

# PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES WITH PRIVATE FUNDING

## Local Army Entrepreneurship in Peru and Ecuador

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*Abstract: In Latin America's young democracies, actors in the private sector may influence military security work through resource transfers, with implications for state accountability and democracy in the region. This analysis finds that in Ecuador and Peru local army commanders—who frequently decide when and where army operations are conducted—make decisions not according to technical evaluations of security requirements but rather on the basis of how much local clients pay. The article's local political economy perspective enables us to identify client influence, even in cases in which client and national security interests overlap. The study also helps bridge two literatures: research on Latin American civil-military relations, which has devoted a great amount of attention to military autonomy vis-à-vis the government without systematically analyzing third-party influence on armed forces, and scholarship on security privatization, which has examined such third-party financing but without underscoring the fact that clients can engage with the military directly, bypassing the national government.*

Following military rule in Latin America (1970s–1990s), the region's armed forces have largely returned to the barracks to focus on security work, and yet there is a dearth of analysis of what missions these militaries perform and who benefits from the missions. This article finds that by buying militaries' services, actors other than the national government can affect the behavior of Latin American armed forces. Through an in-depth look at the Ecuadorian and Peruvian armies, the study shows that army unit commanders—who decide when and where army operations are conducted—make decisions not drawing on their technical evaluations of security requirements but rather in response to local client payments, mainly from private companies in extractive industries. The article's local political economy perspective enables us to identify client influence, even in cases in which client and national security interests overlap. The study helps bridge two literatures: research on Latin American civil-military relations,

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which has devoted a great amount of attention to military autonomy vis-à-vis the government without systematically analyzing third-party influence on armed forces, and scholarship on security privatization, which has examined such third-party financing but without underscoring the fact that clients can engage with the military directly, bypassing the national government.

#### CLIENT INFLUENCE ON THE ARMED FORCES: A LOCAL VIEW

Client influence on the armed forces can be understood as the extent to which actors other than the national government buy military services. Measuring client influence requires that we ask two questions. First, is a military or military branch doing a task because it is paid to do so by a client (indicating client influence) or to defend national security (in which case client influence would be absent)? Answering this question is challenging in Latin America, where the interests of potential clients often overlap with goals of consequence to government-defined national security. Perhaps most notably, security for extractive industries is of great import to many national economies and to private companies (i.e., potential clients of the military) in those sectors. Second, do the procured services constitute a sizable amount of the military's or military branch's overall workload?<sup>1</sup>

By analyzing army-client ties, this article builds on and brings together the distinct research traditions of civil-military relations and security privatization. Scholarship on civil-military relations in posttransition Latin America has put front and center political power struggles between military leadership and the executive (e.g., Stepan 1988; Isaacs 1993; Agüero 1995; Norden 1996; Hunter 1997; Pion-Berlin 1997; Fitch 1998; Arceneaux 2001; Weeks 2003; Trinkunas 2005). In keeping with this trend, a small body of work on postdemocratization military missions examines the military's power vis-à-vis that of the government to define missions (e.g., Rial 1996; Loveman 1999, 269–278; Pion-Berlin and Arceneaux 2000). Research on missions tends to depict armed forces as fundamentally being driven by their corporate interests in obtaining national defense spending, maintaining public legitimacy, and/or performing tasks deemed professional (Hunter 1996; Linz and Stepan 1996, 219–220; Perelli and Rial 1996, 72, 77; Rial 1996, 55; Loveman 1999, 270–274; but see Jaskoski 2012),<sup>2</sup> rather than by an interest in collecting third-party payments. Studies that do reference interactions between the armed forces and clients (e.g., Cruz and Diamint 1998, 118–119; Ferreyra

1. In an arena in which client and national security interests overlap, client payments probably would not account for all military services.

2. Alfred Stepan's work (e.g., 1971, 1973, 1978, 1988) is perhaps the most famous treatment of the military in Latin America as a state institution with its own identity and corporate interests, an approach common in analyses of armed forces beyond the region, as well (Huntington 1957, 67; Wintrobe 1990, 861; Zisk 1993, 14, 27, 47–81, 181–182; Dollery, Spindler, and Parsons 2004). Stepan's contributions are part of a tendency in the field of comparative politics since the late 1970s to allow for the state to be an actor in its own right, independent of societal forces (e.g., Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol 1985).

and Segura 2000, 29–30) do not measure the amount of a military's work that benefits clients, nor do they allow for client and national security interests to coincide.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to studies of civil-military relations, another obvious literature that could shed light on client influence on armed forces is that of security privatization, insofar as that research analyzes private (client) financing of the military. Drawing on the rentier-state literature, Avant (2005, 180–181) writes that weak states invite private transnational corporations (TNCs) to subsidize state security forces. Those states benefit from the financed security, which both encourages private investment and alleviates the states' need to tax citizens.<sup>4</sup> Avant takes for granted a high level of civilian control, whereby the armed forces respond wholly to government decisions. In contrast to this view, armed forces throughout Latin America and other parts of the developing world in fact commonly affect decisions regarding national security and circumvent government decisions. Furthermore, like civil-military relations studies, this model does not address how much of a particular military's services benefits clients, nor does it take into account the potentially complex intersection of client and national security interests, whereas scholars of civil-military relations presume that client and national security interests diverge, Avant's analysis goes to the other extreme, presenting both TNCs and the state as equally interested in security for the sectors in question.

Literatures beyond studies of security privatization and civil-military relations that are potentially germane to the question of client influence also do not analyze the phenomenon's two dimensions outlined here, including, for example, research on US investment in Latin American militaries' counterdrug efforts (e.g., Youngers and Rosin 2005) and analyses of natural resource conflict that mention private company payments to national militaries for their services (e.g., Wirpsa and Dunning 2004, 91; Richani 2005, 127–128; Watts 2005, 390–391).

How can we know whether a military fights urban crime or protects oil pipelines because of the government's national security policy or because third parties fund the activity? At the national level, where overall military strategy and missions are decided, overlap between national security and client interests impedes our ability to discern whether client disbursements affect military behavior. Government directives and military statements may define certain missions as furthering national security at the same time that clients contract with military leaders, committing to pay the armed forces for those same missions. In contrast, a local view of a military branch allows us to observe client payments, ascertain which missions are prioritized over others, and determine which actors receive more military protection than others. Furthermore, at a more fundamental level,

3. Although client influence in the security arena has received only limited attention, scholars have analyzed more thoroughly other entrepreneurial activities of Latin American armed forces, such as military ownership and management of companies, in the defense sector and beyond (Mani 2007, 2011).

4. In the security privatization literature, which concentrates on the outsourcing of security services from the state to private security companies, Avant's (2005) framework is novel for including private financing of public security forces.

the amount of the branch's work that benefits clients is best assessed through an on-the-ground view of branch units' activities.<sup>5</sup>

#### METHODOLOGY

A comparison of the Ecuadorian and Peruvian armies is optimal in several ways for studying client influence on the military. In each case the government has ordered the army to conduct operations actively—in contrast to cases in which the armed forces essentially stay on base—thus making it possible for much work to be sold. Furthermore, a single region stands out as each army's major center of activity: Peru's insurgent zones and northern Ecuador, which experiences spillover from Colombia's internal conflict. Because of this concentration, we can analyze in detail army behavior on the ground while also drawing conclusions about each army overall. The regions are also relevant to the countries' important extractive industries, a scenario that offers overlap between private client and national security interests.

Finally, variation across the two armies in their engagement in "professional" missions proves helpful to this study. As background, Latin American military security missions include external defense to protect international borders from incursions by neighboring countries, counterinsurgency to eliminate armed guerrillas, and police work to control civilian activities. The region's militaries view as highly professional external defense and counterinsurgency (e.g., Stepan 1973; Perelli and Rial 1996, 72; Linz and Stepan 1996, 219–220; Loveman 1999, 270–274), which emerged as a mission for these militaries after the 1959 Cuban Revolution. From the perspective of military leaders, the leftist guerrilla movements that subsequently grew throughout the region were a threat to the nation and to the very existence of the armed forces (Stepan 1971, 155–158). In this context, militaries shifted from an external defense orientation, the "old professionalism," to adding combat against guerrillas to their repertoire, the "new professionalism" (Stepan 1973). Perelli and Rial (1996, 72) depict as follows the importance that Latin American militaries have placed on counterinsurgency well after the Cuban Revolution: "For the US military, fighting insurgency means facing low-intensity disturbances; for the Latin American military, on the other hand, it is a question of high-intensity conflicts, inasmuch as these consume practically all available resources and jeopardize the stability and continued existence of affected countries' economic, social, and political systems. Insurgency, for the Latin American military, is not a peripheral conflict; it is often *the* conflict." In contrast to the highly professional missions of counterinsurgency and border defense, other tasks such as protest control, urban crime fighting, contraband interdiction, and antinarcotics are referred to here as policing.

Keeping in mind these distinctions among security missions, the Peru-Ecuador comparison affords useful variation in army missions for purposes of evaluating client influence. The Ecuadorian army has carried out several policing missions

5. Few studies analyze Latin American militaries in the local arena. In doing so, this article follows Ferreyra and Segura (2000).

in northern Ecuador in addition to defending the international border against incursions by Colombian guerrillas. That the army operates in numerous arenas makes the case conducive for multiple clients to vie for army security services, and thus for assessing which clients enjoy more sway than others. In contrast, the Peruvian army's single mission in insurgent zones is counterinsurgency, which presents a hard test of client influence on Latin American militaries: can clients be sufficiently powerful to procure services of army units that are dedicated wholly to a single, highly professional task?<sup>6</sup>

This article draws on data that I collected in both countries during 2005–2006 and early 2009. I conducted semistructured interviews with more than 330 officers and civilians in the capital cities of Lima, Peru, and Quito, Ecuador, and in other locations in the two countries. To supplement interview data, I reviewed newspaper and government archives, army doctrinal materials, and secondary sources.

With regard to the officer sample, in contrast to most research on Latin American militaries grounded in interview data, my research involved interviewing officers beyond the upper echelons of the hierarchy; the study benefits from the knowledge and views of more than 150 army officers of all ranks. Furthermore, at the time of the interviews many officers were serving on bases outside of the capital city or attending courses required for promotion. In this way, I accessed officers who had recently served in diverse regions of the countries while also avoiding interviewing officers from set professional, ideological, or friendship circles within the armies, a common risk in research that relies entirely on referral chains. Ecuadorian officers were interviewed in Quito and on seven army bases drawn from the army's four regional commands, which encompass the full expanse of Ecuador's mainland. In Peru, officers interviewed in Lima included instructors and students from the war college (*Escuela Superior de Guerra*) and from different service (e.g., cavalry, communications, infantry) schools. I conducted interviews with officers in a key Peruvian army unit located in an insurgency zone. Outside of the two armies, I interviewed more than 170 journalists; academics; nongovernmental organization representatives; private-sector actors; navy, air force, and police officers; elected and appointed local and regional political officials; and officials from the US Departments of Defense and State.

The existence and salience of army-client transactions were unanticipated findings of my research on the broader issue of army missions. Early on in my field research, subjects volunteered information regarding client compensation for missions during interviews. After the theme of army-client relations was revealed, I broached it during some subsequent interviews if subjects did not do so

6. Elsewhere I have argued that the two armies' prior combat experiences help explain their different mission orientations (Jaskoski 2008, 2012). A 1998 treaty concluded the long-standing Ecuador-Peru border dispute. At that point, societal pressures led Ecuador's army to embrace policing to try to prove its usefulness and justify its budget. In contrast, since the 1980s the Peruvian army has had the salient mission of defending the country from insurgents and consequently has not faced comparable challenges to its relevance. That army therefore has not embraced policing, despite government directives to perform the work.

themselves. In all cases, the topic of client compensation emerged logically and naturally amid discussions of missions.

This analysis employs process tracing (George and Bennett 2005, 205–232), drawing on illustrative examples, anecdotes, and crucial facts provided by interview subjects willing to speak about army entrepreneurship. To protect the privacy of subjects, the article does not identify them by name or interview date or location. (Mention of a particular army unit does not imply that I visited it; during interviews, officers often described experiences from prior assignments.) Where possible, the study triangulates across subjects, subject groups, and data sources.

#### CLIENT INFLUENCE IN ECUADOR AND PERU

This article's central finding is that army units in Ecuador and Peru have performed a substantial amount of work that benefits clients. Those third parties have held army units to the hired services through in-kind compensation. The most influential clients have been private hydrocarbon and mining companies. These deals have taken place in a larger setting in which army leaders have starved units of resources, pushing local commanders to engage in entrepreneurship.

#### *The Ecuadorian Army: Serving a Diverse Clientele*

Insecurity in Ecuador's north since the country's 1979 transition to democracy stems from two main sources. First, for decades groups in the oil-rich northeast have protested oil companies and government oil policies (e.g., Gerlach 2003; Sawyer 2004). Second, there is the issue of Colombia's internal conflict just across the border. Colombian insurgents, primarily the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), have used northern Ecuador to rest, supply, and train for combat. Although the insurgents do not stage military attacks on Ecuadorian soil, their activities have led to drug and weapons trafficking, kidnappings, and assassinations in the northern border provinces of Sucumbíos (eastern jungle), Carchi (highlands), and Esmeraldas (coastal jungle). Insecurity in the north intensified after the 2000 implementation of the Colombia-US Plan Colombia, a major offensive against insurgents.<sup>7</sup> The plan triggered the army to move north,<sup>8</sup> where its assigned missions have included border defense, antinarcotics, and general crime fighting.

7. For further analysis of insecurity in northern Ecuador since 2000, see Andrade (2002), Montúfar (2003), and International Crisis Group (2004).

8. Previously, Ecuador's army had been oriented toward defending the southern border against Peru. In 2001, the central command for the army's Fourth Division, which has been the most critical division for confronting insecurity spilling over from Colombia, moved north to the city of Puerto Francisco de Orellana, in the northeastern province of Orellana. The number of army personnel assigned to the border provinces has also increased. In September 2003, the army reported that it had reinforced the north with seven thousand additional personnel ("Entrevista Grab. Luis Aguas: 5000 armados están frente a Ecuador," *El Comercio* (Quito), September 21, 2003).

Ecuador's oil industry presents an example of how national security objectives can intersect with private interests. The military's legal responsibility to protect "strategic" areas, including oil, was institutionalized in Ecuador's long-standing 1979 National Security Law,<sup>9</sup> and it is supported by more recent legal structures, including a June 2007 decree defining oil installations as "strategic objectives vital to the nation" and obliging the military to provide security for "all installations, equipment, and components of the national hydrocarbon system."<sup>10</sup> However, government and army policies do not position oil security as the army's chief priority. A 2001 directive issued by the commander of the army's Fourth Division—the division responsible for providing security in the northeast—states that, "without neglecting its fundamental missions and assignments," the division would provide security to oil companies (Jarrín Roman 2001, sec. D, "Concepto de cooperación de seguridad militar"). Officers have corroborated that oil security is not supposed to be the army's top priority. Of the Ecuadorian army officers interviewed for this study, forty-six were asked to identify the army's most important activities. Among their first three responses, only four of those officers mentioned oil security, whereas thirty-three mentioned border defense and/or reducing Colombian insurgent activities in Ecuador.

In this context, army brigade and battalion commanders in northern Ecuador have sold their security services to private oil companies, as well as to US military representatives, wealthy landowners, and subnational government officials. These local arrangements have shaped the extent to which army units carry out different missions, as well as who benefits from that work. The following assessment of client influence in Ecuador is based on analysis of the behavior of all army battalions assigned to the border provinces and to the oil-rich, northeastern province of Orellana, which borders Sucumbíos to the south.

The local influence of a first client, the US military, is best presented against the backdrop of national US-Ecuador relations. Ecuador's government and armed forces have welcomed US security assistance.<sup>11</sup> Annually between 2000 and 2004 the US government invested in Ecuador's security forces on average \$29 million, the majority of which was spent on the armed forces.<sup>12</sup> Assistance from the US Department of Defense is channeled to the Ecuadorian armed forces through the US Southern Command, with headquarters in Miami, Florida, as well as presence in Latin American countries in the form of country-level units. Southern Command refers to these units as military groups,<sup>13</sup> which often are housed within

9. See *Ley de Seguridad Nacional*, Supreme Decree 275, *Registro Oficial* 892 (Quito), August 9, 1979.

10. "Las FF.AA. ofrecen tres tipos de seguridad a las petroleras," *El Comercio*, December 28, 2007.

11. A US official working in Ecuador said that the Ecuadorian army high command had even solicited US resources earmarked for training in antinarcotics, a mission that Ecuadorian army officers who were interviewed disliked for its corrupting potential.

12. Data are drawn from Haugaard, Isacson, and Olson (2005), Narcotics Affairs Section, US Department of State (2005), and interviews with US officials who discussed the distribution of US security assistance across Ecuador's military and national police.

13. Similarly, civilian and military Ecuadorian security experts refer to the Southern Command representatives in Ecuador as the military group.

US embassies.<sup>14</sup> A US official working in Ecuador said that the military group's top two priorities for the Ecuadorian army were, first, the "war on terrorism"—specifically, increasing border security to help contain Colombia's conflict ("definitely number one")—and second, counterdrug efforts.

The military group has maintained ties with both the Ecuadorian army in Quito and northern commanders. Multiple US officials in Ecuador said that, after the start of Plan Colombia, military group officials grew frustrated that US logistical support (e.g., Humvees, backpacks, radios) did not always reach Ecuadorian military units in the north. For that reason, the military group created a system to communicate with local Ecuadorian commanders, and as of early 2005, that structure was institutionalized. Two military group officials were assigned to the north, one in the city of Esmeraldas to interact with Ecuadorian military commanders in Esmeraldas Province, and a second in the capital city of Orellana Province (Puerto Francisco de Orellana, a city otherwise known as "Coca") to liaise with commanders in Orellana Province and in Sucumbíos. A third military group official was stationed in Quito but maintained communication with the Ecuadorian army battalion commander in Tulcán, the capital of Carchi. In 2005 and 2006, the military group's local influence in the north was palpable. Ecuadorian army commanders employed their forces to conduct antinarcotics operations in response to direct US pressures and frequently sought more resources from military group officers.<sup>15</sup>

Wealthy landowners constitute another client group of the Ecuadorian army in the north. Landowners have faced crop and livestock theft, extortion, kidnapping, and even death. In interviews security experts connected this insecurity to Colombia's conflict, saying that the individuals committing these crimes in Ecuador were civilians working for insurgents in some capacity.<sup>16</sup> As of 2005, the Tulcán battalion provided security for landowners in five of Carchi's six cantons.<sup>17</sup> In each canton, landowners received the continuous protection of one or two Humvees, each of which was manned by more or less ten army personnel. Landowners paid the patrols in food, lodging, fuel, and tires. These resources were so vital to the army unit that officers focused on them during interviews. For instance, of the nine officers who described the Carchi battalion's security work in detail, six vol-

14. The US military group in Ecuador during 2005 and 2006 worked out of a building that was not on US embassy grounds. As of 2009, the US embassy and military group had moved to a new, shared location.

15. In 2009 a US official working in Ecuador described a weakening of local ties between the military group and the Ecuadorian armed forces. Tension between President Rafael Correa's administration (2007 to present) and the US government led the Ecuadorian defense minister to eliminate the military group's Coca position. In early 2009, the military group began requiring detailed, written requests from the Ecuadorian military joint command before transferring supplies to northern units.

16. The overall impression of civilian and military security experts, human rights representatives, and public officials familiar with the north has been that the FARC are sufficiently organized and wealthy to hire Colombian and Ecuadorian civilians to carry out criminal activities for the group in Ecuador, without needing to perform those tasks directly.

17. The sixth canton was located along the border with Colombia. Ecuadorian army presence in that canton consisted of three border detachments used mostly for intercepting contraband. The details of the Tulcán battalion's work were provided by army officers interviewed who had served recently in that unit.



untarily broached the fact that landowners reimbursed the unit for its security services. Furthermore, when I raised the topic during an interview with a seventh officer, he expanded at length on the system and then complained that the resources landowners provided were not sufficient. When asked to discuss the importance of “local support” for the army in Carchi—with no mention of material support—two of the nine officers immediately said that resources provided by elites were critical. In the words of a middle-ranking officer, “For us to move, we need gasoline. But if we don’t have the people’s support, we can’t do the job. We need to get fuel from the landowners.” Army security for wealthy landowners was not “public”; an officer said that the patrols protected wealthy landowners and not the many impoverished people who lived in the same cantons. Similar to the case of Carchi, the Esmeraldas army battalion provided security for wealthy owners of African oil palm plantations, common to the province.

A third client group of northern battalions has been local and provincial governments. Mayors and prefects have subsidized army units, especially their urban anticrime patrols. An officer who recently had commanded a unit in the north said, “The prefect and the municipality ask for night patrols. I am happy to do this, but I need resources for it. [If I have] better relations with the mayor and prefect, I get resources.” This dynamic has been common in the capital cities of all three northern border provinces. The commander of the battalion stationed in the capital of Sucumbíos (special forces unit Rayo 24, in Nueva Loja), periodically requested assistance from the local and provincial governments, which usually responded with five hundred gallons of fuel.<sup>18</sup> The Tulcán commander’s links to local and regional authorities yielded approximately that same amount of fuel. In Esmeraldas, the provincial authorities provided the unit in the capital \$1,500 per month for patrols, money that one army officer said was “necessary” for the work.<sup>19</sup>

Overall, private oil companies have been the Ecuadorian army’s most powerful clients. In Sucumbíos and Orellana, the army has provided security for oil wells, the refinery (in Shushufindi, Sucumbíos), and other infrastructure; and it has guarded the Esmeraldas refinery and the pipeline of the private conglomerate Oleoducto de Crudos Pesados Ecuador SA (OCP) that delivers heavy crude through Esmeraldas to the coast for export. For the most part, the army’s oil services have consisted of controlling and dissuading protests by indigenous groups and settlers who oppose oil company practices. Army units have also provided security for oil installations as part of their counterdrug efforts, which, according to US officials and Ecuadorian army officers, above all has involved interfering with the theft and transport of petroleum ether—a by-product of the oil refining process used to process cocaine.

Brigade and battalion commanders have negotiated with oil companies the

18. Information in this paragraph about the Tulcán, Nueva Loja, and Esmeraldas cases was provided by several officers who had direct knowledge of the referenced unit’s finances.

19. Public officials compensated battalions not only with fuel subsidies but also by contributing to army base improvements, for instance lending army units tractors, donating building materials, and financing associated labor.

terms by which their units provide security services. During interviews army officers and oil company employees explained that, in return for security, companies often gave army units food, housing, vehicles, fuel, and communications equipment. For example, a senior army officer and an oil company representative said that every battalion in Sucumbíos had its own agreement with each private company for which it worked. In return for patrols, the companies gave those units vehicles, fuel, and food. Similarly, as of 2005, OCP provided the Esmeraldas battalion gas, supplies, and vehicles for pipeline patrols. Noteworthy is the power that private oil companies wielded. Interview conversations regarding army oil security in Sucumbíos revealed that even where the state oil company (Petroecuador) operated, army units made deals with the company's private contractors.

The army has allocated ample resources to oil security. The Fourth Division has committed more than two thousand personnel to the mission on an ongoing basis.<sup>20</sup> In that division, the Nineteenth Brigade, housed in Coca and responsible for providing security in much of Orellana and Sucumbíos, has made the oil sector a high priority. Officers interviewed in 2005 said that the brigade's battalions have provided continuous security for oil companies, one of the brigade's remaining five combat forces has been assigned solely to oil security, and at times the other four have been sent simultaneously to perform the work.

In Sucumbíos, widely known among Ecuadorian security experts as experiencing heavy FARC presence and exceptionally intense insecurity due to Colombia's conflict, oil is an army priority.<sup>21</sup> One of the five army battalions in the province (in Shushufindi) is by and large an oil-security unit.<sup>22</sup> Army officers and journalists said that Rayo 24—viewed as the most operational unit in the north—had two detachments, both of which were assigned singly to security for nearby oil installations (with authorization to provide security elsewhere should emergencies arise). The rest of the battalion often has provided backup in oil matters. Supplementing the efforts of northern army units, units from the army's special forces brigade in the highland city of Latacunga have also set aside their other assignments to travel north and tackle oil "emergencies."<sup>23</sup>

In exchange for these security services, oil companies have paid the army units handsomely, overall and relative to the army's other clients. In an interview a middle-ranking officer compared the amount of resources received from land-

20. Considering that the army comprises 34,000 personnel (as estimated by a journalist with extensive experience reporting on the Ecuadorian military) divided into four divisions, and that the Fourth Division consists of 8,400 personnel, 2,000 people is a relatively large proportion of the army, and certainly of the division. On the size of the Fourth Division and the commitment of more than 2,000 personnel to oil security, see "Las FF.AA. ofrecen tres tipos de seguridad a las petroleras," *El Comercio*, December 28, 2007.

21. Illustrating how entrenched the FARC is in Sucumbíos, Ecuadorian military intelligence reported in 2003 that there were roughly one hundred FARC resting and training posts in Sucumbíos ("100 bases guerrilleras y matas de coca en Ecuador," *El Comercio*, August 17, 2003).

22. The Shushufindi battalion's focus on oil security was common knowledge among Ecuadorian army officers, US officials, journalists, and other security experts interviewed for this study. In 2005–2006, the other four battalions in Sucumbíos included the unit in Nueva Loja and units in Puerto El Carmen, Santa Cecilia, and Tiputini.

23. The information in this paragraph about the Nueva Loja and Latacunga units was provided by army officers based on their recent experiences in the units referenced.

owners in Carchi, which lacks oil and associated infrastructure, with those from oil companies in Nueva Loja, or "Lago Agrio," saying, "In Lago Agrio . . . there is more money . . . and more compensation for the military's security work for the oil companies. . . . When I was . . . [there,] . . . oil companies gave us food, housing, fuel. . . . [T]he oil company would give us dorms, good food, a good life." The oil company Texaco Petroleum financed both base improvement projects for the Nueva Loja unit that interview subjects mentioned: a potable water system and visitors' quarters.<sup>24</sup>

Companies' significant investment in army security has brought them great power relative to other clients, including landowners and the US military group. As mentioned, army officers have thought that the resources that the Carchi unit received from landowners were crucial for the army in that oil-free province. Yet officers who had recently served in Esmeraldas spoke little of the battalion's work for landowners, emphasizing more the unit's security services along the OCP pipeline. For its part, the US military group has lost to oil companies in its open competition for army services. During 2007 protests in Dayuma, Orellana, the military group provided supplies to a local school. As a US official working in Ecuador explained, the military group's goal was to help satisfy local needs in order to quell protests and thereby enable the Ecuadorian army to conclude its oil security effort and turn to US priorities—antinarcoitics and border defense efforts farther north.

To summarize this discussion, the Ecuadorian case is one of considerable local client influence. Not only has the army performed much of its services for the benefit of paying clients, but this work seems to have been motivated by the resource transfers. Above all, high-paying, private oil companies most successfully have procured army security services. At this point, two caveats should be made about the local nature of army-oil interactions. First, though local contracts have affected how much security oil companies receive from the army in the face of small and moderate protests as well as during peaceful periods, by declaring states of emergency in moments of massive popular unrest, the national government has increased army presence to the northeast and triggered spikes in the army's oil security efforts.<sup>25</sup> Second, national agreements between oil companies and the military have occurred.<sup>26</sup> (Although as a rule the defense minister signed national contracts, private oil company officials said that the real center of

24. Texaco paid for both projects according to an agreement between the oil company and the army's Fourth Division ("2000 militares vigilarán el sistema petrolero," *El Comercio*, December 19, 2005). Army officers who knew about the projects said that Texaco financed the construction of the modern, on-base housing in exchange for army security for Texaco employees who lived in the guest quarters during investigations for a lawsuit over the company's environmental practices (on the lawsuit, see Kimerling 2006). Texaco paid the Fourth Division \$3,000 monthly in rent for the accommodations ("2000 militares vigilarán el sistema petrolero").

25. For instance, the executive issued one such decree when in August 2005 protests halted Ecuador's oil production, costing companies approximately \$400 million (Bass and Forero 2005; Benton 2008; Valdivia 2008).

26. At times resource exchanges accompanied these national contracts. For instance, a private-sector representative interviewed described how OCP had an agreement with the military joint command, according to which OCP provided the army communication towers.

gravity was the military joint command and the army high command.) One case was a 2001 five-year contract among the defense minister, the head of Petroecuador, and sixteen private oil companies, obtained during the course of research for this study.<sup>27</sup> Nonetheless, as a private oil company official explained for the case of army-OCP relations, the broad nature of national-level agreements left much to be decided locally: “the agreement is made at the highest levels here in Quito, and then the army delegates power down to the level of the battalion head. That battalion head and the local oil company boss work out the distance that the battalion will patrol along the pipeline and how much fuel, food, and housing will be offered to the soldiers and officers working the pipeline.”

An executive in a private security company who had worked extensively with several oil companies described the same practice more generally: “Usually there is a macro agreement, for instance between Oxy [Occidental Petroleum] and the military here in Quito. Also, there are microdeals at the battalion levels.” The limited importance of national agreements has become all the more clear since the passage of a 2007 defense law that outlaws army-private sector contracting.<sup>28</sup> In early 2009, a journalist who regularly reported on army activities in the north said that at that time army units and private oil companies had continued their transactions at the local level despite the 2007 legislation.

#### *The Peruvian Army: Counterinsurgency for Private Companies*

Whereas the Ecuadorian army’s focus on the north has been largely a result of internal conflict across the border in Colombia, in Peru the army’s orientation toward the southern highlands has been due to the country’s own insurgency. The year 1980 saw Peru’s transition to democracy as well as the outbreak of the violent, Maoist Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) insurgency, which at its peak controlled 40 percent of Peru’s territory (McClintock 1998, 81). As of the mid-1990s, the insurgency had been greatly reduced, but since then, Sendero military training, occasional attacks on state security forces, and some threats and kidnappings in remote towns have continued in small pockets of the central highlands (the Upper Huallaga Valley, or Valle del Alto Huallaga) and the southern highlands (the Valley of the Apurímac and Ene Rivers, or Valle de los Ríos Apurímac y Ene [VRAE]), the area of the country in which the Peruvian army is most operational.

Resembling the reality in northern Ecuador, in the VRAE national security concerns overlap with interests of private companies engaged in resource extraction, as both the Peruvian state and companies have sought to prevent insurgent attacks on mining and hydrocarbon infrastructure. Military leaders and civilian security experts interviewed pointed to legal structures to try to validate the

27. The private companies included Agip Oil Ecuador BV, Bellwether International Inc., City Investing, City Oriente Limited, Cía. General de Combustibles, Ecuador TLC SA, Energy Development Corporation, Kerr McGee Ecuador Energy Corporation, Lumbaquí Oil, Occidental, Petrobell SA, Pérez Companc, Petróleos Sudamericanos, Repsol YPF, Tecpetrol, and Vintage Oil Ecuador (Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, Ecuador 2001; “2000 militares vigilarán el sistema petrolero”; “Siete meses más para el convenio del 2001,” *El Comercio*, December 19, 2005; see also Beltrán and Oldham 2005).

28. Ley Orgánica de la Defensa Nacional, *Registro Oficial* 4, January 19, 2007.

army's security work for extractive industries. Those structures include successive national constitutions, which have assigned the army to "participate in the country's social and economic development" (1979 Peruvian Constitution, art. 280; 1993 Peruvian Constitution, art. 171); a 1992 decree law that assigned the military to provide security for the storage and transport of explosives used by civilians (Decree Law No. 25707), which covered the mining sector;<sup>29</sup> and a 2000 state agreement with the major private natural gas consortium Camisea that committed military security for the project (Comité Especial del Proyecto Camisea, Comisión de Promoción de la Inversión Privada, República del Perú 2000, clause 17.4). Importantly, and paralleling the Ecuadorian case, security for extractive industries has not been identified—in law or in interviews—as the key reason for army presence in Sendero zones. Rather, the army is supposed to concentrate on targeting the guerrillas.<sup>30</sup> Despite this intended priority, in Peru's guerrilla zones private mining and hydrocarbon companies have paid army units to put their counterinsurgency efforts toward protecting company property, thus distracting the army from its principal assignment.

Client influence was exceptionally strong in Peru during the 1980s and 1990s, when, as army officers and civilian security experts recalled, small army units were assigned to all the country's most important mines, partly to guard against theft of dynamite, which Sendero frequently used "more often than any other weapon" (McClintock 2005, 63).<sup>31</sup> Army officers and private-sector representatives said that, in exchange for these services, private companies commonly constructed and fully equipped bases to house the groups of between thirty and forty-five army personnel. A former private security official said that companies contracted with the local army commander, who usually ranked no higher than a colonel in the army hierarchy. Another retired private security official provided this example:

When we put Mobil [in the Upper Huallaga Valley in 1991] we asked the commander in [the nearby city of] Tarapoto to put a base there. We set up the base, communications, and food. . . . That was a platoon, thirty to forty men. . . . We did one thing where [the troops] would have to patrol up to the site where Mobil was . . . on a hill. To pick up their meals, they had to patrol up a certain way we wanted them to patrol. The food would be strategically placed so that they would patrol where we wanted them to. We had nice places for them to sleep. They were very well fed. Oil companies do that, by the way—they have incredible food.

Even when private contracts did not affect army base locations, they could still divert patrol routes, as illustrated by a case in Huanta, a province in the VRAE, in the department of Ayacucho. An interview subject described events that he had

29. Lawyers working for the national association of energy and mines said that the decree (especially article 10) provided the foundation for the army's security services for the mining sector throughout the 1990s.

30. Of the Peruvian officers interviewed for this study, fifty were asked to identify the army's most important activities. Among their first three responses, twenty-two of those officers mentioned counterinsurgency, whereas none of them mentioned security for natural resources.

31. A senior officer estimated that in the departments of Junín and Huancavelica alone, there were thirty or thirty-five such units.

observed firsthand that involved the army's Huanta battalion in the late 1990s. One of the battalion's counterinsurgency bases was located near the community of Ocros. Initially, the troops maintained regular patrol routes in and around the community. At one point, a nearby private mining company official asked that the battalion commander move the counterinsurgency base closer to the mine and order the troops to patrol in the company's vicinity. In response to the request, the base itself was not moved, but all patrols leaving from it began patrolling the company's installations and mine, neglecting Ocros entirely. Five days after the mining official asked for the help, new items appeared on the battalion base, including several televisions. The interviewee explained that the counterinsurgency base had not been relocated because decisions about base placements had to be reported back to the Huanta commander's superior, at the brigade level. However, the Huanta commander on his own was permitted to change patrol routes, reaping the material benefits of the arrangement for his unit.

In interviews army officers and private security officials said that, as Peru's guerrilla threat has decreased, companies usually no longer fully fund army units. One private security official described the current dynamic as "informal": "Now there are relations, though more informal, more friendly than anything. A company will . . . say, 'Can you pass through the nearby town . . . ?' So the army, which can be doing its patrols anyway, walks the route that the company wants. The company will say, 'Then, stop in at my encampment for food, for medicine, in return for these . . . patrols.' . . . But . . . officially, the army doesn't do patrols and security in this way for the companies."

Despite the overall loosening of ties between private companies and Peru's army, the case of Camisea makes plain the private sector's continuing clout. Given that counterinsurgency bases in the VRAE in 2005–2006 numbered in total only between twenty-seven and thirty-five,<sup>32</sup> a large proportion of the army's overall counterinsurgency efforts have been for Camisea. In 2005 an official in Peru's energy and mining ministry said that the army had units near each of Camisea's fourteen installations that ran along the pipeline, which crosses the VRAE on its way from Peru's eastern jungle to the coast. In separate interviews an army officer and a private security official said that all the counterinsurgency bases belonging to the Ayacucho brigade ("Los Cabitos")—numbering more than ten—were lined up along the pipeline. Counterinsurgency bases in the neighboring department of Cusco also have provided security for Camisea infrastructure, according to a security expert.

The army has carried out Camisea work as part of relationships between army units and local offices of members of the natural gas consortium. A private security official said, "Officially Los Cabitos in Ayacucho have their strategic plans that determine where their bases are and what patrols they do, but somehow, *coincidentally*, their bases end up by Camisea, and their patrols are there, as well" (emphasis in original, denoting sarcasm). The head of Los Cabitos has negotiated

32. I arrived at this estimate drawing on interviews with army officers and private-sector officials, and on research conducted by security expert Ricardo Soberón Garrido (2006).

with the local office of Transportadora de Gas del Perú (TGP), the Camisea consortium that operates the pipeline. Army officers who knew about this relationship said that TGP built and stocked the counterinsurgency bases near the pipeline and absorbed all patrol costs. Conditions on the TGP bases were comfortable for army personnel relative to army-funded bases, as a middle-ranking officer emphasized, drawing on personal experience: "There is rotation [through the Camisea bases] so that the troops have the chance to be on the bases, as it is a better situation on these bases than on other bases of the brigade not located at Camisea. . . . In these kinds of bases, there is better treatment of soldiers. . . . The situation is better where these companies are, as they have more resources. They have [civilian] engineers living there, professionals, so the food is good there."

Pipeline security has interfered with what otherwise might have been more effective counterinsurgency operations, because it has tended not to bring army personnel to Sendero Luminoso's areas of armed training and operations. An officer who had served recently in Los Cabitos said that army personnel could leave the Camisea posts temporarily to address emergencies involving insurgents, which suggests that emergencies were improbable near Camisea infrastructure. In contrast to the Camisea patrols, some patrols leaving from the brigade's larger battalion bases spent a night at a time away from the base; that is, relative to Camisea units, those other patrols traversed more territory and thus could reach remote areas more likely to see armed Sendero columns.

Added to army relations with TGP, army units have also contracted with Techint, a leading member of the TGP consortium that handles Camisea construction. In early 2009 a Techint security employee said that the army provided security for Techint's Block 57 construction project in Chiquintirca, in the Ayacucho province of La Mar. The army's two nearby units conducted regular patrols near the project, and in return Techint's local station provided and stocked the bases.

Although much contact between Peru's army and private companies has occurred locally, the military joint command and head of the army have participated in the rental of major army equipment. Army officers said that in the 1980s and 1990s helicopter rentals were common and highly lucrative. One retired general said of that period, "With the money that oil companies have and give us for using the helicopters, you can buy two helicopters. . . . We did well."<sup>33</sup> More recently, as of 2006, TGP had permanent access to army helicopters even when the government required the helicopters for strictly public purposes.<sup>34</sup> A former official in the interior ministry recounted one such case during the early years of President Alejandro Toledo's government (2001–2006): "We needed . . . high-altitude helicopters because there was a cold snap in [the department of] Puno, and we needed to reach the people with supplies. We had two or three [helicopters] but needed

33. The military leadership's participation in renting out army helicopters was mentioned during interviews by a senior army officer, a retired interior ministry official, and a former private security official who had played a role in several such cases.

34. In an interview, an energy and mining ministry official said that one or two army helicopters were constantly present on at least one of TGP's installations.

another one. The army said that theirs were in poor condition. One month later . . . I [learned that the army] . . . *had* a working helicopter, but it was being rented out to Camisea" (emphasis in original).

In summary, similar to the Ecuadorian case, private companies in Peru's extractive industries have successfully bought army security services. An important difference between the two armies is that, whereas Ecuador's army has performed multiple types of security for clients in northern Ecuador, the Peruvian army has conducted the single mission of counterinsurgency in the VRAE, which shows that private clients can be sufficiently influential to purchase even the services of an army focused on defending national sovereignty against organized, armed guerrillas.

### *Local Impoverishment*

Clients have not influenced army units in a vacuum. Rather, in both Ecuador and Peru, army leadership has denied local units the resources necessary for operations, pressuring unit commanders to be entrepreneurial.<sup>35</sup> For the case of Ecuador, we can begin with the special forces brigade housed in Latacunga. An officer familiar with the brigade's accounting said that, excluding salaries and food, the army covered only about 20 percent of the unit's operating expenses. He explained that when a general in Quito ordered the brigade to perform tasks, the local colonel in charge could not refuse and had to find a way to pay for the work. He also said that, from serving as a finance officer in more than ten army units throughout the country, he knew that other units fared similarly in terms of their limited funds and pressures from above to be entrepreneurial.

Interviews with other officers substantiated these observations. A senior officer said that Rayo 24 in Nueva Loja received only \$200 from the army each year to maintain its thirty vehicles. A junior officer who had managed finances for that battalion thought the job was stressful because he was perpetually unable to pay vendors on time. Similarly, another junior officer relayed how the brigade in the southern coastal city of Machala received from the army only about one-tenth of the diesel and one-sixth of the gasoline that the unit used.

Although security deals have been the most lucrative source of outside funding for Ecuadorian army battalions and brigades, microenterprises also support base functions, further evincing units' financial desperation. The Nueva Loja battalion's sales from its fish and chicken farms yielded a precious \$6,000–\$7,000 each year, which was spent on fuel. The brigade in Latacunga sold its dairy and other farm products to military and civilian families to earn income that covered nearly 20 percent of the unit's operating expenses, leaving out salaries and food.

As has been true of their Ecuadorian counterparts, Peruvian army leaders have also compelled local commanders to raise funds, creating pressure that a senior officer described as follows: "The heads of the army here in Lima . . . know about the [local entrepreneurship], but they look the other way. The army has

35. This section is based on information provided by officers who had recently commanded or managed the finances of one or more of the referenced units.



its priorities . . . [.] rations for the troops, ammunition, and fuel. But what is not prioritized by the army is electricity, water. . . . So the units have to come up with this, to make up the difference." A middle-ranking officer reflected on his own experience of the budget squeeze on the ground: "Information [regarding a unit's self-financing] goes to Lima. Based on this information, the next year's budget is calculated. For instance, I tell the general that we raised 80,000 soles last year, and I say that to run the [unit] I need 300,000 soles for . . . this year. He gives me 200,000 and tells me to work harder this year to come up with the extra 100,000 soles."

Beyond selling army security services to clients in the VRAE, local commanders throughout Peru have raised money using other methods, for instance, by renting out base infrastructure. In various parts of the country (e.g., the southern departments of Puno and Tacna, the northern department of Tumbes, the eastern city of Iquitos), units own and run plantations that provide subsistence and generate revenue through sales to surrounding communities. Army engineer battalions often have rented out their roadwork services, reporting only some of the income to the generals in Lima; a retired officer from the army corps of engineers said, "[W]e need resources to fix the equipment, for maintenance. . . . So the units might work for twelve hours, rent the equipment and men out for that period of time, but then report to Lima that they worked for only three hours."<sup>36</sup>

The percentage of base funds obtained through these entrepreneurial activities has varied from 15–20 percent in Tumbes, to 20–30 percent for one battalion in the department of Arequipa, to 50 percent in Tacna. In some remote areas, units without access to clients have relied on subsistence activities, as has been true of detachments near the Peru-Colombia border, where soldiers have fished and hunted. Other remote units have fed their personnel with yields from small ranches and gardens.

## CONCLUSION

This analysis of client influence has demonstrated that in Ecuador and Peru resources from beyond the national defense budget have affected who benefits from army services in the region of the country where the army most actively performs security work. Local commanders facing severe shortages of central army funds have ordered much of this work in response to outside compensation for the security services.

This finding has grave implications for civilian control of the armed forces, the central concern in studies of civil-military relations in Latin America. Military entrepreneurship detracts from the armed forces' dependence on and thus responsiveness to the elected national government (Cruz and Diamint 1998, 118–119), the authority to which the military (and all other executive agencies) should answer.

36. The reported income was counted as resources directly collected (*recursos directamente recaudados*). The Peruvian army can legally rent out its equipment, infrastructure, and services to other state and private actors in return for resources directly collected, which are reported as part of the defense budget and from 2003 through 2005 made up between just under 8 percent and 11 percent of defense spending (Robles Montoya 2003, 159–161; 2005, 145).

The local power of clients exposes just how distant army priorities are from nationally established policy. The power of *private* clients is striking, revealing that the armies themselves have been somewhat privatized.

As a final, methodological note, in contrast to much research on armed forces, which tends to analyze militaries as unitary actors, this article underscores that armed forces—and branches thereof—should be treated as complex organizations. As in any state bureaucracy, in the army local officials have decision-making power. Indeed, the analysis was able to identify client influence only by examining the behavior of army units. Giving attention to the local level is all the more critical as we study state behavior in countries that have experienced fragmentation of state authority and where agency interaction with outside actors is therefore highly probable, as is true in the Central Andes.

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