



## **Construction of the Figure of “Artemio” and the Shining Path in the Journalistic Discourse of the Peruvian Newspapers *El Comercio* and *La República***

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### **Introduction**

This article examines the journalistic construction of the figure of “Artemio,” one of the leaders of the terrorist organization Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso). The research focuses on his capture in 2012 by analyzing the journalistic discourse employed for this news in two mainstream Peruvian newspapers with different editorial lines, *El Comercio* and *La República*. We chose *El Comercio* and *La República* because both papers closely covered the events during the 1980s and '90s at the peak of terrorist violence in Peru.

Published since May 1839 and November 1981, respectively, they are two of the country’s major newspapers, with a nationwide circulation of 94,428 for *El Comercio* and 43,701 for *La República*, as of the first quarter of 2012.

By studying the criteria and meanings proposed through the journalistic treatment of a given aspect of reality, we seek to approximate the vision-version which the speaker suggests as valid for his or her society. This involves detecting the features and hallmarks found in the symbolic construction of the facts. With this in mind, we focused on a circumstance that has had a significant impact on the last several decades in Peru: the actions of the Shining Path (SP) terrorist group and its current configuration in the journalistic discourse. The arrest of its leader, Abimael Guzmán Reynoso, in 1992, marked a turning point in the evolution of the events and circumstances related to the internal war started by the SP. Since that time, the perception of this group constructed via journalistic discourse has also witnessed new hallmarks.

The *corpus* of the analysis covered the month leading up to the capture, and the examination was based on previously designed templates that made it possible to identify the characteristics of the

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components that the journalistic treatment and language comprised, as well as the logic behind the construction of meaning. The work involved a quantitative approach and a qualitative interpretation.

We believe that *El Comercio* and *La República* engaged in a metonymic exercise: the attributes with which the terrorist is saddled are used to spin webs of signification around terrorism, which in some way can be understood since the systems of signification must be narratively "embodied" in order to become visible, socially speaking, an "embodiment" carried out in actions and actors bearing the meanings.

The case of "Artemio" was chosen because his capture constituted what Damián Fernández Pedemonte (2010) calls a shocking media story, that is, a story that interrupts "normality," breaks the "continuity," and recasts day-to-day journalistic activity. The concept mirrors the "exceptional case" theory proposed by Giorgio Grossi (2005) in which the role of the media in the face of unforeseen, extraordinary phenomena becomes qualitatively distinct.

The case of Artemio meets the conditions established by Fernández Pedemonte (2010) for shocking cases: not only does it have a jarring effect on daily life, but it also gives rise to a prolonged debate.

### **Theoretical Framework: The Symbolic Dimension**

The practice of journalism is a symbolic act. Being provided a narrative arc, people mediatize social experience, transforming the world's information into significations and representations, constructing meanings inscribed in systems of beliefs and values.

Through its function of symbolic mediation, journalism provides different meanings for the events that occur in the world. Thus, journalism involves a mediatization and resignification of daily life, as well as the imaginaries, significations, and representations which circulate in that day-to-day existence.

Of course, this symbolic labor is performed within concrete, situated, historical, and social relationships. Thus, each society, collective, or cultural system constructs its own imaginaries, which, as Cornelius Castoriadis (1975) said, act like a magma of significations.

The treatment of the symbolic field and symbolic mediation are also situated, that is, there is no uniform symbolic practice. Each printed or online newspaper, blog, news program (on television or the radio) systematizes and articulates the significations and symbolic world in its own way, based on its own axiological systems and worldviews. This is what we might call the construction of news reality (Browne, Carvajal, & Salinas, 2011).

For this article, we have taken into consideration Ardévol's (2004) idea that the symbolic dimension of discourses is connected to perception, emotion, and memory. Specifically, the significations regarding terrorism are stored in the collective memory, associated with a highly potent dose of emotional content.

### The Context

The origins of the SP are linked to the southern highlands of Peru, especially to the Department of Ayacucho. Despite the fact that the group's violent actions were first noted in the 1980s, its roots go back to previous decades. Carlos Iván Degregori (2010), a Peruvian anthropologist and investigator, points to the factors within the regional scenario in which the group was born, as critical to understanding its nature: "the social actors active there, including both the intellectuals and the university students who would go on to form its backbone, as well as the urban and rural populations who would act as its potential grass roots" (p. 17).

The initial breaking point occurred in 1980 with the beginning of violent actions resulting from a general election process that marked the country's transition from a military dictatorship to a democracy.

The Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission<sup>1</sup> (TRC) (2004) sums up the findings of other Peruvian authors and investigators consulted:

1. Start of armed violence (May 1980–December 1982)
2. Militarization of the conflict (January 1983–June 1986)
3. Spread of violence nationwide (June 1986–March 1989)
4. Extreme crisis, subversive offensive, and state counteroffensive (March 1989–September 1992)
5. Decline in subversive actions, authoritarianism, and corruption: the capture of Abimael Guzmán Reynoso (September 1992–November 2000)

Óscar Ramírez Durand, alias "Feliciano," one of the main leaders of the SP, attempted to rebuild the Shining Path after the capture of Guzmán Reynoso. In 1999, Feliciano was arrested, an event that caused internal divisions in the group. From his prison cell, Guzmán Reynoso proposed an agreement with the State. Three groups arose: one based in the Alto Huallaga and another in the Apurímac, Ene, and Mantaro River Valley (VRAEM), which "have dubbed themselves 'Proseguir',<sup>2</sup> because they seek to continue the war. They denounce Guzmán as a 'traitor,' and even accuse him of genocide" (Antonio Zapata, *La República*, Feb. 15, 2012). The third group is made up of followers of Guzmán Reynoso, known as the "acuerdistas," or "conciliators." According to Zapata (2012), this group would be behind the Movimiento por Amnistía y Derechos Fundamentales (Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights–MOVADEF), a group currently trying to position itself as a viable political actor.

"Artemio," born Florindo Eleuterio Flores Hala, had defined himself as a follower of Abimael Guzmán Reynoso. However, according to an article in *La República* "he refused to obey the call to end the

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<sup>1</sup> Created by virtue of Supreme Executive Order (Decreto Supremo), dated August 28, 2003, by the transitional government of then-President Valentín Paniagua, the TRC presented information on the origins, development, and repercussions of the 20 most violent years in the history of Peru (1980–2000), marked by the war between the Peruvian State and the Peruvian Communist Party–Shining Path (<http://www.juridicas.unam.mx/publica/librev/rev/dconstla/cont/2006.2/pr/pr31.pdf>)

<sup>2</sup> Translator's note: Spanish for "carry on."

war and take up politics. He chose to continue with the violence and seek out peace negotiations" (Antonio Zapata, *La República*, Feb. 15, 2012). He was a member of the Shining Path's Central Committee, the last one to remain at large and to be involved in insurgent activities. He was ordered to move into the Huallaga in 1983, when the armed forces intensified their actions.

Up until his capture, Artemio continued to collect protection fees from drug-trafficking clans. According to a report by *IDL Reporteros* (a team of investigative journalists in Peru directed by Gustavo Gorriti), he also offered protection to small-scale drug traffickers, and "unlike the '80s, he was growing coca crops and had maceration pits" (Romina Mella, "La rendidora coca del Huallaga" ["Coca: The Cash Crop of the Huallaga"], *IDL-Reporteros*).<sup>3</sup>

On February 12, 2012, he was captured, injured, and disarmed in a cabin on the banks of the Huallaga River in Cashiyacu, Tocache.

### Methodology

Our research included the review of texts (news stories, editorials, opinion pieces, features, special reports, cartoons, photographs) related to Artemio and published in these newspapers between February 10 (the day the information related to the hunt for the terrorist leader first appeared) and March 10, 2012. It was decided to complete the *corpus* on this final date because, from that point on, the information loses its relevance and is relegated to the back pages of these newspapers. The analysis involved a quantitative approach and a qualitative interpretation.

In order to obtain the data, a template<sup>4</sup> was structured and used to collect the pertinent information using such indicators as the headline, the page on which the information was found, length of the text, the story's placement on the page, direct and indirect mentions of the concept (terrorism), number and size of photos, and the inclusion and content of other story elements, such as captions, actors, sources, and keywords.

By classifying the defined *corpus*, we were able to identify certain axes for the interpretation of the material collected as a guideline for our analysis:

1. Treatment of sources;
2. Construction of the actors involved in the events;
3. Treatment of the focus on the events; and

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<sup>4</sup> Template was designed by Úrsula Freundt-Thurne for the book *El Periodismo y Elecciones Municipales de 1998 [Journalism and the Municipal Elections of 1998]* (1999), improved with the incorporation of ideas on Added Journalistic Value (AJV) (property of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile), subsequently expanded for media monitoring purposes by Gloria Tovar, Úrsula Freundt-Thurne, and César Pita (2011), and then adapted to the objectives of this research study (2012).

4. Location of the events (background and context).

The interpretation of the material registered and its contextualization around these axes revealed the narrative and storyline constructed from the speakers' respective vantage points.

**Analysis**

***The Sources and Actors: Voices and Individuals Involved  
in Events According to Journalistic Narratives***

The practice of journalism requires an "other" in order to approximate that which Kovach and Rosenstiel (2003) recognize as the first obligation of the profession: the truth. That "other" may take the form of human beings, any of a variety of documents, as well as spaces, selected rigorously, responsibly, and in a timely manner, in order to reconstruct the story.

"Given that the news is the material which the citizen uses to inform himself and reflect on the world around him," say Kovach and Rosenstiel, "its most important quality consists in being useful and reliable" (2003, p. 53). As such, pertinence, reliability, and timeliness in selecting sources that will become part of the journalistic narrative are an important indicator of journalistic quality, which may only be adequately administered if its reliability, as an intangible value, may be rigorously measured.

The sensation of safety (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2003) offered by journalistically produced news stories is significantly linked to the recognition, selection, and incorporation of reliable sources. Beyond the contents of the declarations from the different sources selected by the journalists, there are prior criteria (a "before") that tend to privilege the prominence of the source over his/her pertinence. The person saying it, more than the actual contribution to the version provided, should be recognized when measuring journalistic quality.

Thus, the quality of news content, in different contexts, should consider:

1. Who is saying it (prominence and pertinence);
2. Who says it when (context);
3. What is said (the content, considering prominence, pertinence, and context); and
4. The editorial line of the media outlet providing the information.

There is even a fifth variable, usually omitted in journalistic analyses of content, which we will call *Personal Sources*. These are living and/or documentary sources that a journalist has, and which, thanks to a systematic effort made to maintain them, differentiate that journalist from other journalists. This involves recognizing the journalistic value of the assumed civic commitment, which means, as U.S.-born journalist David Shaw (1998) notes in "my only-on-the-record policy," recognizing that "the use of anonymous sources is, basically, a bad habit" (p. 9).

"The relationship with sources is determined," according to Javier Darío Restrepo (2012), "by their usefulness to readers" (Consultation number 1235). Based on Tsfaty and Cappella's (2003) discussion on trust and credibility, Jacob (2010) recognizes that "Credibility is a central component of trust. In the case of the media-user relationship, the user attributes credibility to the information source" (p. 593).

It is very interesting to observe the close relationship between the types of sources selected and consulted by both media outlets and the journalistic angle they use to present the event being analyzed. See source distribution in Table 1.

**Table 1. Distribution of Sources in Newspapers El Comercio and La República.**

Sources	<i>El Comercio</i>	<i>La República</i>
Peruvian Police Force (PNP)	25	19
The Judiciary	23	12
Communication Media and Journalists	6	16
Executive Branch	12	13

In September 1992, the journalistic coverage of the capture of the Shining Path leader Abimael Guzmán Reynoso in Lima showed that the selected sources mainly took an "ideological" angle. Conversely, the headlines and development of coverage on the capture of Artemio evidenced a journalistic approach that privileged the "pursuit/manhunt" angle, emphasizing the "criminal" aspect above the "ideological" one.

Linking Artemio to drug trafficking results in a greater use of keywords such as *ties to drug traffickers*, *drug trafficking*, *criminality*, *vulnerability*, *betrayal*, *pursuit*, and *manhunt*, but also justifies the inclusion of sources related to the National Police Force and the Judiciary. While both institutions may seem pertinent from a journalistic perspective, in Peru, they lack the necessary approval levels to make them reliable sources (73% of the population disapproves of the Judiciary in Lima [2010] and 71% disapproves of its management in the rest of the country<sup>5</sup>). Despite having a trust level of only 30% in Peru, according to Latinobarómetro's (2011) analysis of the period 1995–2010, the police force is the source most often consulted and quoted by both newspapers.

The Judiciary is the second-most consulted source by both outlets. In this case, while the group comprises 12 sources, 10 are *Concrete Sources* (identified by name) and two are *Generic Sources* (institutions or categories). We are once again looking at an institution which is worth consulting, journalistically speaking, but which suffers from low levels of trust.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Ipsos-APOYO Opinión y Mercado S.A., January 13–15, 2010. Total persons surveyed: 1,000 above the age of 18 nationwide, and 500 in Metropolitan Lima. Topic: Approval or disapproval of the management of the Judiciary during Alan García's administration.

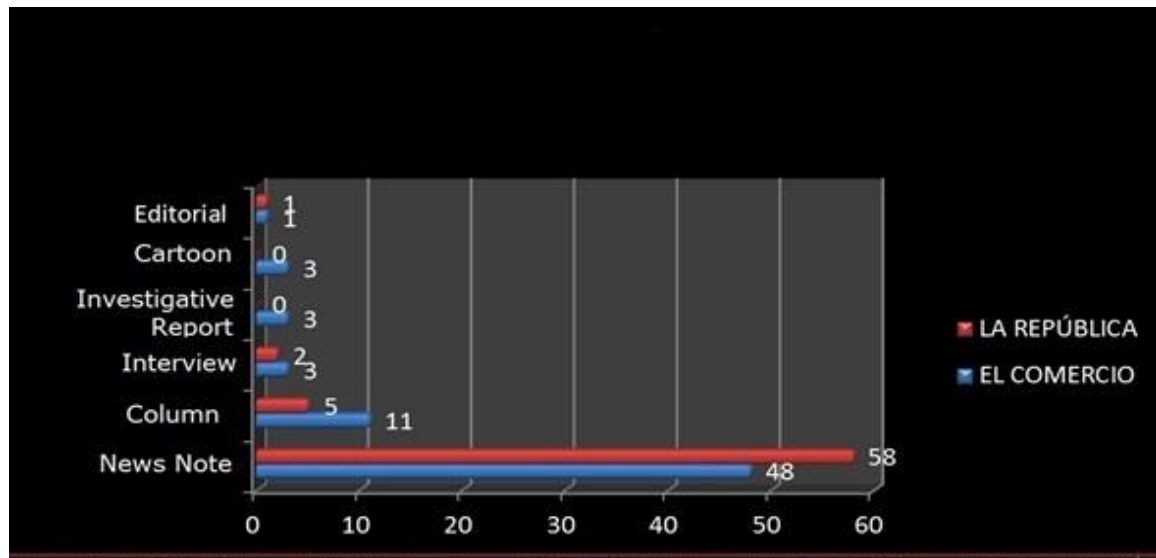
The inclusion of *Generic Sources*, considering the danger associated with the story, seems to be justified by the need to safeguard the well-being of the people and institutions consulted. As Restrepo (2012, para. 6) suggests, “When it is not possible to identify the (concrete) source, the reader should at least be given an indication of his/her authority on the subject,” in order to safeguard the quality of the informational content and, thus, the reliability of the narrative.

What should be avoided, according to Shaw (1998), is the use of unidentifiable or nonexistent sources to filter in personal points of view.

While the sources selected by the journalists provide measurable variables directly related to the quality of the journalistic information, balance—a basic premise of journalism—involves a criterion intrinsically linked to that of the journalistic source. Balance not only demands more than one source, it also requires a clear criterion of *equality* among them. As such, the incorporation of two anonymous sources, as Shaw (1998) explains, does not automatically validate a story.

### ***Vision of the Events: The Axis of the Journalistic Narrative***

Our analysis leads us, first of all, to identify the treatment of the informational axis as a point of departure. The majority of texts are identified as news stories, a genre characterized by its purpose as a reference point and the application of the so-called inverted pyramid structure (see Figure 1). It is a fundamentally descriptive approach to the events.



**Figure 1. Journalistic Genres in El Comercio and La República.**

The issue is a bit more nuanced than this, however. If we observe the panorama from a quantitative perspective, news stories account for the majority of texts in both newspapers (48 news stories in *El Comercio*, out of a total of 95 texts; and 58 in *La República*, out of a total of 96). Considering the characteristics of the news story and its limitations, we may perceive a fragmented, immediate, and circumstantial approach, aimed at following along with the events: the pursuit, capture, and transfer of Artemio. However, when we examine the particular traits of these texts, it may be observed that a significant percentage of them are of considerable length, incorporating certain components and aspects of the events (see Figure 1).

As a breaking point in current events, it has an obvious presence on the front page. On the other hand, in the case of *El Comercio*, there are 27 texts that appear in the *Story of the Day (Tema del Día)* section, which is a special news report presented on the story, which fundamentally maintains the descriptive axis, but opens up the perspective to more complex components. In the case of *La República*, there are 45 texts that appear in the *On the Cover (En Portada)* section, a space reserved especially for highlighting and expanding on news stories in this newspaper.

This may be interpreted as focusing the attention on the capture itself, as well as the importance attributed to Artemio as an *actor* in the events. However, it is important to note that this is also undeniably an expansion upon the information; it does not involve going into any more depth, or providing an explanation. It is the event as a unit of journalistic work that is articulated by the text. In addition to the 27 *Topic of the Day* texts, in the case of *El Comercio*, there are 21 news stories published. The event is the axis: the core of the story is the capture itself, together with the ensuing details.

In the case of *La República*, we find that, in addition to the 45 texts published in the *On the Cover* section, there are 13 news stories in the other sections. The *On the Cover* texts act as reports, expanding on the story and including some elements of context or background.

*El Comercio* includes 25 texts in the *Politics* section, compared to *La República's* 14. While *El Comercio* features more texts in this area, the trend is similar: the political as the second axis in both cases. This fact is highly interesting in terms of identifying the focus. While we are dealing with a case and a person linked in the discourse to criminal activity and a police pursuit, it is also framed as a political event (see Figures 2 and 3).

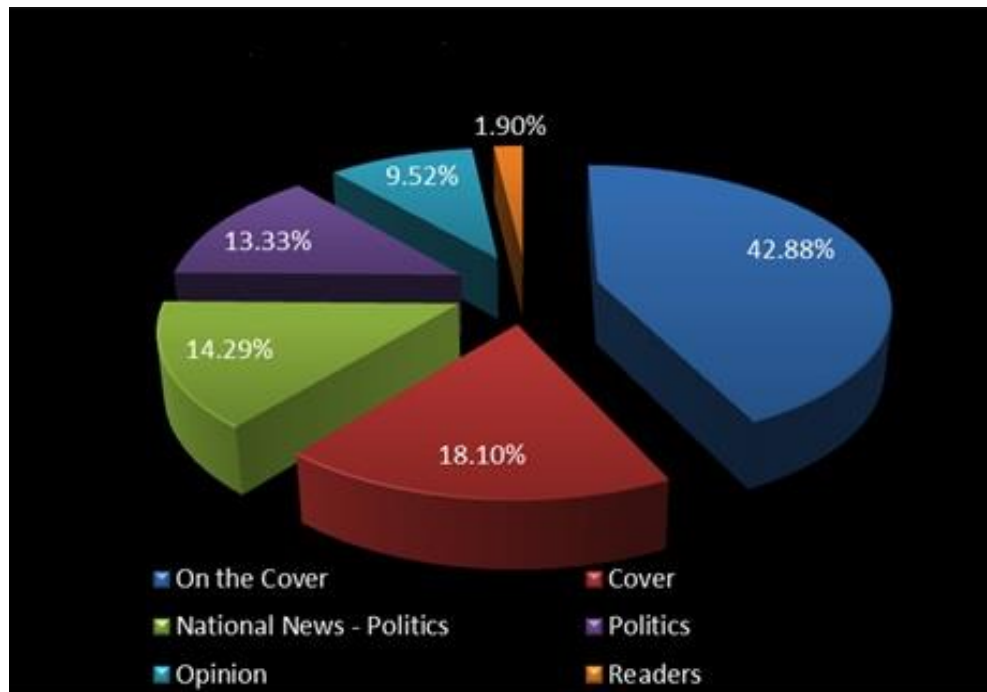
In one interesting example, entitled “Artemio’ Was the Last Head of the Shining Path Central Committee in the Huallaga Zone” [“Artemio’ era el último dirigente del comité central de Sendero en la zona del Huallaga”], published in the *National News-Politics* section of *La República*, the focus is placed on the person of Artemio in his identity as a Shining Path leader.

Similarly, the political axis may also be detected after the capture, when the judicial aspect of the case is brought up in a story published in *La República* entitled “Artemio’ Will Answer to the Justice System for Terrorism and Drug Trafficking” [“Artemio’ responderá a la justicia por terrorismo y narcotráfico”]. What is notable here is the identification of Artemio with drug trafficking, something that will become a constant sign.

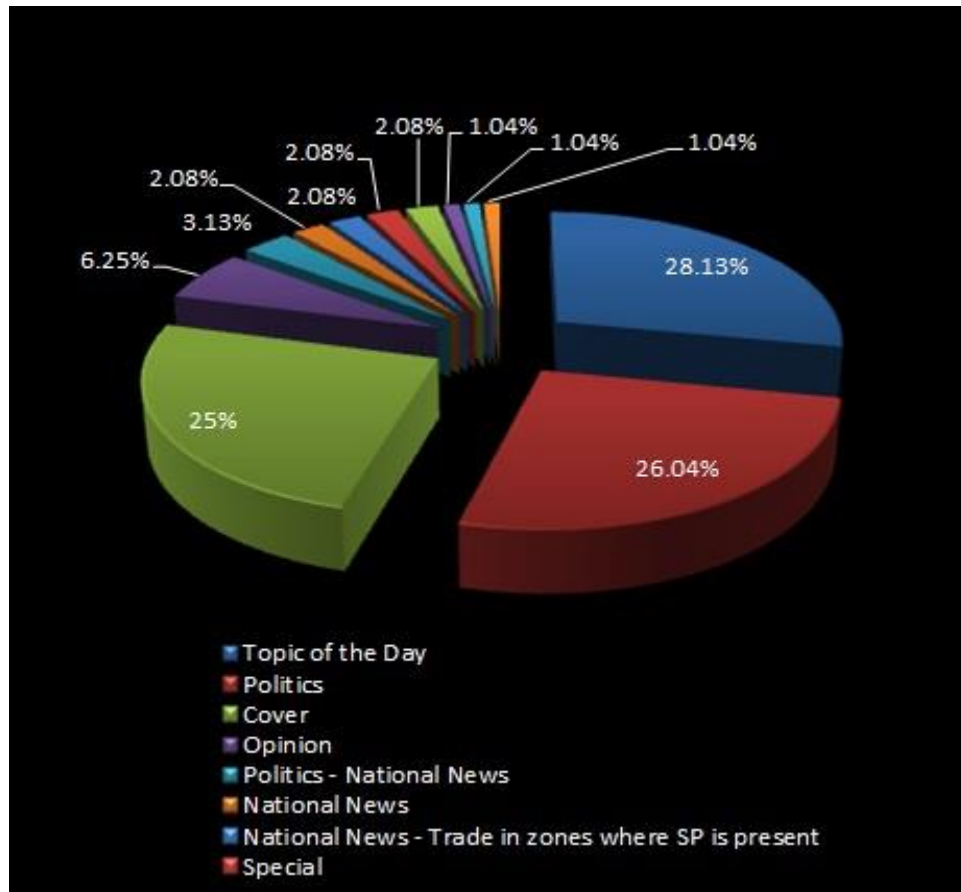


In the case of *El Comercio*, the judicial angle of the case is also present. On February 16, there is a story in the *Politics* section under the headline "Artemio Has Seven Criminal Proceedings Open" ["Artemio tiene abiertos siete procesos judiciales penales"]. An editorial beside the news story is entitled "Legal Coca Leaf and Illegal Coca Leaf" ["La coca de allá y la coca de más allá"].

It is interesting to note that this section also addresses the presence and actions of MOVAREF, a group trying to insert itself into the political scene. This places one more component in the area of current events. Although no explicit connection is made with the case of Artemio, this group is alluded to as a front for the Shining Path (*El Comercio*, *National News-Politics* section, February 12, 2012). The possible relationship between MOVAREF and Artemio is proposed in a news story in the *Politics* section of *El Comercio*, published February 25, 2012: "State Prosecutor's Office Investigates Whether Artemio Funded Movaref" ["La procuraduría investiga si Artemio financió al Movaref"]. Once again, a judicial slant is evident.



**Figure 2. Sections in La República.**



**Figure 3. Sections in El Comercio.**

Although quantitatively lesser, the opinion space is also present. It is made explicit through the approach of columnists and experts invited by the media to write on the subject.

In an opinion piece by the general director of *El Comercio*, Francisco Miró Quesada, an explicit comparison is made between Artemio and "José," one of the Shining Path leaders in the VRAEM. He defines these persons as linked to the world of drug trafficking, but connects Artemio to his political origins as a Shining Path member, a trait not attributed to José.

Some opinion columns feature a tone of warning regarding the current size of the Shining Path group. Such is the case with an article by the journalist Hugo Guerra, published on February 22, 2012 under the headline "The Threat of the New Shining Path" ["La amenaza del nuevo senderismo"], which presents a panorama that includes a range of factors linked to the SP today and defines their threatening nature. A direct allusion is made to the group's ideological component and its connection to drug trafficking.

In the case of *La República*, there are writers (both columnists and contributors) who employ an analytical tone with regard to the capture. These include Mirko Lauer ("Limits and Reach of a Downfall" ["Límites y alcances de una caída"], February 14, 2012) and Antonio Zapata ("The Capture of Artemio" ["La captura de Artemio"], February 14, 2012), for example.

The point of view insinuated is also expressed in the informational texts. The headlines reveal it, as well as the relationship established with the photographic narrative, in which Artemio is shown beaten, wounded, and invalidated, and the scenes present a zone taken over by the forces of order. Once again, the capture is depicted as the axis of the narrative, with the military component defining the situation.

Generally speaking, there is control and balance in the descriptive tone, although due to the very nature of the issue, the tone tends to define the capture as something positive. The evidence is not surprising. The weakest point with regard to the approach and location of the issues lies, perhaps, in the tendency toward a certain disconnection of the case from the context, in order to infuse it with a meaning related to the evolution and configuration of the current role of the Shining Path.

The presentation of the capture event as just one event in a larger process is suggested only timidly. It lurks beneath the text, getting a mention in some opinion pieces written in an analytical tone, but it is not a constant that forms an axis of the journalistic approach in general. The overall sensation of this approach (with some nuances, especially in the case of *La República*, which tends to expand further on its stories and allude more frequently to the ideological nature of the individual and the events) is that it is circumstantial, placing greater focus on the occurrence rather than the background or context.

### ***Denominations: Construction of a Concept***

When journalism applies labels, it is not merely seeking the right wording; it is also performing a discursive act. It constructs a reality full of significations. In the case of *El Comercio* and *La República*, both use discursive strategies of lexicalization, to be precise, establishing a conceptual lexical process that enables them to configure a semiotic and symbolic web around terrorism.

One of the most notable discursive mechanisms is that of *denomination*. Throughout the period analyzed, it may be noted that the terms most often used to denominate terrorism are those that directly allude to the concept of terror: *terrorism*, *terrorist*, and *narco-terrorist*. In *El Comercio*, there are nearly 200 recurrences of these words, while *La República* features almost 250. A separate note should be made about a word that shares the same root: *terruco*.<sup>6</sup> Here, the suffix *-uco* is used pejoratively to form a word that entered popular, everyday language during the height of terrorist violence in the 1980s and 1990s.

However, there are other terms that appear constantly, establishing a continual semantic relationship with terrorism. This is not a case of simply alternating names (direct or indirect), but rather a complementarity of meanings used to weave the symbolic fabric being constructed.

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<sup>6</sup> Translator's note: Pejorative Peruvian slang word used to refer to a terrorist.

For instance, there is the term *Artemio* (occurring 155 times in *La República* and 106 in *El Comercio*), which ends up established as a topic. However, through attributes (*criminal, bloodthirsty, etc.*) and other terms associated with this individual (*Shining Path leader*), a semantic relationship is established between the individual and an even greater referent: terrorism itself. Artemio becomes the personification of what terrorism has come to represent over the last several decades: murders, attacks, and so on. An exophoric semantic-discursive relationship is thus established. The information necessary to supplement the meaning surrounding Artemio and what he represents comes from the social imaginary, the collective memory.

With regard to Artemio, it is interesting to note the mention of his real name, Florindo Eleuterio Flores Hala (106 times in *El Comercio* and 155 in *La República*), which is alternated with his alias ("Artemio"). A person's given name is distinctive in nature, serving to differentiate and identify him, acting as the anchor of his civil identity (it appears on his birth certificate and identity documents, guaranteeing his social existence).

In the case of terrorists, the alias becomes a meta-proper noun, since it does not encapsulate any connotation or allude to a specific trait of that person (somatic: "Narigón" ("Big Nose"), "Zapatón" ("Bigfoot"); or demonymic: "El Trujillano" ("The Man from Trujillo"). It is another name, as in the case of "José," "Gabriel," and so on. These names are used to camouflage the person's identity, to the point that they take on more representative and symbolic force than his real name. Thus, the alias acts as an onomastic symbol of terrorism. In the subversive enunciative praxis of Peru, there occurs a re-baptism, and thus, redenuciation of the individual. Unlike the regular criminal world, which resorts more to nicknames, the alias constitutes one of the symbols of terror.

However, there is a differentiated use of the alias between *El Comercio* and *La República*. While the former uses it as an autonomous lexeme, *La República* opts to accompany it with the term *comrade*, a word associated with leftwing sectors and, in the case of Peru, terrorism.

The used terms fulfill not only a denominative function, but an attributive one as well: terrorist group, narco-terrorists, armed column (*El Comercio*); criminal organization, narco-Shining Path, organized crime (*La República*).

### Conclusions

The analysis reveals a focus on a specific circumstance by the speakers, often detached from background, despite occasional allusions to such effect. The tendency is toward a focus on the immediate, approaching the individual as a stand-alone rupture event.

Despite the political slant of the case, as well as its inclusion in the *Politics* section, the analysis lays bare the predominance of the police/judicial angle in the treatment of the topic.

This is related to the treatment of the case as immediate news, rather than as part of a series of events linked to a prior evolution and history. Allusions are made, but no comprehensive whole is

configured in terms of the concept constructed around the individual and, thus, the terrorist group. It is possible to observe a notion disarticulated from and unlinked to the complexity of the phenomenon, but which reveals the valid reference points surrounding Artemio and terrorism as an actor.

We have observed that denominations surrounding terrorism found in the investigated newspapers are not gratuitous or arbitrary. The anaphoric use of the term *narco-terrorist* or *narco-terrorism* (as well as the association of the Shining Path with drug trafficking), and not just *terrorist*, reveals how these media classify, value, and qualify this reality (terrorism), permanently penalizing it by constantly stripping it of all traits of legitimate struggle (for example, the absence of the word *guerrilla*), and repeatedly infusing it with connotations of organized criminal activity (links with drug trafficking, hired killers, protection fees, murders). Thus, there is a discursive process for the de-ideologization of terrorism through denomination and the actions carried out by members of the Shining Path.

The image of a cruel, merciless, bloodthirsty public enemy is constructed, an enemy involved in attacks, ambushes, and the murder of police officers (the retelling of the crimes committed by Artemio reminds readers of the actions for which the Shining Path was known during the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s).

But any “political” force or “people’s struggle” is once again diluted in the discourses by establishing and emphasizing links to drug trafficking (36 times in *El Comercio* and 34 in *La República*), and the subject’s different roles as hit man and producer and distributor of drugs.

We are not simply looking at terrorism in terms of a public enemy that has become a mere criminal or which has joined the ranks of organized crime by involving itself in drug activities; unlike the representations found during the 1980s and 1990s, the discursive scenario of *El Comercio* and *La República* presents terrorism as an enemy of the State and the Nation, weakened and vulnerable (*El Comercio*, 12 times and *La República* for 14), cornered or pursued and captured (14 times in *El Comercio* and 15 in *La República*), but also disorganized, scattered, and torn apart by betrayal (especially in *La República*, on 14 occasions), causing not only desertions, but also the capture of the group’s leader. The fall of Artemio is not just the fruit of police operations, but also of the betrayal and abandonment of the leader, which occurred within the heart of the Shining Path. The figure of the adversary is diluted.

The discursive configuration of *El Comercio* and *La República* is thus a semiotic filter of the complex reality that is terrorism. Through their coverage, they offer us an image-force on this subject. By lexicalizing and semanticizing this reality, they project cognitive models, cultural and symbolic values—not to impose, but to reconstruct the collective imaginary, which mixes memory, sensitivity, and emotion.

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