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Research Article

Voting in the Shadow of Violence: Electoral Politics and Conflict in Peru

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Abstract

Why do some insurgent groups with associated electoral parties target civilians despite the costs of doing so? Organizations with peaceful electoral wings and violent factions operating at the same time are common in contemporary democracies. One of the more consistent observations in the literature is that insurgent targeting of civilians is costly to their electoral counterpart, and insurgents are aware of this cost. Yet, many insurgent groups continue to target civilians. In this article, we suggest a localized effect of violence on electoral outcomes of parties with ties to violent groups offers an explanation for why such insurgent groups might continue to perpetrate violence. Specifically, we suggest insurgent benefits, measured as electoral costs to the incumbent for failure in stemming the violence, likely outweigh the localized electoral costs to insurgent-affiliated parties from the violence. Our subnational analysis of violence and electoral results across Peruvian provinces strongly supports our story.

Keywords: voting, civil war, Peru

Introduction

Why do some insurgent groups with associated electoral parties target civilians despite the costs of doing so? Organizations with peaceful electoral wings and violent factions operating at the same time are common in contemporary democracies (Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Perliger 2008; Altier, Martin, and Weinberg 2013; Staniland 2015). A burgeoning literature demonstrates the effects of insurgent violence on the electoral fortunes of incumbent parties (Kibris 2011; Berrebi and Klor 2006; Lago and Montero 2006) and on insurgent-associated parties (Joshi and Mason 2008; Bhasin and Hallward 2013; Heger 2015; de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca 2013). Many show that insurgent targeting of civilians is costly to their electoral counterpart, and insurgents are aware of this cost (de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca 2013; Heger 2015; O'Leary and McGarry 1996; Moloney 2007; McAllister 2004). Yet, many insurgent groups still target civilians.

In this article, we suggest that the electoral costs of this violence are only felt locally and often outweighed by more general benefits. Results from our analysis of the Peruvian case indicate that insurgent violence does negatively affect its associated electoral party's vote share at the province level. Insurgent benefits, measured as electoral costs to the incumbent for failure to stem the violence, likely outweigh the localized electoral costs to insurgent-affiliated parties. This explains why insurgent groups might continue to perpetrate violence in the midst of democratic processes and peace efforts.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of the relationship between variation in territorial control, measured by the dominance of one armed actor, and the resultant variation in the vote for incumbents in national elections (García-Sánchez 2016). To our knowledge, the effect of territorial variation in violence on the vote for insurgent-associated parties remains unexamined. In this article, we argue that voters are likely to withdraw

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electoral support from insurgent-associated parties where the insurgents commit violence, but in contrast will punish incumbents for failure to resolve the conflict regardless of whether violence occurred in their locality or not. In other words, violence committed by insurgents is likely to produce concentrated losses of votes for insurgent-associated parties, while incumbent parties will be punished nationwide.

The Peruvian story of how violence influenced voting in the 1980s and 1990s illustrates this mechanism. At the national level, the story is a well-known and uncontroversial example of incumbent loss of support: the incumbent parties were repeatedly punished for failing to stem insurgent violence and for the violence the incumbents themselves perpetrated in the Andes. In contrast, the radical left coalition associated with the insurgents gained or maintained their national vote share, suggesting that insurgent-associated parties were less affected by the violence.[1] At the same time, extensive qualitative scholarship on the Peruvian conflict suggests that these aggregate results only tell a partial story that obscures more nuanced local dynamics. In particular, the aggregate electoral account ignores indigenous *campesinos* living in the Peruvian Andes, who were initially recruited to form a support base for the insurgency, but then turned against the organization in the late 1980s when they found themselves in the midst of heavy violence (Degregori 1999; Degregori and Carrillo 2004; Chernick 2007).[2] We posit that territorial variation in the costs and benefits of insurgent violence is an important element, demonstrate its relevance in the Peruvian case, and surmise that similar dynamics may hold true in other countries where elections coincide with civil conflict.

The article is organized as follows. First, we briefly discuss the literature on voting and violence and summarize the scholarly insights on the Peruvian conflict. We then present our argument and discuss the scope conditions under which our hypotheses are likely to hold. Next, we present the data and empirical estimation strategy to test our hypotheses, followed by a discussion of the effects of violence on provincial level outcomes in the 1990 presidential elections. We test our theoretical expectations for how violence affected the 1990 elections in Peru, confirming the idea that variation in insurgent violence is associated with a hidden variation in the votes cast for insurgent-associated parties in different locales. We attribute the variation to Peru's leftist alliance—the parties most closely associated with the Sendero Luminoso insurgency—receiving fewer votes only in provinces that suffered extensive violence and a higher vote share in regions further removed from the violence.[3] We also consider issues of endogeneity and the plausibility of alternative hypotheses. The article concludes by suggesting that, beyond the Peruvian story, territorial variation in violence provides important insight into the relationship between civilian electoral support and insurgent violence in other comparable cases (see also Condra and Shapiro 2011; Kalyvas 2006).

Violence and Voting

Electoral parties with ties to violent organizations are common (Snyder 2000; Weinberg, Pedahzur, and Perliger 2008; Brancati 2006; Guelke and Smyth 1992; Dietz 1986; Danzell 2011; Altier et al. 2013; Staniland 2015). Previous research demonstrates the association between a range of causal variables and the amount, level, and timing of electoral violence. This literature also examines the effects of violence on electoral outcomes, consistently showing that violence against civilians affects electoral support for parties associated with the perpetrators of violence.

The causes of electoral violence cited in the literature include constituency mobilization and government-selective use of security forces (Wilkinson 2005), incumbent fear of losing power (Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski 2013), the proximity of elections (Newman 2013), dynamics of group territorial control (Braithwaite 2013), and strategic interaction between government and armed electoral groups (Staniland 2015).[4]

The literature also examines the causal effects of violence on electoral turnout (Joshi and Mason 2008), the electoral fortunes of incumbent parties in countries where there is conflict (Kibris 2011; Berrebi and Klor 2006; Lago and Montero, 2006), and the electoral fortunes of insurgent-associated parties in regional elections

1 Though this is not the case in Peru, incumbent electoral punishment may also be hidden in the aggregate electoral outcome. This may be the case if the incumbent is simultaneously being rewarded by voters not affected by violence for successfully suppressing dissent and losing votes in localities where violence actually occurs.

2 See also Palmer (1995); McClintock (1998); Starn, Degregori, and Kirk (1995); Fumerton (2001, 2003); Yashar (2005); Stern (1995); Stern (1998); Taylor (2006); and Gorriti (2008).

3 The shift to the center and left in the 1985 election was in part spurred by dire economic conditions in the aftermath of El Niño in 1983.

4 For an extended overview of a variety of causal linkages between elections and violence, see Dunning (2011).

(de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca 2013). One of the more consistent observations emerging from this literature is that the electoral fortunes of insurgent-associated parties are strongly linked to the extent to which the insurgents target or shield the population from whom the electoral party draws support. For example, Bhasin and Hallward (2013) argue that Hamas's dual strategy of targeting an external actor (Israel) while building the support of Palestinians contributed directly to their increasing electoral fortunes. An analysis of Basque violence similarly suggests that insurgents are likely aware of the electoral effects of the violence that they perpetrate and act accordingly (de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca 2013). Similarly, Heger (2015) argues that groups that participate in the electoral process are less likely to target civilians than groups that do not contest elections because of the electoral costs associated with attacking civilians. Her analysis of Northern Ireland is consistent with earlier work on this case suggesting electoral support may increase for movements that curb violence against potential civilian supporters during electoral mobilization. For instance, Irish nationalists arguably aimed to keep their violence against Catholics to a minimum to win their support, which included votes (O'Leary and McGarry 1996; Moloney 2007). Similarly, McAllister (2004, 139) argues individuals who had seen friends or close relatives killed or injured by Unionists during the conflict were more likely to vote for the Irish nationalist party, Sinn Féin.

Despite these negative findings, many insurgent groups still target the populations or parts of the population from which their affiliated political parties expect to draw support. Thus, the question remains: if insurgent-associated parties stand to suffer a suppression in electoral support when insurgent groups target their constituent populations, why would insurgents carry on with such violence in the run-up to elections? In providing one answer to this question, we take a cue from recent work examining the relationship between variation in territorial control and the resultant variation in the vote for incumbents in national elections (García-Sánchez 2016). We suggest that territorial variation in how violence affects the vote for both insurgent-associated parties and for the incumbent parties likely influences insurgent willingness to target their constituent populations. We argue that if insurgent-associated parties are only punished where they commit violence, but incumbent parties are punished electorally across the country for failure to resolve the conflict (and for violence in locales where they commit violence), then a localized loss of vote share for associated electoral parties may be a price the insurgents willingly pay. We test our hypotheses on a single case but suggest our findings may have generalizable implications across cases.

Electoral Politics and Violence in Peru

In a test of electoral democracy (Przeworski, 1991; Geddes, 2003),[5] Peru's executive office changed hands in both the 1985 and 1990 elections. These transfers came after a recent transition to democracy in 1980 under the leadership of Fernando Belaúnde of the Acción Popular (AP) party. The insurgent group Sendero Luminoso's declaration of war in 1980 coincided with this process of redemocratization. Peru's ensuing civil war presented an extreme case of large-scale violence, with an estimated seventy thousand individuals killed and disappeared by insurgents and the government between 1980 and 2000 (see Ball et al. 2003). At this time, voting in Peru was compulsory,[6] and nonparticipation was punished with denial of public and private services that required official identification, until the voter paid a substantial fine. This mandate ensured consistently high turnout (León 2017) despite the violence. In this article we examine the Peruvian presidential election of 1990, specifically. The 1990 election presents a classic case of incumbent electoral punishment for failing to deal with years of violence. At the same time, the party on the far left, generally associated with Sendero Luminoso, maintained its fragmented share of the vote despite increasing conflict violence.[7]

5 Importantly, while electoral fraud is almost twice as likely in countries affected by conflict than in nonconflict countries, the fact remains that more than 80 percent of recent elections in conflict countries do not show signs of electoral manipulation (Weidmann and Callen 2013).

6 All Peruvian citizens more than eighteen years old and mentally sound have the right to vote (Article 65, 1979, Peruvian Constitution). The vote is free, secret, and mandatory until the age of seventy (congreso.gob.pe).

7 In 1990, the Peruvian president, deputies, and senators were elected on a single ballot, but voters could cast three votes and split their ticket (Tuesta Soldevilla 1994, 27–28). Consequently, the resulting number of votes for each office sometimes differed within a district. Since the hypothesized effect is withdrawal of votes from the party associated with the perpetrator of violence for expressive or instrumental reasons (Fiorina 1979; Schuessler 2000), we would expect to see the effect in both presidential and legislative elections. However, because Peru is a presidential democracy, we focus on presidential elections in this article.

The first years of the conflict were marked by increasingly forceful and indiscriminate counterattacks by Belaúnde's government on the Sendero Luminoso and the surrounding civilian population in the Andes (Degregori 1999, 76–78). Reacting to the incumbent failure to stop the insurgency and to the extreme government violence in 1985, Alan García, leading the center-left Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA), came to power with 53.1 percent of valid votes and a platform that emphasized "respect for human rights" (Palmer 1995, 295). The far-left Communist Party of Peru (PCP), from which Sendero Luminoso broke away, ran in the coalition of the United Left (Izquierda Unida, IU) in 1985 and 1990. Before the 1985 general election, the IU consolidated the fragmented left[8] and substantially increased its vote share from just more than 8 percent in the 1980 general elections to more than 24 percent at the national level in 1985 (Tuesta Soldevilla 1994).

Despite García's assurances, however, "reports of disappearances and other human rights violations increased more than tenfold between the first two and the last two years of his administration" (Palmer 1995 297–99). Thus, in 1990, the public deemed all the traditional ruling parties incompetent, both with respect to the conflict and a looming economic crisis caused in part by El Niño. Voters abandoned the incumbent APRA in scores, awarding it only 22.5 percent of the votes. The leading parties in the election were two brand new parties: FREDEMO (Frente Democrático), which won 32.6 percent of valid votes in the first round, and Cambio 90, which won 29.1 percent of valid votes.[9] Once again fragmented, the radical left received 12.9 percent of the aggregate vote or a share comparable to what they received in 1980, though substantially lower than their share of the vote in 1985 (Tuesta Soldevilla 1994).

The central story of incumbent electoral punishment for failure to stop the insurgents and for violence the incumbents themselves committed is undisputed. The return of the radical left's vote share in 1990 to 1980s levels is generally attributed to movement fragmentation in 1980 and 1990, rather than backlash from insurgent violence. The radical left received a higher share of the vote in 1985 because of the coalescence of the IU, which aggregated far-left votes (Woy-Hazelton and Hazelton 1992). At the same time, extensive qualitative scholarship on the Peruvian conflict suggests that the national-level account tells only a partial story that obscures more nuanced local dynamics (see Palmer 1995; McClintock 1998; Degregori 1999; Fumerton 2001, 2003; Degregori and Carrillo 2004; Yashar 2005; Chernick 2007; Gorriti 2008).[10] As such, the aggregate story leaves out the account of the indigenous campesinos[11] (peasants) living in the Peruvian Andes, who were initially recruited to form a support base for the insurgency.[12] Over time, however, Sendero increasingly undercut the economic livelihood of the peasantry for the purpose of destroying the capitalist system (Chernick 2007; Fumerton 2001) and effectively administered targeted punishment to anyone thought to be disloyal (Palmer 1995; Degregori 1999; Fumerton 2001, 2003). As the conflict progressed, the violence inflicted by the Sendero came to surpass that inflicted by the armed forces (Chernick 2007), and Sendero's original supporters increasingly turned against the organization in the late 1980s.

Izquierda Unida's Relationship with Sendero Luminoso

Before assessing the effect of variance in Sendero violence on electoral outcomes of associated parties, it is important to clarify the relationship between Sendero and its electoral wing, Izquierda Unida (IU).

In this way, the Sendero Luminoso originated as a violent faction of the Peruvian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Peruano-Sendero Luminoso, PCP-SL), whose associated electoral faction was called the Peruvian Communist Party-Red Homeland (Partido Comunista Peruano-Patria Roja, PCP-PR).

Because association with PCP-SL presented a risk of disqualification from elections for the PCP-PR, the two factions attempted to distance themselves

8 The IU consolidated the fragmented left before the 1980 local elections but after the 1980 general elections.

9 Alberto Fujimori, of C90, ultimately won the presidency in a runoff against FREDEMO's Mario Vargas Llosa.

10 See also Starn, Degregori, and Kirk (1995); Stern (1995); Stern (1998); and Taylor (2006).

11 Specifically, in the departments of Ayacucho, Cusco, and Huancavelica, where much of the violence took place, more than 80 percent of the population reported Quechua as their primary language in the 1981 census (see INEI 2012). Furthermore, Quechua was the maternal language of more than 75 percent of those known killed or disappeared by the state or Sendero between 1980 and 2000 (Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación 2003; Holmes 2006).

12 Many of Sendero's initial supporters were young people including teachers and other professionals, vendors, students, and peasants (McClintock, 1998) in search of a modern identity (Degregori 1999) and reform. The organization won support with distribution of confiscated goods and by punishing bandits, thieves, rapists, and livestock rustlers (Fumerton 2001, 475).

rhetorically from each other. Such repercussions for insurgent-associated political parties is common in democracies (Bourne 2012, 1080).

As is common in other democracies that ban the electoral wing of political parties for "direct or indirect involvement in violent political acts" (Bourne 2012, 1080), the electoral faction of the PCP-PR and the violent wing of that party PCP-SL attempted to distance themselves rhetorically from each other. Furthermore, Sendero explicitly attempted to disrupt elections and other administrative functions of the state (Woy-Hazelton and Hazelton 1992), sabotaging the electoral participation of the PCP-PR. However, we suggest that attempts to distance the two factions in the public eye were undermined by the groups' overlapping ideologies, their intrafactional recruitment efforts, the fact that both were being targeted by the government, and the ongoing conflict within the IU about the appropriateness of violent tactics.

Historically, both the PCP-PR and the PCP-SL originated after the Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s, which caused fragmentation in Communist parties everywhere. In Peru, the Partido Comunista Peruano-Bandera Roja (PCP-BR) was formed as the pro-Beijing faction of the party during the split. In the late '60s and early '70s, two new factions, the PCP-PR and the PCP-SL, emerged within the PCP-BR in response to accusations of corruption within the PCP-BR leadership (Taylor 2006). The main differences between the two Maoist factions (PCP-PR and PCP-SL) centered on the appropriateness of an armed struggle. The PCP-PR pursued electoral success on the basis of being a founding member of the IU coalition. In turn, the PCP-SL increasingly engaged with the armed struggle, often "target[ing] for recruitment village leaders who enjoyed prestige and legitimacy at the grass roots, a number of whom . . . belonged to the legal left, Izquierda Unida (United Left)" (Taylor 2006, 27). From its founding moment onward, factions within IU that were more amenable to supporting violence struggled over the leadership of the electoral coalition with those that categorically opposed it. On presumption of allegiances with Sendero, the government routinely picked up and detained without trial hundreds of IU members in terrorist sweeps. The IU leadership, in turn, accused the government of deliberately trying to undermine the organization, especially in Lima. Finally, in 1989 after yet another confrontation between IU factions supporting and opposing violent tactics, the leader of the moderates and IU's presidential candidate in 1985, Alfonso Barrantes, broke away and ran as the presidential candidate of the Izquierda Socialista (IS) in the 1990 elections (Woy-Hazelton and Hazelton 1992).

Given this long-standing interdependence, the assumption that the average voter would associate the Sendero faction (PCP-SL) with *radical left* parties represented by the IU (including the electoral faction PCP-PR) seems warranted.[13] To be clear, we cannot know whether voters thought Sendero and the IU were affiliated. For example, voters may have disliked the ideology both represented and may have chosen to punish the electoral party for the associated ideology without considering this to be a statement against activities of Sendero Luminoso.

In contrast, we do not expect average voters to associate the IS with Sendero as the IS leadership was known to represent the moderates. Others argue that the electoral left and Sendero were very clearly not affiliated because Sendero engaged in extensive targeted assassinations of some three hundred prominent leftist leaders between 1980 and 1990, (Ron 2001, using DESCO data).[14] We concur that Sendero did target the *center-left*, especially after the center-left APRA came to power in 1985 (DESCO 1989). In contrast, before the 1985 election, Sendero killed only one elected official belonging to the PCP, and before the 1990 election, Sendero killed another two known members of the PCP (DESCO 1989, PCP 2013). Sendero also targeted a handful of people belonging to the IU more generally. However, a cursory survey of political affiliation of those assassinated (DESCO 1989) suggests that this number was low compared to victims with other political affiliations, especially with the center-left APRA. Furthermore, the message associated with the violence was sometimes in support of the radical left represented by the IU.[15] It seems, therefore, that the *radical electoral left* was not a principal target of Sendero violence before the 1985 election and neither before the 1990 election, when the electoral center-left (including APRA) was targeted. Consequently, while voters

13 Importantly, the assessment of the strength of the association between the Sendero and the electoral party likely varied substantially between voters. Undoubtedly, some voters considered the two unassociated while others likely thought the two were associated in policy only and not organizationally. We thank an anonymous reviewer for this point.

14 In this analysis the perpetrator's identity is not always known.

15 For example, in 1984 when a bomb attempt in the Municipality of Callao was diffused, a note was found proclaiming long life to the IU. In another instance, an assassination attempt was made against the secretary general of the Workers Union in Lima, allegedly for attacking the PCP-UN, which was the original Communist Party Organization (author's translation, DESCO 1989).

may have thought the center-left was Sendero's target, they had less reason to believe the radical left was. While this does not show that voters thought Sendero and the electoral party were affiliated, it does suggest that voters likely associated Sendero violence with the same radical ideology espoused by the radical left electoral parties.

The Argument

Building on prior research, we assume that incumbents are held accountable in elections for escalating conflict violence (Berrebi and Klor 2006; Woy-Hazelton and Hazelton 1992). We thus argue that insurgents have an incentive to increase observable conflict severity to undermine overall public confidence in the incumbent's ability to govern the state. Our contribution is to highlight the fact that insurgents' incentives to not target civilians is mitigated if the insurgent-associated electoral wings only suffer losses of electoral support where the violence takes place, and support of the insurgent-associated electoral party is maintained or even increased where insurgents do not commit violence. If this argument is correct, we should see significant territorial variation in votes for insurgent-associated parties as a function of location and severity of insurgent violence. Insurgent-associated parties should receive fewer votes in localities where violence is perpetrated, while possibly even receiving more votes elsewhere. Furthermore, we expect less territorial variation in the vote share for incumbents, as we assume they are likely to lose votes everywhere, regardless of whether they perpetrated violence locally or not.

With respect to Peru, the case literature shows that while one of Sendero's objectives was to disrupt elections, its first objective was to depose the government. To this end, Sendero welcomed general opposition to the state, including opposition channeled through elections.[16] Furthermore, the qualitative account shows popular support was as important to Sendero as to other insurgent organizations globally and was undermined by the organization's victimization of the local Andean population. Our argument illustrates that Sendero recognized escalating violence in select areas of the country[17] was a gamble that paid off in the short run because it only resulted in local loss of support for the organization and its associated electoral parties, while the incumbent suffered extensive loss of support across the country.

16 The organization encouraged voters to abstain or turn in blank ballots in locales where elections were not disrupted (Holmes 2006).

17 As time passed loyalty was increasingly secured through intimidation and progressively onerous and indiscriminate violence against the civilian population (Palmer 1995; Degregori 1999; Fumerton 2001, 2003).

Data and Methods

We test our conjectures about territorial variation in vote caused by territorial variation in violence on data from the 1990 presidential election. Currently, the most disaggregated election results available for Peru for the 1990 presidential elections are at the province level, one above the electoral district.[18] Availability of electoral data and our ability to estimate accurate levels of violence at the provincial level restrict further disaggregation of our data. Provincial aggregation is a substantial improvement over aggregation at the level of the twenty-four departments—the administrative units above the province—or the national level where much current analysis is focused. More importantly, we are not aware of any district-level trends within provinces that would reverse our results. Indeed, further disaggregation between violent and nonviolent districts would likely only strengthen our findings.

Our main explanatory variable is the intensity of violence in each Peruvian province in the five years prior to the national elections, as we assume that intensity likely reflects threats to both personal security and environment. Our dependent variable is the vote share for each party in each province.

Vote Shares in the 1990 Election

To measure support for different political parties during the Peruvian conflict, we focus on provincial level vote shares from the first round of presidential elections in 1990 (Sulmont 2008). Table 1 shows the aggregate election results for both 1985 and 1990. As described above, the political landscape in Peru in the 1980s displayed strong fluctuations, with parties forming, merging, and splitting, and new parties entering in almost every election. For this reason, we cannot examine the change in vote shares for parties between elections, as there is too little consistency in party platforms between the 1985 and the 1990 elections. In particular, the party most associated with the insurgency—the IU—split after the 1985 elections into the IU and the IS. Since only the IU continued to be associated with the insurgency, we expect to see voters who were exposed to violence punishing the IU, and we do not expect to see punishment of the IS.

18 Exit polls may provide some individual level information but these are not available in Peru from this time and at these locations.

Table 1. Aggregate results of the 1985 and 1990 presidential election (first round)

1985		1990	
APRA (center-left) (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*)	53.1%	FREDEMO (*Frente Democrático*)	32.6%
UI (left – insurgency associated) (*Izquierda Unida)*	24.7%	C90 (right) (*Cambio 90*)	29.1%
CODE (right) (*Coordinadora Democrática*)	11.9%	APRA (center-left) (*Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*)	22.5%
AP (right) (*Acción Popular*)	7.3%	**UI (left – insurgency associated)** (*Izquierda Unida*)	8.2%
		IS (left) (*Izquierda Socialista*)	4.7%

To directly estimate vote shares of the different parties in the 1990 elections, we follow Tomz, Tucker, and Wittenberg's (2002) method of seemingly unrelated regression (SUR).[19] Due to extreme changes in the landscape of political parties, we cannot estimate the difference in vote shares of parties between elections as a function of independent variables. However, we can examine the effect of independent variables (including varying levels of violence) on relative vote shares of parties in a single election. As vote shares of different parties are inherently dependent, SUR assumes that the dependent variables of our equations (one for each party) share a common, multivariate distribution, allowing the error terms to be correlated across the different regressions. We calculate the natural log of each party's *i*th share of the votes, relative to that of the reference party j. Our reference party is the second challenger to the incumbent, the Democratic Front (FREDEMO).

We examine the vote shares of all major parties in the 1990 election, including the incumbent APRA, as well as its principal challenger, C90 (Cambio 90). We do this to establish whether the incumbent (APRA) was systematically punished for perpetrating local violence and to see if the challenger (C90) was rewarded for not being party to any of the violence. Out of 194 provinces, 183 produced results in 1990.[20] Below we show that the eleven provinces without electoral results are evenly distributed across different levels of violence.

Measuring Violence in Peru

To measure conflict violence, we present new estimates of provincial-level killings and disappearances for the period prior to the 1990 elections. To account both for long- and short-term effects, we test for the effect of violence five years prior to the elections (1985–1989) and three years prior to the elections (1987–1989). While several different indicators for violent events in Peru are available, none of them provide a representative or complete account of violence that we need to avoid making incorrect inferences about how violence affected electoral outcomes (see Davenport and Ball 2002). To address this problem, we estimate the number of killings and disappearances based on the three sources used in the Final Report of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) (see Ball et al. 2003). The report provides the names of those killed and disappeared as collected by the CVR and the Ombudsman Office (DP, Defensoría del Pueblo). It also provides a combined list from the National Coalition of Human Rights, the Agricultural Development Center, and the Human Rights Commission (ODH). Maps 1–3 in Figure 1 show the geographic variation in violence recorded by CVR, DP, and ODH in the five years prior to the 1990 elections. Based on the victim's identifying information, as well as the location and date of death, names across these three lists were matched to obtain the number of documented cases across all sources and eliminate duplicates. Based on the number of documented cases, we use capture-recapture estimation, a method that has been used in epidemiology, demography, and more recently in studies of conflict, to estimate the number of killed and disappeared

19 Seemingly unrelated regression (SUR) is a multiple-equation version of conventional linear regression.

20 The Sendero did disrupt elections in a select few provinces. From those provinces, no results were returned, or the results returned were not sufficiently reliable for inclusion in the official tally (Fernando Tuesta Soldevilla, former head of the Peruvian National Office of Electoral Processes (ONPE), personal conversation with author).

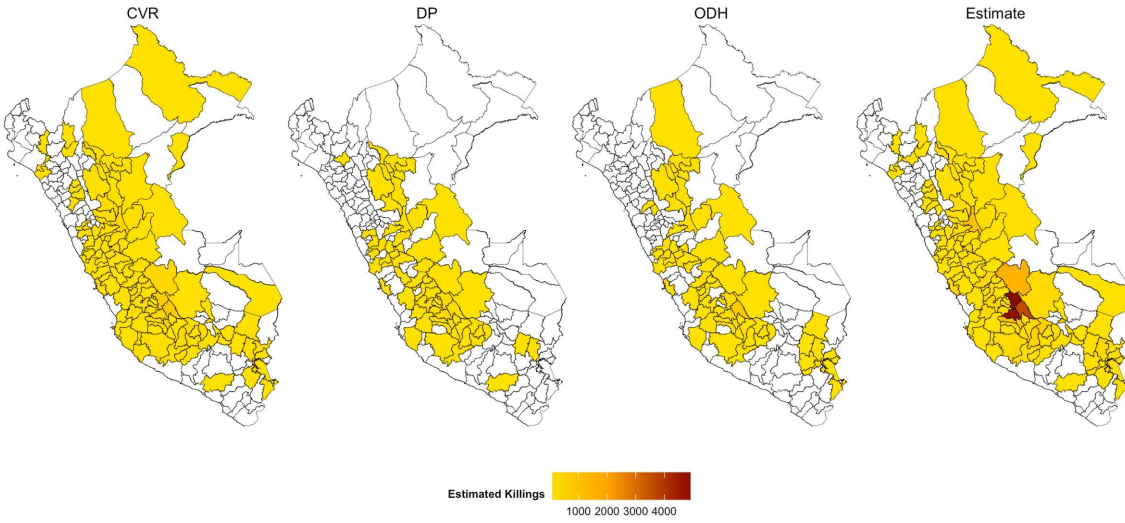

Figure 1. Observed and estimated provincial-level violence in Peru, 1985–1989

people that never reported in one of the three sources; for example, because no one came forward to tell their story (see Manrique-Vallier, Price, and Gohdes 2013).[21] The far-right map in Figure 1 presents the estimated level of violence in all provinces based on all sources and the capture-recapture method.

The fourth map shows that, in comparison to the maps of the individual sources, patterns of killings vary substantially, and failing to account for unreported events would underestimate the intensity of violence between 1985 and 1989, particularly in the region of the central Andes (the Sierra).

Figure 2 shows the frequency of estimated killings at the provincial level. In seventy-seven provinces, no violence was reported between 1985–1989, corroborating the geographic concentration of violence visible in Figure 1. Because a few provinces did not register election results in 1990, we distinguish between provinces that produced election results (in white) and provinces that did not (in grey). We were concerned that provinces without election results would display higher levels of violence, but Figure 2 shows that provinces without election results are evenly distributed across provinces that witnessed lower levels of violence. We therefore conclude that the lack of results for these provinces poses no problem to our analysis.

21 The estimation was performed in R, using the *dga* package by Johndrow, Lum, and Ball (2015). For further discussion of the capture-recapture method applied to Peruvian, data see the appendix.

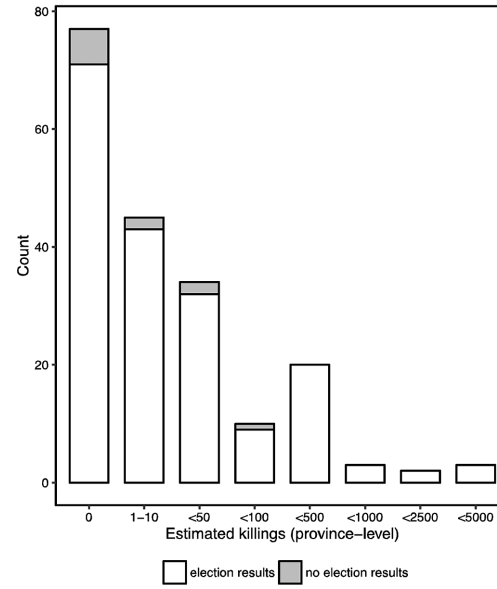

Figure 2. Frequency of estimated killings (provincial-level)

Confounders

There is a range of alternative explanations for observing a relationship between violence and electoral outcomes. The most important confounders are possible socioeconomic differences that might have influenced both violence and electoral outcomes and therefore need to be accounted for in our empirical model. Research by Birnir (2008) shows the high correlation between poverty and indigenous status in Peru and suggests the majority of

victims killed in the Peruvian highlands belonged to the indigenous population. Both poverty and ethnicity are factors that might have affected both the intensity of violence and individuals' vote choices. We therefore include a set of indicators that measure the ethnic composition at the provincial level. First, we proxy the ethnic composition by measuring the percentage of individuals whose primary language was indigenous, based on census data.[22] In alternative model specifications we use the measure of the percent of people whose first language is Quechua and the percent of people that speak Spanish as their first language (see appendix, Tables A1 and A2).

Following qualitative evidence of the conflict, we account for the fact that the Peruvian conflict was predominantly perceived as being fought in the countryside, far away from the capital Lima, by including the *geographic distance* from the center of each province to the capital (in km) as a control variable. We additionally account for differences in climate and remoteness by including a dummy variable for all provinces in the *coastal region*, as well as a dummy variable for all provinces in the highlands *Sierra* region where the Peruvian Andes are located. Population size of the province may also correlate both with exposure to violence and vote choice, which is why we include *population* counts based on census data.

Next to socioeconomic factors, levels of violence might have affected the electoral outcome in other ways. For example, voters in violent provinces might have been intimidated and therefore cast blank ballots. Blank ballots (*blancos*) are not to be confused with a spoiled ballot (*nulos*). To thwart the democratic process, Sendero encouraged voters to abstain or turn in blank ballots (Holmes 2006).[23] Nevertheless, intimidation might also have motivated voters to cast a spoiled ballot. We include both the percentage of *blank votes* and the percentage of *spoiled ballots* in each province in our empirical model. Similarly, violence as a form of voter intimidation might have suppressed turnout, so we also control for provincial-level *turnout*.

Results

Our empirical expectation is that insurgent-associated parties will lose votes in provinces where voters were exposed to violence. Table 2 presents the results for the insurgent-associated party (IU), as well as the results for the incumbent (APRA), the challenger (C90), and the moderate leftist break-off party (IS). The results offer clear support for our expectation: conflict violence is significantly related to a decrease in votes for the insurgent-associated IU.

The results show that higher levels of violence in the five years prior to the 1990 elections are significantly associated with lower levels of vote shares for the party most directly associated with the insurgency, the IU. By contrast, vote shares for the other leftist party (IS), as well as provincial-level electoral outcomes of the incumbent (APRA) and the challenger (C90) are not significantly associated with provincial-level violence.

We include the percentage of blank ballots, the percentage of spoiled ballots, and turnout to control for the fact that some voters may not have turned out to vote for fear of retribution or might have turned out but were too intimidated to cast a vote for their preferred party, thus leaving the ballot blank or spoiling their ballot.[24] The results in Table 2 show that significantly more blank ballots were cast in provinces where the established parties (the incumbent, as well as the parties on the left spectrum) won votes. Significantly fewer blank votes were cast in areas where the challenger gained ground, supporting the idea that C90 was viewed as a viable alternative to the establishment parties. Spoiled ballots show a similar pattern: where more spoiled ballots were cast in

22 Censuses were administered in 1981 and 1993, and we opted for the census data from 1993. Between the 1981 and 1993 censuses, the Andean population in Peru declined slightly (INEI 2012). This decline is likely to have occurred in the first years of the conflict prior to 1985, when the violence was greatest, and likely reflects deaths and displacements. The 1993 census therefore likely captures the population numbers by locale around the time of the 1990 election more accurately than the 1981 census.

23 To examine the effect of violence on blank ballots (as a choice in the absence of a better electoral alternative), we also examine the relationship between violence and blank ballots at the provincial level.

24 We run a separate analysis to investigate the effect of violence on both blank votes and turnout (see appendix, Table A6). The results show that as one might expect, turnout is negatively and significantly related to violence. Where violence was greater, fewer people turned out. However, the percentage of blank ballots and the percentage of spoiled ballots are not significantly related to violence. Therefore, violence is associated with lower turnout, but voters were no more likely to cast blank or spoiled ballots in areas of high violence. Furthermore, while electoral intimidation was undoubtedly a feature of the election, we do not find systematic evidence in the number of blank ballots or turnout that intimidation was disproportionately associated with the vote for a particular party.

Table 2. The provincial-level effect of violence on voting (1985–1989), 1990 election

	IU (insurgency-affiliated)	IS (socialist left)	APRA (incumbent)	C90 (challenger)
Intercept	–4.0766***	–5.4226***	–3.1503***	–2.0403*
	(0.6666)	(0.7767)	(0.7392)	(0.9372)
Estimated violence	–0.0003***	–0.0001	–0.0002·	–0.0000
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Blank votes (%)	0.0232*	0.0105	0.0258*	–0.0624***
	(0.0101)	(0.0118)	(0.0112)	(0.0142)
Spoiled ballots (%)	0.0392***	0.0248·	0.0247·	–0.0351*
	(0.0115)	(0.0134)	(0.0127)	(0.0162)
Turnout (%)	0.0139**	0.0063	0.0139**	0.0140*
	(0.0045)	(0.0052)	(0.0050)	(0.0063)
Log population	0.0836·	0.1267*	0.0360	0.1098
	(0.0494)	(0.0575)	(0.0548)	(0.0694)
Dist. to capital (km)	0.0003	0.0004	0.0012***	–0.0016***
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)
Coastal region	–0.3482*	0.9845***	0.4988*	0.5783*
	(0.1741)	(0.2029)	(0.1931)	(0.2448)
Sierra region	0.1467	1.1181***	0.6145***	0.8686***
	(0.1360)	(0.1584)	(0.1508)	(0.1912)
Primary language indigenous (%)	0.0132***	0.0075***	–0.0046*	0.0267***
	(0.0018)	(0.0021)	(0.0020)	(0.0026)
R^2	0.6235	0.4734	0.3314	0.5677
Adj. R^2	0.6039	0.4460	0.2967	0.5452
Num. obs.	732	732	732	732

Note: Seemingly unrelated regression.

areas where the insurgency-associated party won votes, significantly fewer spoiled votes were cast where the challenger C90 managed to win over voters. The percentage of voter turnout displays a positive significant effect across all parties except the break-off left party IS (not associated with the insurgency); however, the IS gained significantly more votes in populous provinces. In looking at the distance to capital measure we see that those provinces further away offered more support to the incumbent party APRA, while Limeños and voters living closer to Lima punished the incumbent at the ballot box. The challenger, C90, conversely won significantly more votes in provinces that were closer to the center of political power in Lima, while gaining less political power in the more remote areas of the country. The results further show us that all else equal, the insurgency-associated left received fewer votes in the coastal region where the IU faced the strongest competition from the IS,[25] but that no general trend was visible in the Sierra mountains. We see that the other parties received more votes in both the Sierra and the coastal region.

Lastly, all parties, except for the incumbent received a higher vote share in areas with higher indigenous populations. It is particularly noteworthy that the insurgency-associated IU seems to, when controlling for levels of violence, have received a higher vote share in provinces with higher proportions of indigenous Peruvians. Absent conflict violence, provinces with higher percentages of indigenous citizens were more likely to cast their votes for the insurgent-associated IU. The incumbent, on the other hand, received significantly fewer votes in areas with high proportions of indigenous citizens.

To more fully investigate the effect of the main variable of interest, we simulate expected vote shares for the party associated with the insurgency given different levels of provincial-level violence. The expected values allow us to interpret the effect of changing levels of violence, holding other factors constant,[26] while accounting for estimation uncertainty. The top-left panel in Figure 3

25 Barrantes, the leader of the IS, was the head of the IU in the early 1980s and the mayor of Lima from 1983 to 1986.

26 Other variables were held at their mean value, and binary variables are held at the median value. The x-axis

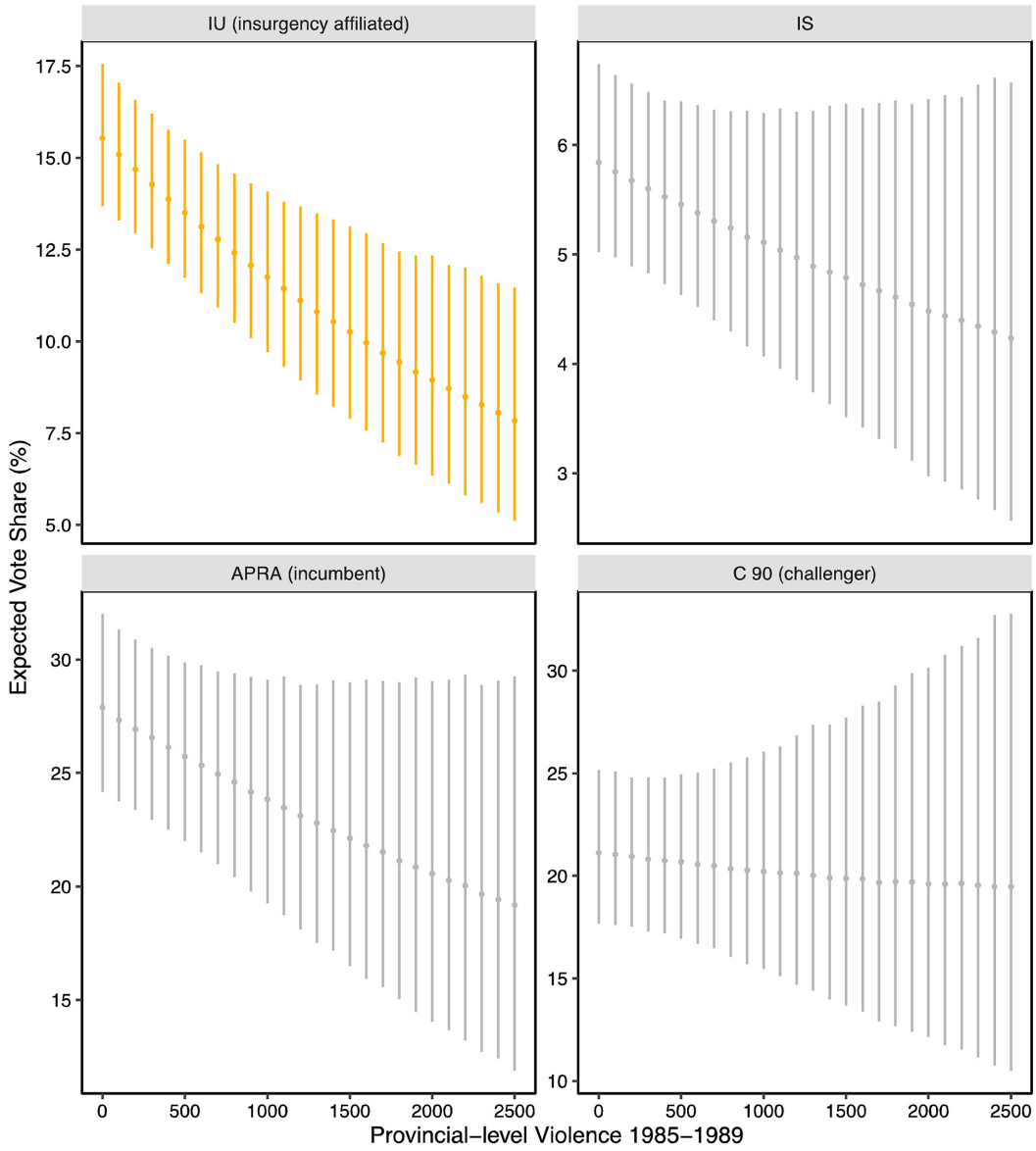

Figure 3. Violence and vote share in the 1990 presidential election

shows that in provinces that remained peaceful throughout the years prior to the elections, the radical left party is expected to have received around 16 percent of all votes cast. Already at relatively low levels of violence—where less than five hundred individuals were killed over the five-year period—do we see a substantial lower vote share for the IU, and this decrease in votes continues steadily to less than an average of about 8 percent in some of the most violence provinces in the time before the elections. The simulations show that, in provinces where no violence occurred in the five years prior to the elections, the party associated with the insurgency received roughly double the number of votes that it did in provinces that experienced high levels of violence.

In comparison, the top-right panel demonstrates that the average expected vote share of the more moderate IS also slightly decreased with increasing levels of violence, but the 95 percent confidence intervals reveal that the

does not include all levels of violence present at the provincial level between 1984 and 1989, but instead focuses on the most frequent levels.

difference is not significant. Similarly, the lower left panel of Figure 3 shows that change in the vote shares for the incumbent is not significantly related to local variations in violence. At the same time, the aggregate election results presented in Table 1 show that APRA was punished nationwide. The simulations add to our understanding by showing that APRA lost regardless of the level of violence voters experienced in their own province. Lastly, the main challenger party C90 also does not appear to have received more or fewer votes due to provincial-level variations in violence.

The Counterfactual Vote Share for IU in the Absence of Violence

So, how much support did the United Left (IU) party actually lose in the 1990 election due to conflict violence? To approximate this effect, we simulate the expected vote share for IU for each province, using the original covariates and the parameters from our regression model, but replacing actual levels of estimated violence with a zero—as if no violence had occurred at all. This *hypothetical* vote share—the support we expect the party would have received in each province given our model—is then compared to the *actual* vote share the party received. Figure 4 maps the difference in votes the IU would have received based on the counterfactual that no violence occurred in the five years prior to the elections.[27] Clearly, we see strong variation across the regions, and when compared to estimated levels of violence in Figure 1, we can see that the dramatic loss in votes is mostly confined to those provinces that *directly* experienced high levels of violence. Although many parts of the country did not see any losses in IU votes due to violence (particularly in the Southeast), comparing observed vote shares to a counterfactual scenario where no violence occurred, the IU lost more than 10 percent of its support as a result of deaths and disappearances.

Our findings cast light on the discrepancy between the Peruvian electoral story at the aggregate and local levels. Voters heavily punished the party associated with the insurgent group—the radical left IU—in areas where substantial violence was committed. At the same time, the radical left maintained its votes nationally because it won more votes in areas where violence was low. In provinces with high levels of violence, however, the radical left lost or gained much less than it would have in the absence of violence. As expected, the vote loss resulting from violence was quite localized. As shown in Figure 4, although votes were lost in high violence provinces in the Sierras, the IU sometimes gained votes in nearby provinces within the same department—the administrative unit above provinces—where violence was lower.

Furthermore, the results indicate that voters successfully distinguished between leftist parties associated with the insurgency and those that were not. In the 1990 election, the PCP was still represented by the IU. The IS, on the other hand, was comprised of more moderate parties that had broken away from the IU between the 1985 and 1990 elections. While voters who witnessed violence in their province punished the IU, the IS was not similarly affected. Meanwhile, at the national level, we know that voters heavily punished the incumbent for the conflict. The results here show that punishment was, however, not contingent on local exposure to violence. As noted above, disillusioned voters abandoned APRA nationwide in the 1990 election.

Alternative Explanations: Propaganda, Coercion, and Endogeneity[28]

We address a range of alternative explanations for our findings, offer robustness tests, and consider reverse causality. One possible alternative explanation for the above results is that the government coerced people in the Andes to abandon the IU and vote for the incumbent party. While fear of government retribution likely played some role, it is unlikely that this explains all our results. First, there is little reason to believe that government propaganda and intimidation of voters varied systematically between neighboring Andean provinces. The results we present above control for effects that would have been specific to the departments located in the Sierra, and we find no significant relationship here. The results are also robust to controlling for the percentage of indigenous people living in a province, which does not affect the relationship between violence and voting. We present alternative model specifications that account more specifically for the percentage of citizens who speak Quechua as their

27 Provinces where the counterfactual predicted lower electoral support than the IU actually received are grouped in one category (in yellow) in the map.

28 Complementary explanations include targeted displacement (Steele 2011). Targeted displacement is likely where violence is longstanding, and factions have had ample time to organize and respond to each other. While general displacement certainly resulted from the conflict in Peru, qualitative accounts of the conflict agree that violence, especially government violence, was extremely indiscriminate in the period under examination (see for example, Palmer 1995) making targeted displacement less likely.

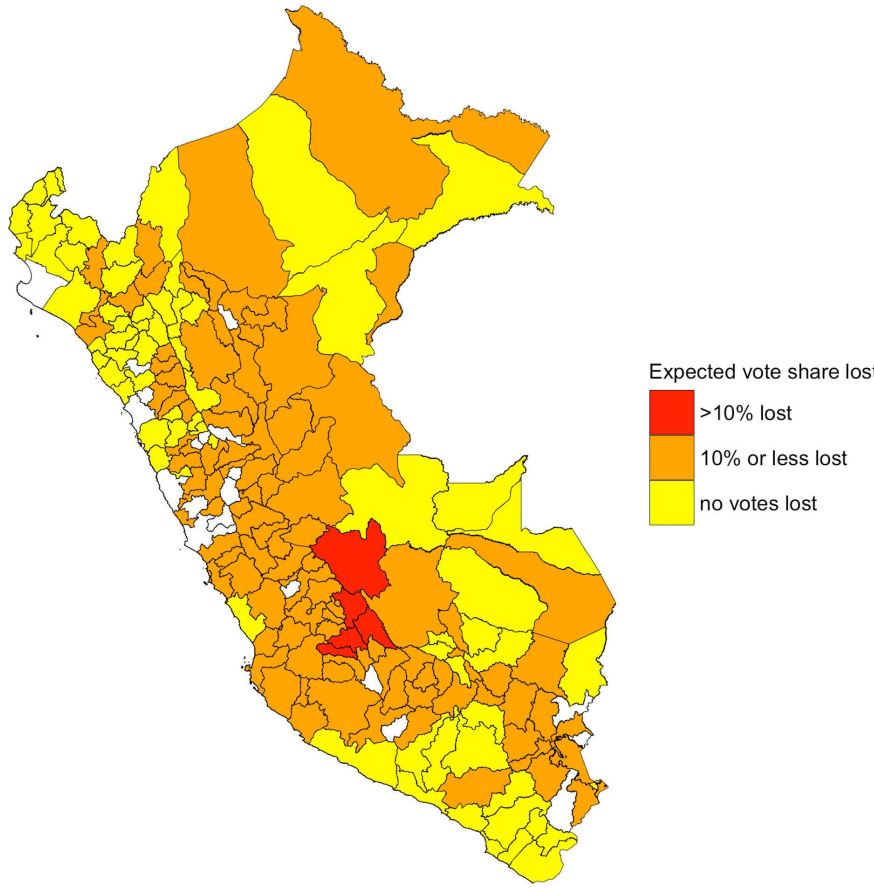

Figure 4. Expected loss of IU vote share due to violence (1985–1989)

first language (see appendix, Table A1) and the percentage of citizens who speak Spanish as their first language (Table A2). The results are robust to alterative specifications and show that, controlling for violence, significantly more votes were cast for the insurgency-associated left in provinces with high percentages of Quechua speakers, while the incumbent APRA lost significantly more votes in those areas. The indigenous population therefore does not seem to have been intimidated in making their dissatisfaction with the incumbent leadership known at the ballot box. Unsurprisingly, the percentage of first-language Spanish speakers is negatively associated with votes for the IU and associated with more votes for the incumbent.

Another interpretation might be that the decrease in votes for the IU can be explained by differences in baseline vote shares between violent and nonviolent regions. That is, if the IU had only received support in violent regions in 1985, voters in nonviolent regions (such as Lima) could not have defected from the party in 1990 at the same rates as voters in violent regions, irrespective of the cause. Between the 1985 and the 1990 elections, the overall vote share of the more radical left (IU and IS in 1990) did indeed regress to where it had been in 1980 (Tuesta Soldevilla 1994). While it is true that support for the more radical left decreased everywhere in Peru between 1985 and 1990, our results show that the radical left lost significantly more votes in provinces that witnessed high levels of violence in the years prior to the election.

We also consider the fact that looking at violence perpetrated in the five years prior to the election might overestimate the length of time in which citizens might be motivated to vote based on their experiences of violence. One might also assume that voters weigh experiences closer to the elections more strongly when compared to violence experienced in the more distant past. We reestimate levels of violence for the three years immediately prior to the elections (1987–1989) and present the results (Table A3). Looking only at the three years prior to the 1990 election, we find that the estimated relationship between violence and voting at the

provincial level remains robust. One might also argue that the few most violent provinces are driving the results, so we exclude provinces where violence in the five years prior to the elections was estimated at two thousand or more deaths/disappearances. Table A4 demonstrates that the results are robust to the exclusion of the most extreme cases.

Lastly, we consider issues related to reverse causality, where we might expect that the perpetration of violence was motivated by insurgent expectations about future electoral performance.[29] If this were the case, we would expect that provincial-level electoral support for the insurgency-associated group predicts levels of violence in the period prior the elections. Table A5 presents results for several negative binomial regressions attempting to predict violence using the 1990 election results. Across all models, the vote share of the insurgency-associated IU in the 1990 election remains insignificant, thereby indicating that vote shares are not a useful predictor of violence prior to the elections.

Conclusion

In this article, we have argued that the local effect of wartime exposure to violence on electoral support is a crucial factor in understanding the Peruvian electoral story of 1990. More generally, our results provide empirical support for the theoretical argument that parties with ties to violent armed nonstate actors will experience fluctuating electoral support contingent on the degree to which these armed actors perpetrate violence. By investigating a counterfactual scenario of "peace" in the period prior to 1990 elections, we demonstrate that the party associated with Sendero Luminoso lost more than 10 percent of its votes in violent provinces, while it managed to maintain or even gain votes in provinces that had previously been relatively peaceful. Exposure to violence evidently seems to affect voters' decisions to provide or withdraw support from such parties—even when said violence did not occur within the explicit context of the electoral process. Based on our results, we conclude that current theories about Peruvian electoral dynamics in the context of conflict fail to account for important local-level dynamics. Although the incumbent was punished at the national level, the full story is more complex. Our study shows how and where the left lost support and credibility in light of the violence committed by Sendero Luminoso.

The Peruvian story shows the importance of disaggregated analyses of violence dynamics, as national-level outcomes may obscure local processes and sometimes result in inference errors. The localized effect of violence on electoral outcomes of parties with ties to violent groups explains why such insurgent groups might continue to perpetrate violence despite the associated electoral costs. Our results indicate that, while extreme violence has negative results on the electoral party's returns, the effect is quite localized. The Peruvian case shows us that among the country's political parties, the incumbent party was the biggest loser, suggesting that while insurgent groups are punished in a more nuanced way for violence they commit, incumbent parties may suffer a loss of more support overall. Future work at the microlevel that theorizes and empirically analyzes the specific incentives and motivations of voters caught in the midst of violence is needed to further unpack this mechanism.

Does localized violence perpetrated by insurgent groups help explain fluctuating electoral fortunes across localities of parties associated with insurgents in countries other than Peru? Other cases potentially include Hezbollah in Lebanon and Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland where (in both cases) electoral parties' vote shares are related to civilian targeting (Heger 2015). Kurds in Turkey present another potential example of violence perpetrated by an organization having localized negative implications for the associated electoral party. Before the 2007 election, for example, Kurdish separatists (PKK or Kurdish Workers Party) threatened harm to voters that did not vote for Kurdish representatives in Kurdish regions and to candidates representing non-Kurdish parties (Öztürk, 2007). Bolstering the credibility of this threat, PKK attacks against civilians increased between the 2002 and 2007 elections (START 2016). Subsequently, Kurdish parties lost electoral support in several Kurdish strongholds in the 2007 election.[30]

Theoretical generalizations must, however, be conducted with great attention to the details of each case, one country and group at a time. For example, the nature and the strength of the association between the violent wing and the electoral party likely vary by case, possibly with

29 We thank an anonymous reviewer for this important point.

30 See Turkish election results by party (or independents) by province in North-, Central- and South-Eastern Anatolia (http://www.ysk.gov.tr/ysk/index.html). Notably this decrease occurred despite the fact that, by running as independents in the 2007 election, representatives of the main Kurdish party DTP (Demokratik Toplum Partisi) circumvented the high electoral threshold (10%) that in 2002 prevented the representatives of the Kurdish DHP (Demokratik Halk Partisi) from taking office (Bacik 2008). Our interpretation of this case is supported by observations made by local election monitors (personal conversation with Brendan O'Leary in 2012).

important consequences for outcomes. The lifecycle of a particular conflict probably also plays an important role. For example, we would expect that voters would reward those incumbents with electoral support who successfully resolved a civil conflict. Testing such a proposition here is impossible because the Peruvian conflict story does not feature this sequence of events during the period we examine.

Finally, in the most general terms, fluctuating electoral support across for parties associated with insurgent groups likely taps into fluctuations in underlying political sentiments towards the insurgent movement across space and time. We have only just begun to investigate the relationship between voting patterns and insurgent groups and how variations in this relationship play out in conflict settings.

Supplementary Information

Supplementary information is available at the *Journal of Global Security Studies* data archive.

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