fact that the lack of a written order did not prove Fujimori’s innocence, Nakasaki insisted that this meant that the prosecution could not prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Fujimori was guilty: “En el último día de presentación de sus alegatos, César Nakazaki dijo que una absolución es el ‘único camino’ del tribunal, por cuanto, afirmó, no se ha podido
comprobar ‘en el grado de certeza’ que Fujimori ordenó una guerra sucia” (“Último alegato de defensa” 3-30-09). Nakasaki certainly did his best to defend his client, but his strategy only angered those who were seeking the truth about the past, especially the families of the victims who suffered as a result of the “dirty war.”

The Media’s and the Society’s Reactions

In addition to those people participating in the trial process, many others reacted to the events of the trial, giving their opinions about witness testimony and the final verdict. While the journalists often simply presented the events of the trial and the opinions of the lawyers, they also wrote editorials illustrating their opinions about the events that were occurring. The families of the victims also voiced their reactions to the trial, showing both anger and contentment at different junctures. Finally, the Peruvian public shared its feedback about the trial, participating in surveys and marches and writing comments to El Comercio. It is these reactions which I will analyze in this section in order to show the reader how the media and the public viewed the trial and how it contributed to the processes of truth, justice and reconciliation.

During the trial, the victims were not content with some of the witnesses’ testimony. When they heard Montesinos’ testimony, they were disappointed that they did not hear the truth. One of the victim’s family members, Gisela Ortiz, said: “‘Montesinos ha venido con un libreto para limpiar a Fujimori de la responsabilidad que tiene’” 7-01-08). It is obvious that Gisela not only believed that Fujimori was guilty but also felt that there needed to be consequences to his actions. Less than three weeks later, at the burial
of the remains of the Cantuta victims, the family members’ search for justice became even more apparent. Gisela spoke to the media of the relief that would come with convicting perpetrators of violence: “‘Con este entierro también sepultamos una buena parte de la historia de impunidades en nuestro país. Creo que ahora sí nuestros familiares van a poder descansar con la tranquilidad de saber que esos asesinos están siendo castigados y que está llegando la justicia’” (“Mejía Huaraca 7-19-08). She then specifically condemned Fujimori: “‘Hoy nosotros volvemos a reafirmar quién es el principal responsable de estas muertes: Alberto Fujimori’, enfatizó Gisela Ortiz, mientras la multitud coreaba ‘Escucha Fujimori, Cantuta no se olvida’ y en una banderola se leía ‘No a la impunidad, no al genocidio’” (“Mejía Huaraca 7-19-08). The reaction of the family members while Gisela is speaking shows that they felt that the killings had to be remembered and Fujimori needed to be punished in order for society to recover. Though having the remains of their loved ones identified was a positive step in the reconciliation process, it was not sufficient. The court and society needed to acknowledge the perpetrators’ guilt.

After Fujimori was convicted for his involvement in human rights violations, the victims expressed that they were happy that justice had been achieved. Raida Cóndor, the mother of one of the students killed in the Cantuta massacre, declared: “‘Estoy muy emocionada, gané, entró la felicidad en mi casa. Tenía miedo, estaba nerviosa pero ahora me siento feliz. Tras 17 años de lucha, encontré la justicia que andaba buscando’” (“Raida Cóndor: ‘La justicia” 4-07-09). Raida could not and did not want to forget about what had happened, and only now, with the conviction of Fujimori, did she feel relieved.
Gisela reiterated Raida’s sentiments of contentment: “Gisela Ortiz, hermana de una de las víctimas y vocera de los deudos de ambos crímenes, declaró que por primera vez desde que se cometieron las matanzas ‘la justicia peruana se ha mostrado a la altura de lo que exige la historia en la lucha contra la impunidad. Por primera vez se respeta el derecho de los familiares (de las víctimas) a la verdad y a la justicia’” (‘Los deudos de Barrios Altos y La Cantuta’ 4-07-09). She then emphasized her hope that the verdict would create positive changes in the future: “‘Ojalá que estos crímenes por los cuales nosotros hemos luchado durante 17 años para que se haga justicia sea una enseñanza que aprendamos todos como peruanos para que no vuelva a repetirse. Ojalá que esta historia de impunidad no vuelva a intentar perpetuarse en nuestro país’” (‘Los deudos de Barrios Altos y La Cantuta’ 4-07-09). If Peruvians are able to prevent a reoccurrence of the violence that was perpetrated by the Fujimori government, it would allow citizens to develop a relationship of trust with the state. We could say, then, that the victims celebrated Fujimori’s convictions because they knew it would help them overcome their trauma, while at the same time facilitating the reconciliation process.

The *El Comercio* journalists, like the victims, were looking for justice to prevail, and in their editorials, it is clear that they believed Fujimori to be guilty. However, this perspective did not just belong to *El Comercio* but also to the vast majority of both the national and international press, who celebrated Fujimori’s conviction. During the trial, one of the *El Comercio* journalists criticized Montesinos’ testimony in his editorial. First, he or she condemned Montesinos for contradicting previous statements: “La voceada nueva intención de Montesinos de limpiar de toda responsabilidad a Fujimori en
graves delitos contra derechos humanos contrasta con sus declaraciones previas. Estas, que constan en diferentes documentos judiciales y como tales deben ser apreciadas por el tribunal, enfatizan que el ex presidente sabía y urdía todo, y que Montesinos ejecutaba” (“La dupla cómplice” 7-02-08). To explain the change in testimony, the journalist stressed Montesinos’ possible economic and political motivations: “No se puede descartar que esta aparente intención de no confrontar a su ex jefe, obedezca a un esquema de aprovechamiento futuro, en caso de que el grupo fujimorista retome algunas esferas de poder” (“La dupla cómplice” 7-02-08). Finally, at the end of the article, the journalist emphasized the need to punish criminals: “Corresponde en este caso a los jueces actuar con sensatez para imponer el imperio de la ley, rechazar cualquier estrategia burda y proterva de burlarse de ella, y aplicar justicia y castigar a quienes delinquieron con tanta premeditación y alevosía” (“La dupla cómplice” 7-02-08). The journalist, then, believed that Fujimori deserved to be jailed and that Montesinos was equally as guilty as Fujimori, neither one willing to admit to any wrongdoing and make amends for their actions. For him or her, the court and the Peruvian people needed to recognize both the falsity of Montesinos’ testimony and Fujimori’s pristine regime.

A couple months later, another editorial was written in El Comercio by ex anti-corruption lawyer César Azabache Caracciolo. While he was not convinced that the prosecution had proven that Fujimori had ordered the killings, he did not think that this proof was necessary. In addition, he felt that both sides had exaggerated their stories: “La Fiscalía y las víctimas han sostenido una versión sobre la culpabilidad total de Fujimori que supone la demostración de órdenes directas y expresas que posiblemente
nunca haya sido necesario emitir. Al frente, la defensa pretende una exoneración de responsabilidad penal tan absoluta que resulta institucionalmente insostenible” (Azabache Caracciolo 9-11-08). Azabache Caracciolo believed that to prove Fujimori’s guilt, it was sufficient to show his indirect participation in the events:

Lo que hay que probar es que los crímenes en efecto se cometieron, un balance final, y que Fujimori, siendo el presidente de la República, no hizo nada desde Barrios Altos para evitar que Canto Grande y La Cantuta ocurrieran. Si se trataba de resolver un problema político forzando al sistema a tomar partido por la impunidad, entonces la omisión revela aquiescencia, y se convierte en algo tan grave como matar, sin necesidad de buscar en ningún archivo firmas probablemente inexistentes. (9-11-08)

Allowing violence, then, is a crime according to Azabache Caracciolo, and Fujimori did deserve to be punished for his involvement in the events. Fujimori showed no regret for what he had done: “Fujimori no se ha sentido obligado a pedir perdón por lo que en efecto puede no haber ordenado, pero sin duda dejó hacer” (Azabache Caracciolo 9-11-08). Azabache Caracciolo felt that the president was ultimately responsible for both the damage caused to the country and for the initiation of the healing process; Fujimori had let the Peruvian public down by permitting the further fragmentation of the divisions in society.

At the end of the trial, after Fujimori finished his self-defense, Juan Paredes Castro wrote an editorial in *El Comercio* criticizing Fujimori’s final arguments:
Una vez más, inclusive en un momento crucial de su defensa, Fujimori salva —porque así lo quiere— a Montesinos y a Hermoza, no importa cuánto del pasivo de estos él y su grey lo terminen asumiendo y a costa de privar a la historia del país de la verdad y del escarmiento por crímenes y matanzas hasta hoy impunes. […] Que siquiera pidiera perdón por todo lo que, en el menor de los casos, se le escapó de las manos, y por todo lo que, en el peor de los casos, y conociendo la naturaleza de los hechos y sus eventuales efectos, no fue capaz de controlar ni exigir una rendición de cuentas. ¡Por lo visto nunca se le ocurrió hacer un control de daño de los excesos de la indiscriminada acumulación de poder de su régimen! (4-02-09)

Again, like Azabache Caracciolo, Paredes Castro did not care if Fujimori had ordered the killings or not; the fact that he did nothing to rectify the situation or prevent future human rights violations was criminal enough. His use of exclamation points in this declaration shows the anger that he felt for the crimes that were committed and Fujimori’s denial to accept responsibility. Undoubtedly, Paredes Castro believed that Fujimori was hindering Peru from admitting its mistakes and learning from the past; Fujimori should have been the example to create change, but, instead, he justified a system which resulted in Peru’s collective trauma.

Finally, in an editorial written after the verdict was delivered, another journalist asserted that the sentence was “just” and “exemplary” (“Caso Fujimori: Fue una
sentencia” 4-19-09). For the journalist, justice was achieved since the damages to the victims and their families had been repaired: “El concepto de justicia tiene muchos significados, entre ellos uno muy importante entendido como la reparación del daño. Por eso, el juicio a Fujimori y la sanción que ha recaído sobre él son justos, porque se ha reparado el daño que su gobierno causó a un número determinado de personas, como sucedió con los casos de Barrios Altos y La Cantuta, entre otros” (“Caso Fujimori: Fue una sentencia” 4-19-09). Certainly, punishing Fujimori would facilitate the process of overcoming trauma for the victims’ families since the state would be acknowledging the wrongful deaths of their loved ones. In turn, their recovery would facilitate the recovery of society as a whole. The victim’s families would be able to develop new relationships with other sectors of society and the state, simultaneously providing them with an increased support system and allowing all Peruvians to give new meaning to the memories of the violence caused by the state.

The reaction of the Peruvian population as a whole was similar to that of the journalists, most Peruvians condemning Fujimori. During the closing arguments, a survey of 1000 Peruvians from sixteen different cities in the country was published by El Comercio. According to the survey: “El 60% de los peruanos considera que el ex presidente Alberto Fujimori es culpable de los casos de violaciones a los derechos humanos por los que está siendo juzgado, según una encuesta publicada hoy por el diario El Comercio” (“Fujimori es culpable de violar” 1-18-09). Another survey was carried out after the reading of the verdict, and in this case, the percentage of Peruvians who believed Fujimori was guilty had increased: “La culpabilidad o inocencia de Fujimori...
también estuvo en debate. Así, un irrefutable 70% opina que Fujimori es culpable. […] En tanto, el 27% cree en la inocencia del ex presidente” (“La mayoría de peruanos cree” 4-19-09). These surveys show not only that most Peruvians believed Fujimori to be guilty but also that they were influenced by the prosecution’s arguments and evidence. Based on the comments written to El Comercio by its readers in regards to this article, those who supported Fujimori believed that the good he did in the country outweighed the bad, and he therefore should not be condemned. A Peruvian named “Percy” wrote:

yo no lo creo asi . pienso que existe cierto intereses de personas . soy agradecido por lo que iso fujimori en el pais . estabilidad . cero inflacion . y extermino la peor lacra que fue el terrorismo . exterminar el terrorismo fue clave para que hoy el peru se encamine al desarrollo . en toda guerra siempre hay perdidas humanas . las personas que critican a fujimori no estuvieron en el pais como los miles de peruanos que si . con que derecho critican si ellos vivian en europa . de que existio irregularidades existio pero en que gobierno todo es color de rosa .. en anteriores gobiernos robaron igualmente . alguien iso algo como lo estan haciendo ahorra con fujimori . (“La mayoría de peruanos cree” 4-19-09)

Fujimori did, in fact, win the fight against terrorism and improve the economy, and it seems that Peruvians who used Percy’s argument did not necessarily believe in Fujimori’s innocence, but that he should be found innocent because of his successes. Alexis Pizzaro, El Comercio reader, criticizes Percy’s perpective:
TODAVÍA SIGO LEYENDO ESTUPIDECES DE LOS FUJIMORISTAS. ¿NO ENTIENDEN QUE NADA TIENE QUE VER SU OBRA POLÍTICA CON LOS DELITOS QUE HA COMETIDO? PUEDE HABER HECHO COSAS POSITIVAS, PERO ESO NO LE AUTORIZA A COMETER CRÍMENES. HAGAN UN ESFUERZO DE IMAGINACIÓN, DEJANDO DE LADO SU TOZUDEZ E INTOLELANCIA, Y DÍGANME SI USTEDES NO DENUNCIARÍAN O ACUSARÍAN A SU JEFE, A PESAR DE SU BUENA GESTIÓN EN LA EMPRESA, POR HABER DESPEDIDO INJUSTAMENTE A COLEGAS SUYOS Y DE ACOSAR O VIOLAR A TRABAJADORAS DE LA EMPRESA. SER UN BUEN GERENTE NO LE DA DERECHO A COMETER INJUSTICIAS Y EXCESOS. ¿ES CLARO EL EJEMPLO?

(“La mayoría de peruanos cree” 4-19-09)

This dichotomy between Peruvians was also clear in the demonstrations organized both for and against Fujimori. In March of 2009, 3000 Peruvians marched in Lima, demanding that Fujimori be punished for his crimes. Their signs emphasized the necessity to remember and to achieve justice: “Las pancartas que portaban los manifestantes pedian un castigo para Fujimori: ‘Ni olvido ni perdón’; ‘No a la impunidad’; ‘Sin justicia no hay paz’ o ‘El pueblo no olvida’, y muchos de los asistentes usaban camisetas con dibujos del ex mandatario entre rejas” (“Tres mil personas pidieron” 3-12-09). They believed that Fujimori had to be convicted in order for society to work toward reconciliation. On the other hand, Fujimori supporters had their own
demonstration before the verdict at the end of March of 2009, insisting on Fujimori’s innocence: “Convocados hace apenas cinco días, los manifestantes se dieron cita en el llamado Campo de Marte y marcharon disciplinadamente con pancartas que rezaban ‘Fujimori inocente’, ‘Chino libertad’” (“Simpatizantes claman” 3-25-09). During the march, Fujimori’s daughter, Keiko, proclaimed her father’s innocence using Percy’s argument: “Keiko volvió a proclamar como el gran triunfo de su padre el haber vencido al terrorismo ‘y por haber tenido la valentía de enfrentarlos (a los terroristas), está siendo acusado’” (“Simpatizantes claman” 3-25-09). The Fujimori supporters were not looking for reconciliation; they were proud that Fujimori was successful, and they were not willing to admit that the way he had achieved victory was the cause for the development of traumatic memories.

Conclusion

Peru has taken many steps towards uncovering the truth of the past and achieving justice and reconciliation. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission completed an in-depth investigation of the human rights violations which were perpetrated by both the state and the Shining Path. They interviewed victims and the family members of victims, providing Peruvian society with a great deal of information about the events of the past, truths that most Peruvians had never heard before. However, these interviews not only provided Peruvians with a chronicle of truth but also allowed the victims and their families to speak about the unspeakable, enabling them to initiate the process to overcome their trauma. The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission also
provided Peruvians with a written record of the Shining Path revolt and civil war, a record that would serve as the memory of society and aid in the reconciliation process through its presentation of truth and its recommendations to the state. Though not all of the recommendations have been implemented, there has been an attempt to register the victims and their families and begin to provide them with reparations. The state needs to complete the reparations process and continue to work towards narrowing the divisions in society. One recent project which has been approved by the Alan García government is the Museo de Memoria, or Memory Museum, which will be constructed in Lima, the commission created to carry out the project being headed by Mario Vargas Llosa. García asserts the objectivity and inclusiveness of the museum: “El proyecto que se presente sobre el Museo de la Memoria incluirá la visión de todos los peruanos, de una manera objetiva, sin sesgos políticos ni afanes de venganza” (“Presidente García pide tener confianza” 4-06-09). The Memory Museum, like the TRC report, will provide Peruvians with a record of the truths of the past, though it is but one step in the reconciliation process. Peruvians need to use what is presented in the museum to work towards overcoming trauma as a society and uniting to create a better future.

The documentary that I discussed in the chapter, State of Fear, is like the Memory Museum in that it provides Peruvians with an easily accessible format to learn about and remember the past. State of Fear is based on the findings of the TRC, so it does not provide us with any new information about the Shining Path revolt and civil war. Nonetheless, the TRC is a very lengthy report which few people have read in its entirety, and State of Fear presents important testimonies from the TRC’s work in a way that is
easy for all Peruvians and non-Peruvians to understand and which does not require an
extensive amount of time to view. In addition, seeing the narratives presented visually
impacts the viewer emotionally in a way that would not be possible by simply reading
about the events in a report. The viewer can witness how the memories of the violence
continue to affect the victims and their families in the present, bringing the speaker to
tears and evoking their pain. Through seeing these images and listening to the speakers’
stories, the viewer can witness a more complete truth about the events of the past and can
more easily empathize with the victims and their families. This empathy can then trigger
advancements in the reconciliation process. If all Peruvians realize that society as a
whole is suffering from trauma and reach out to their neighbors, listening to them and
treating them with respect, it is a step towards achieving true reconciliation.

As with *State of Fear*, the Fujimori trial enabled Peruvians to learn about the past
and also to make progress in the reconciliation process. Clearly, the trial also achieved a
justice which, for years, many Peruvians had been waiting and hoping for. Through
reading about or watching the witness testimony, Peruvians could ascertain truths about
the past. Of course, not all of the witnesses told the truth, which makes the search for
truth much more difficult. Peruvians had to pay close attention to the trial and attempt to
discern which witnesses were lying and which were being truthful. Nonetheless, now
that the trial has ended, one can analyze the trial as a whole and distinguish the truths
from the fabrications with less difficulty. In addition, the ending of the trial can now
initiate another phase of the reconciliation process. The victims of state crimes and the
families of victims, as well as many other Peruvians, felt either relieved or elated by the
justice that was achieved, Fujimori’s 25-year jail sentence. Knowing that someone has been punished for the crimes that were committed enables Peruvians, especially the victims and the families, to overcome the trauma that they have been suffering from. This knowledge gives them a sense of peace and allows them to start their lives anew. The justice rendered also provides a new beginning for society as a whole. Peruvians now know that human rights violations will not be permitted in their country, which facilitates the construction of a relationship of trust between the state and the people. Trust is the building block to achieving true reconciliation. Hopefully, the trial will not be the end but rather the beginning of the state’s efforts to reach out to the Peruvian people and create a better future for everyone.
Conclusions

Like so many neocolonial societies, in contemporary Peru, both individuals and society as a whole continue to suffer from historical layers of social trauma. The definitions of trauma proposed by Kai Erikson have proved useful in the analysis of Peruvian social trauma, individual trauma being defined as “a blow to the psyche that breaks through one’s defenses so suddenly and with such brutal force that one cannot react to it effectively,” and collective trauma being defined as “a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing sense of community” (187). During the Shining Path’s armed struggle and civil war, Peruvians were bombarded with excessive acts of violence which they were not prepared for. At first, they did not believe that the Shining Path’s revolt was severe, and, as over time, their awareness increased, so did the spiraling cycle of insurgency and counterinsurgency violence. As a result, Peruvians had difficulty coping with everyday life, and ethnic divisions and social conflict deepened. Their memories blocked by trauma, they could not process the events of these years, which resulted in the installation of another layer of individual and collective trauma.

Using the concept of latency originally developed by Sigmund Freud, Cathy Caruth explains that trauma does not develop during or immediately after an event but rather over time as the memory of the event continually “possesses” the person who
experienced it (“Introduction” 4). First of all, as Pierre Janet has shown us, memories of traumatic events can be dissociated from conscious awareness because they are stored differently than memories of ordinary events. Nonetheless, these memories still possess the individual through dreams and flashbacks triggered by events in the present. And even when the events are not triggered, according to Janet, the memories remain in the brain as subconscious fixed ideas which can still affect present actions and perceptions. How does this affect us? A person experiencing trauma cannot create a coherent narrative of the traumatic event since it was buried in the unconscious. Van Der Kirk and Van Der Kolk say that the individual may also have trouble ordering the event due to damage caused to the hippocampus as result of witnessing it (178). What really matters is that this burying in the unconscious and the difficulty in retrieving and giving new meanings to these scars is what prohibits us from confronting trauma and coping with our present reality (Frow 53-54).

Of course, the way that individual memories are formed differs greatly from the way that cultural memories are formed. Jesús Martin-Barbero explained in his talk “Los medios, memoria y olvido” that cultural memories are not cumulative. According to Abril Trigo, this is because we use cultural memories to understand our present and create a common future (88). The Peruvian TRC did want to simply reconstitute the memories from the past; the goal of their remembrance was to work towards reconciliation in society and to create a better future for Peruvians. This reconciliation, though, is tempered by the fact that cultural memories are conflictive (Martin-Barbero “Los medios, memoria y olvido”). Each group in society has its own memories, and
some memories take precedence over others. The cultural memory of the upper and middle classes has become the national historical memory, which excludes the indigenous cultural memories, scarred by centuries of colonization. It is this long history of oppression which has nurtured many forms of resistance, tactics for survival, struggles for memory, and violent rebellions, like the recent armed struggle of the Shining Path. On the other hand, the Shining Path’s uprising and civil war did not affect only the indigenous people but rather the society as a whole, and, as a result, Peru is suffering from a new layer of social trauma that engulfs the historical memory of the 1980s and 90s as well as the opposing cultural memories of all sectors of society. But, even now, after the initiation of many reconciliation efforts, the previous divisions in society still continue to exist.

Although recent Peruvian governments have not yet been able to erase social divisions, they have attempted to address individual and collective trauma. Initially, during the end of the Fujimori regime, there were no efforts at reconciliation because Fujimori promoted a policy of collective amnesia. Policies of amnesia can be implemented in the name of reconciliation, trying to bury the past. However, as we have seen, Peru’s policy of forgetting did not bring about reconciliation but rather societal trauma. Since the end of Fujimori’s presidency, the state has changed its policy to one of remembering, creating the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, carrying out trials against Fujimori and other officials who violated human rights and approving initiatives such as the Memory Museum. As Daly and Sarkin have explained, truth can lead to reconciliation or reconciliation can also lead to truth (6). Peru has chosen the strategy of
seeking truth in order to achieve reconciliation, the principal example being the creation of the TRC, because the people believe that justice, in addition to truth, is essential in advancing the reconciliation process. Daly and Sarkin show us that according to proponents of restorative justice, justice is attained by defendants and victims working together to rebuild society rather than through putting the perpetrators of violence on trial (14). We could say, then, that while Peru believes in reconciliation, the state does not believe that punitive justice and reconciliation are mutually exclusive, as do proponents of restorative justice. The victims and their families, as well as many Peruvians in general, have clamored for punitive justice, believing it necessary for them to confront and overcome their trauma and reestablish a relationship of trust with the nation-state.

In my analysis of the *El Comercio* coverage of the conflict, as well as the Abimael Guzmán speeches and interviews and Shining Path writings and newspaper coverage, we were able to see the motivations for the initiation of the Shining Path struggle, the effects of the party’s actions, the increasing awareness of the violence taking place and a mounting fear and desperation in society. These sources reveal to us the complexities Peruvian history and how it would subsequently affect the development of trauma. In addition to following the communist teachings of Mao Tse-tung, Guzmán was also inspired by José Carlos Mariátegui, who married his socialist beliefs with his concern for the indigenous peoples: “En el Perú no cabe separar al socialismo del indigenismo porque aquél representa y defiende los intereses de la clase trabajadora en el Perú—como en los otros países andinos—su inmensa mayoría está constituida precisamente por indios” (Cornejo Polar 173). This view, expressed by Mariátegui in the 1920s, could be seen as
the basis for some of the ideologies of the indigenist novel of the time, which focused on condemning the exploitation of the indigenous peoples but did not give them agency in changing their own destinies (Cornejo Polar 180-181). The novelists themselves, like Mariátegui, were not indigenous peoples but intellectuals trying to resolve their problems for them. It is this tradition which seems so apparent in Guzmán’s perspectives and actions. He recognizes indigenous oppression and Mao’s call to revolution as the motivating factors in the initiation of his armed struggle. And, according to both Mao and the indigenist tenets, he believed that the indigenous peoples needed to be led by intellectuals. Thus, Guzmán’s attempt to start a revolt which, if successful, would overcome the layers of trauma developing since colonization was a reaction to Peruvian history’s attempt to address the social divisions in society. Unfortunately, Guzmán did not take into account the ideologies of neoindigenist novels such as those written by José María Arguedas, which attempted to articulate indigenous culture from an indigenous perspective. Many indigenous peoples either would not support Guzmán or became disillusioned by his actions. They saw their own people being unnecessarily sacrificed, and they did not feel that Guzmán was addressing their needs. Guzmán was carrying out a revolt based on what he thought would be best for the country, not taking into account what forms of resistance would best serve the interests of the indigenous peoples. The result of this strategy was the counterinsurgent violence and the growth of fear in society previously mentioned. Many lower class Peruvians were afraid because they saw the Shining Path violence as being contradictory; violence was being perpetrated in their name, but they did not seem to be the beneficiaries. And middle and upper class Peruvians came to be afraid by the middle of the conflict because they saw their power
being seriously challenged and their comfortable lifestyles put in jeopardy. Consequently, in their panic and search for safety, they accepted Fujimori’s authoritarian measures.

The eventual result was the development of trauma. For many Shining Path militants, trauma was only the cause of their violence. For those who believed in what they had done, they would not feel remorse for their actions. Nevertheless, as history has evidenced, some of the activists became disillusioned with the Shining Path ideology, and, as a result, could have experienced remorse, and accordingly trauma. In Chapter 3, it was those militants who were able to differentiate between their goals and their immediate actions that suffered from trauma. They may have wanted to change their country, but they came to realize that violence does not accomplish that goal but rather exacerbates the broken social bonds in society. On the other hand, those Shining Path characters who did not feel remorse could only see the positive effects of their armed struggle. Though we did not see a post-conflict Shining Path expression in Chapter 3, State of Fear demonstrated that real-life Shining Path militant Fany Palomino still believes that her path was the correct one. She expresses the opinion that if no one can resolve Peru’s fractured society through peaceful means, then violence is a viable solution.

The dichotomy of the military/government reactions to armed revolt and civil war was similar to that of the Shining Path. There are military personnel and government leaders that still will not apologize for their participation in the violence because they believe that it was the only way for them to end the conflict. They certainly recognize
that human rights violations were committed, but they see these actions as a necessary evil. In addition, they are influenced by the history of state violence since colonization. Any resistance to the power of the upper classes had always been met with repression. The indigenous peoples were seen as inferior, and thus, not worthy of the same rights afforded to the upper classes. This may be another reason why many military personnel and government leaders believe that their violence was not a crime. Conversely, others have shown signs of remorse and apologized for their actions, admitting the excessive nature of their violence. Though we cannot be sure of their motives, it is possible that they may see that Peru is suffering from collective trauma and that ignoring society’s pain is not aiding in the reconciliation process.

Regarding Peruvian society, the lower classes seem to have been more greatly affected than other groups in society because a greater percentage of them died in the conflict and their past has influenced how they cope with the trauma. The history of the lower classes, especially the indigenous peoples, has been one not only of oppression but also of broken promises. Each new presidential candidate promises change and aid for the indigenous peoples, but the positive effects are always limited. Even with the agrarian reform law passed by the Velasco Alvarado regime in 1969, the overall benefits for the Peruvian peasants are questionable. Land was, in fact, redistributed, and cooperatives established, however, many peasants continue to live in poverty because the economic power structure has changed little, meaning that peasants are not getting the support that they need to grow their businesses. In addition, the social power structure of indigenous inferiority and white supremacy has remained intact, further hindering lower
class attempts to progress in society. They are suffering from layers of trauma which do not allow them to hope that a better future awaits them, and thus, when this is combined with the trauma that developed after the Shining Path armed struggle and civil war, they become even more broken down and less trusting of the state and other social classes. The Shining Path’s efforts, in addition to victimizing the lower classes, have also come to signify another broken promise. It could be for this reason that many lower class Peruvians either struggle to overcome trauma or feel that they are unable to do so. It could also be the reason why the lower classes are wary of the possibility of true reconciliation in the country.

In contrast to the lower classes, middle and upper class Peruvians, in general, have an unrealistic view of the reconciliation process. Many of them are suffering from trauma since, in the end, they were not spared from the Shining Path violence; however, they do not have the past layers of trauma holding them back that the lower classes do. This means that they are better able to confront and overcome individual trauma and are more hopeful of Peru’s future. Nonetheless, it is this optimism which is precisely the downfall of the country. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and State of Fear showed us that some believe that if Peru addresses the individual and collective trauma of the Shining Path revolt and civil war, then they will be able to achieve reconciliation. While it is true that these efforts can contribute to national reconciliation, they are not sufficient to achieve it because they do take into account the social divisions in society which were formed during Spanish colonization. For the Peruvian middle and upper classes, trauma is their trauma, that which was caused by their inability to process the
events of the 1980s and 90s. Although they include the lower classes as part of this trauma, it is probable that they do not want to admit to the previous layers of trauma that they caused. They appear to want to return to their old lifestyles, and if this can be attained, then reconciliation has been achieved in their minds.

As I demonstrated in chapter 4, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission understood that reconciliation of only the most recent collective trauma was not enough to change society. They wanted all Peruvians to acknowledge the pluriculturality of society, believing that this could help reduce discrimination of the lower classes. Nevertheless, they did not provide a concrete strategy to bring about this change because it was not part of their mandate: “In accordance with the TRC’s mandate, its proposals for institutional reform are limited to the tragic events of the past two decades” (TRC Final Report—Summary of Recommendations Section). They recommended that the state devote more resources to the lower classes, providing them with economic and symbolic reparations, but these suggestions only offer a temporary solution. Likewise, the TRC hearings, the Fujimori trial and the Memory Museum provide a partial resolution, allowing Peruvians to learn the truth about the past and confront their unresolved memories. However, this assistance will not change the power structure of society.

The deeper question is whether or not the state actually wants to change society. It was the state that decided the mandate of the TRC and made the conscious decision to not allow recommendations for institutional change which would address the social divisions in society. It appears that the state, like the upper classes, wants Peru to return
to the status quo, a society in which the indigenous peoples were considered inferior and the Creole elite maintained its hegemony. To dilute the hostility of the lower classes, the state was willing to acknowledge their oppression and marginalization. And by initiating economic reparations to the victims and their families, the state makes it seem as though they are addressing the needs of the lower classes. By making these concessions, the state achieves the illusion of change without, in fact, making any changes that will result in long-term effects. In essence, the state is attempting to aid Peruvians in overcoming the trauma of the conflict in order to avoid short-term violence and enhance the confidence of the upper classes. State representatives do not want to admit that the Shining Path had a valid cause at its core because they know that the Shining Path was trying to annihilate their system of hegemony. They are willing to admit that Fujimori was excessive in his actions because he created a negative international image of Peru, and thus, in efforts to remedy that image, the state is prosecuting and punishing those leaders and soldiers who represent the face of that excess. As a result, the search for justice, as well as the state’s creation of the TRC, in addition to contributing to recovery from the conflict, serves as a mask which enables the state to avoid direct criticism and quietly continue to promote the discrimination of the lower classes.

Unfortunately, unless the state alters its hegemonic ideology, true and lasting reconciliation will not be achieved. The state’s attempts to address the trauma of the conflict need to be carried out in conjunction with measures that address the underlying issue of the social divisions and layered trauma. If the foundation of Peru’s deep historical trauma is not addressed, the country will not be able to avoid another
outpouring of violence as occurred during the 1980s and 90s because, as I mentioned in Chapter 1, Žižek theorizes that revolutions attempt to “redeem” unsuccessful past revolutions (Sublime 141). As a result, Peru certainly must implement the TRC’s recommendations for symbolic and economic reparations and continue what they started when the commission was developed. Yet they must also enforce anti-discriminatory regulations and implement institutional changes to educate the middle and upper classes to transform their views of the lower classes’ role in society. At the present, it does not seem likely that this will occur. International pressure could influence the Peruvian state to implement institutional changes, however, the state’s mask of temporary changes will most likely temper any such efforts. For this reason, indigenous and Peruvian human rights organizations must proactively work to gain more influence in the state and force government representatives to confront the issue of oppression and discrimination. It is only through education of the state and, in turn, education of the population that Peru can hope to truly overcome collective trauma.
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