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**URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS, POLITICAL
PARTIES, AND THE STATE IN POST-
AUTHORITARIAN PERU: THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT NEXUS**

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March 1995

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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FREQUENTLY USED ACRONYMS

AP	Acción Popular (Popular Action Party, centre-right)
APRA	Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, centre-left)
CENCA	Centro de Capacitación y Asesoría (NGO operating in the district of El Agustino)
CENDIPP	Centro de Investigación y Promoción Popular (NGO operating in the district of El Agustino)
CG	Comité de Gestión (Management Committee)
CTIC	Comité Coordinador Técnico Intercentros (coordinating committee of the three main NGOs operating in the district of El Agustino)
D.L.	Decreto Ley (Decree Law)
FODECO	Fondo de Desarrollo Comunal (Communal Development Fund, provided funding for the MIADES in the district of El Agustino)
INVERMET	Fondo de Inversiones Municipales (Municipal Investment Fund in Metropolitan Lima)
IU	Izquierda Unida (United Left)
MAS	Movimiento de Afirmación Socialista (Movement of Socialist Affirmation, leftist)
MIADES	Micro-Areas de Desarrollo (Micro-Areas of Development in the district of El Agustino)
PMR	Partido Mariateguista Revolucionario (Revolutionary Mariateguist Party, leftist)
PUM	Partido Unificado Mariateguista (United Mariateguist Party, leftist)
SEA	Servicio Educativo de El Agustino (NGO operating in the district of El Agustino)
SINAMOS	Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social (National System for the Support of Social Mobilization, created by the Velasco government in 1971)

GLOSSARY OF FREQUENTLY USED SPANISH TERMS

agencias municipales	municipal agencies
alcalde	mayor
asamblea popular	popular assembly
asentamiento humano	low-income "popular" settlement
asistencialismo	"assistentialism", denotes a relationship of dependency with public institutions, NGOs, etc.
auto-golpe	"self-coup", refers to the closure of the Peruvian Congress by President Alberto Fujimori in 1992
autogobierno	self-government
barrio	neighbourhood
cabildos abiertos	reunions between the municipal administration and representatives of popular organizations to inform and consult the population on municipal policy
capacitación	training
centralización	"centralization", refers to the process by which individual popular movements unite
cerro	hill
ciudadano	citizen
clubes de madres	mothers' clubs
co-gestión	joint management
comedor popular	comunal soup kitchen
comisiones mixtas	mixed commissions, often comprising representatives of urban popular movements and the municipal administration
comité de gestión	management committee
comités comunales	neighbourhood committees under the Decreto Ley No. 051
cono	cone, refers to one of the cone-shaped outskirts of Lima comprising low-income or "popular" districts
coordinadora	coordinating committee
democracia popular	popular democracy
desarrollo	development
director municipal	municipal director, head of the

dirigente	municipal administration
emergencia	leader
	emergency, often in a social or economic sense
fiscalización	supervision, control
frente de defensa	defense front composed of different organizations, such as unions or neighbourhood movements, responding to cuts in social services, the impact of economic adjustments programmes, etc.
frente barrial	equivalent to frente de defensa, but limited to the neighbourhood level
gestión	management
junta directiva	steering committee
junta de gobierno	steering committee, governing committee
juntas de vecinos	neighbourhood committees under the Decreto Ley No. 051
lotización	demarcation of lots in a settlement
manzana	block
obras	public works
poblador	settler
poder popular	people's power
lo popular	the popular world
promotor	"promoter", community worker
protagonismo popular	attitude denoting sympathy with the concerns of popular movements and their social and political practices
pueblo	low-income or "popular" settlement
pueblos jóvenes	term coined by the Velasco government denoting urban squatter settlements
remodelación	process of restructuring a squatter settlement after the initial land occupation
rondas campesinas	peasant self-defense leagues
taller	workshop
técnico	specialist
vaso de leche	glass of milk
vecino	neighbour
Zona Plana	central or "flat" zone in the district of El Agustino

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the possible impact of direct political participation by urban popular movements at the level of local government. It is argued that these movements harbour a democratic potential, which is contained in their social, cultural, and political practices, as well as in the collective identities of their participants. The relevance of this democratic potential derives from the fact that it could serve to democratize other political actors, particularly political parties, and to render local political institutions more democratic and efficient, depending on three conditions. First, effective political decentralization has to result in the creation of institutional openings for popular participation at the local level. Second, in order to overcome their various limitations and to project their potential for change into the political arena, urban popular movements have to form alliances with other actors, particularly political parties. Third, since such alliances often result in cooptive pressures, urban popular movements should strive to form multiple alliances with more than one actor in order to better preserve their autonomy. In the second part of the dissertation, this theoretical framework is applied to a study of popular participation at different levels of local government in Lima, Peru. While drawing on various sources, the dissertation uses as its primary source of data a series of open-ended, semi-structured interviews with representatives of urban popular movements and political parties, as well as local government officials, which were conducted from September 1991 through April 1992. On the basis of the cases studied, the dissertation concludes that the democratic potential of urban popular movements is genuine, but that its realization is often impeded by a number of obstacles, such as legal, institutional, and economic barriers to popular participation, the inherent weaknesses of urban popular movements themselves, as well as politically motivated interference by other actors. The dissertation then goes on to discuss the implications of these findings for the future role of popular participation in the new democratic regimes of Latin America, as well as for our understanding of the links between social actors within civil society and the political system.

RESUME

La présente dissertation examine les effets possibles de la participation politique directe des mouvements populaires urbains au niveau du gouvernement local. La dissertation soutient comme thèse principale que ces mouvements abritent un potentiel démocratique, qui est contenu dans leurs pratiques sociales, culturelles et politiques, ainsi que dans les identités collectives de leurs participants. L'importance particulière qui s'attache à ce potentiel démocratique relève du fait qu'il pourrait servir à démocratiser d'autres acteurs politiques, particulièrement des partis politiques, ainsi que de rendre les institutions politiques locales plus efficaces et démocratiques. Ceci dépend de trois conditions. Premièrement, des mesures de décentralisation politique doivent aboutir à la création d'ouvertures institutionnelles pour la participation populaire au niveau local. Deuxièmement, afin de surmonter leurs propres limitations et de projeter leur potentiel de changement sur la scène politique, les mouvements populaires urbains doivent s'allier à d'autres acteurs politiques, notamment des parties politiques. Troisièmement, compte tenu du fait que de telles alliances risquent d'augmenter les possibilités de cooptation politique, les mouvements populaires urbains devraient s'allier à plusieurs acteurs simultanément, afin de mieux défendre leur autonomie. L'encadrement théorique développé dans la première partie de la dissertation est ensuite utilisé pour examiner plusieurs expériences de participation populaire au niveau de différents gouvernements locaux à Lima, Pérou. A part d'autres sources de données, la dissertation se base principalement sur une série d'entrevues semi-structurées et de durée illimitée avec des représentants de mouvements populaires urbains, de parties politiques, ainsi que de gouvernements locaux. Ces entrevues ont été réalisées entre le mois de septembre 1991 et le mois d'avril 1992. Sur la base des cas étudiés, la dissertation conclue que le potentiel démocratique des mouvements populaires urbains est authentique, mais que sa réalisation se heurte souvent à de nombreux obstacles, à savoir, des barrières légales, institutionnelles, et économiques, des faiblesses des mouvements populaires urbains eux-mêmes, ainsi que l'ingérence de caractère politique de la part d'autres acteurs politiques. Dans sa partie finale, la dissertation discute les implications de ces résultats pour le futur rôle de la participation populaire dans les nouveaux régimes démocratiques d'Amérique Latine, ainsi que pour notre compréhension des liens entre les acteurs sociaux à l'intérieur de la société civile et le système politique.

Future events . . . will depend, not on academic predictions, but on collective action guided by political wills that make work what is structurally barely possible.

F. H. Cardoso and E. Faletto

I am convinced that if we had not learned from Marxism to see history from the point of view of the oppressed, gaining a new and immense perspective on the human world, there would have been no salvation for us.

Norberto Bobbio

INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades, urban popular movements in Latin America have clearly come into their own. In virtually every urban centre in the region, there exists a dizzying multitude of such movements focusing on issues such as housing, health, material survival, small-scale economic activities, or women's rights, among others. The movements display an astounding range of cultural and political practices and the social and ethnic backgrounds of their participants are as diverse as their respective identities. Over the years, some urban popular movements have also shown considerable programmatic development, as their demands shifted from largely material concerns to a call for social and political citizenship in a much wider sense.

What makes these movements significant? Some would assert that they are not, given the alarming signs of social disintegration that have appeared in the course of a disastrous economic crisis, and the new cult of the individual that is sweeping the region in the guise of neo-liberalism. Nevertheless, it can be argued that urban popular movements are crucial for the future development of Latin American societies, since they have the ability to effect social and political change. This potential for change, which is embodied in the social, cultural, and political practices of these movements, as well as in the collective identities of their participants, manifested itself clearly during the popular mobilizations that preceded the fall of most authoritarian regimes in Latin America towards the end of the 1970s. What has been called the resurgence of civil society after

prolonged periods of authoritarian rule (O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986)¹ was evidence for the existence of a democratic potential emanating from the grassroots, which continues to pose a challenge to pervasive patterns of authoritarianism and clientelism to this day.

In the context of current democratic regimes in Latin America, the particular relevance of this potential for change derives from the fact that it could serve to redefine the links between civil society and the state. Despite the return to democratic rule, these regimes have so far proved unable to integrate the popular majorities into the political system, nor have they been capable of overcoming their social and economic exclusion. On the contrary, political and economic power has remained firmly in the hands of the elites, and the persistence of anti-democratic tendencies, together with rampant bureaucratic inefficiency and over-centralization, have prevented the new democratic regimes from addressing the pressing needs of the popular sector. In this dissertation, it will be argued that an expansion of the possibilities for direct popular participation in political institutions could contribute to addressing these deficiencies. Under certain conditions, such an enlargement of popular participation could enable urban popular movements to infuse political institutions with their democratic potential, thereby rendering them more efficient and more responsive to popular needs, as well as to exert a democratizing influence on other political actors, particularly political parties.

The question of popular participation can obviously be approached in various ways and the possible impact of urban popular movements on political

institutions and other political actors examined at different levels. In the context of this dissertation, the analysis will be limited to a study of popular participation at the level of local government, for two principal reasons. First, urban popular movements are typically strongest at the grassroots. They address most of their demands at local governments and develop most of their activities in a local context; therefore, the impact of their novel identities and practices will be felt most strongly there. Second, as the level of government which is closest to the population, local governments are in a privileged position to perform a bridging function between civil society and the state. Consequently, local governments can be expected to be more responsive to the concerns and needs of the population than other levels of government, as well as more open to demands for an expansion of popular participation.

Whether or not an expansion of direct popular participation at the grassroots can have such a democratizing effect on local governments and other political actors is of course not a given; rather, this depends on a number of conditions. In this dissertation, these conditions will be examined at three different levels of analysis. First, while the innovative social and political practices of urban popular movements and the collective identities of their participants constitute a democratic potential, these movements also have some significant shortcomings. Most importantly, the development of stable collective identities is often complicated by the fact that participation in urban popular movements is largely conjunctural, following the ups and downs of political mass mobilizations around

specific demands. Furthermore, urban popular movements have often found it difficult to unite a set of common concerns. Against this background, this dissertation will examine how both the novel practices and identities of urban popular movements, as well as their deficiencies, affect the potential of these movements for social and political change.

Second, in order to overcome their weaknesses, urban popular movements often form alliances with other actors. While such alliances can give urban popular movements more clout and can help them project their potential for change into the political arena, they also heighten the risk of political cooptation by other actors, especially by political parties. Obviously, such cooptation would strip urban popular movements of their democratic potential and instead contribute to cementing conventional clientelist practices. In this light, this dissertation will assess the effectiveness of alliances between urban popular movements and other actors to promote the goals of these movements, the degree to which urban popular movements can influence the direction these alliances take, as well as the alternatives open to urban popular movements in order to counteract the cooptive pressures to which they are exposed.

Finally, the realization of the democratic potential of urban popular movements also hinges on the existence of adequate institutional openings for popular participation at the local level. While the reform of local government in several Latin American countries, often in the context of political decentralization programmes, has furnished some positive signs in this regard, the devolution of

powers to local governments has often remained incomplete and the resource base of most municipalities is still precarious. Against this background, this dissertation will determine if and to what degree political decentralization and the reform of local governments have produced the necessary political openings for popular participation at the local level.

The approach taken by this dissertation is original in several respects. With regard to its theoretical contribution, in the first chapter the dissertation directs attention to the *interactions* between urban popular movements, political institutions, and political parties at the local level. Likewise, it examines how these interactions affect the formation of collective identities and the definition of strategies on the part of urban popular movements, as well as their autonomy. These aspects have so far found little attention in the literature. While a possible democratic influence of urban popular movements has often been evoked especially by social movement theorists, as well as occasionally by students of democratic transitions and consolidation, surprisingly little research has been done on the way the interactions between these movements, political institutions and other political actors actually work. This is particularly true with respect to the recently democratized regimes in Latin America.

Furthermore, in Chapter 2, the dissertation provides a theoretical framework for studying these interactions in a comprehensive and systematic manner. While building on existing scholarship in the field, this framework furnishes several novel elements. In particular, by examining popular

participation in conjunction with the strategies that political parties and other actors adopt vis-à-vis urban popular movements, as well as political decentralization and local government reform, it places popular participation squarely in a political context. This is a considerable advantage over much of the existing literature, which has often treated the political environment of popular participation as a residual variable and has instead focused on technical aspects relating to programme design and implementation. By contrast, the political approach taken in this dissertation permits a better assessment of the likelihood that greater popular participation at the local level will in fact have a democratic impact on other actors and on political institutions, as well as of the obstacles that such a project faces. At the same time, this approach identifies some of the options that urban popular movements have in order to realize their objectives as well as to counteract cooptive pressures from various sides.

At an empirical level, the dissertation likewise contributes to existing scholarship. After giving an historical account of the relations between urban popular movements, political parties, and the state in Peru in Chapter 3, the theoretical framework that was developed in the first two chapters is then used in Chapters 4 and 5 to study the practices of various levels of local government in the Peruvian capital, Lima, during the 1980s.² In so doing, the dissertation sheds new light on the existing literature, while at the same time supplementing it with new empirical material. Most importantly, the sixth chapter of this dissertation presents the results of an original case study, which is based on a

series of open-ended interviews that were conducted during 1991 and 1992 in El Agustino, a low-income district of Lima, as well as in the neighbouring district of Santa Anita. While further demonstrating the utility of the theoretical framework developed in the first part of this dissertation, this case study is intended above all to provide insights into more recent developments concerning the relations between urban popular movements, political parties, and local governments in the Peruvian capital. At the same time, the conclusions that can be drawn from the cases studied are relevant not only in the context of Lima, but also in the wider Peruvian and Latin American contexts, and possibly beyond.

PART I

Chapter 1

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA: IDENTITY, STRATEGY, AND AUTONOMY

This chapter has two principal objectives. On the one hand, it provides some crucial conceptual clarifications, while on the other hand situating the topic of this dissertation in the wider framework of theories of social, and more particularly, of urban popular movements, especially in Latin America. For this purpose, this chapter is subdivided into three main sections. In the first section, I will define the concept of urban popular movements and explain the implications of seeing these movements as part of the larger universe of social movements. In this context, particular attention will be paid to the key concepts of identity, strategy, and autonomy. In the second section, I will explore the roots of these key concepts in contemporary social movement theories. The third and final part of this chapter will go on to examine how these concepts have influenced recent theorizing on urban popular movements in Latin America.

Conceptual Clarifications

An important first step in coming to grips with the concept of urban popular movements is to explore what is meant by calling them *popular* movements. The notions of *lo popular*, the popular sector or the popular classes' derive their utility from the empirical reality of highly segmented and unequal societies in Latin America. In common Latin American parlance, the popular sector

comprises that part of the population, usually the majority, which is disadvantaged in its life chances and consumption possibilities vis-à-vis the middle and upper classes. The term popular movements commonly refers to all movements emanating from the popular sector, that is, it includes the peasant and the workers' movements (Galín, Carrión, and Castillo 1986). The notion of *urban* popular movements, on the contrary, is much more restrictive and usually refers only to popular movements that have their base in urban shantytowns or popular neighbourhoods.

While analytically separating popular movements from other, for example middle class-based, social movements, this is obviously still a fairly loose definition denoting a "heterogeneous social collective" (Moisés 1982, 26) that encompasses groups with distinct social, economic, ethnic, and other characteristics. Put in occupational terms, for example, the popular sector comprises not only peasants and the minority of workers that are regularly employed in the formal economy, but also the un- and underemployed, the growing numbers of informal workers and small entrepreneurs, as well as the lumpenproletariat, which is largely excluded from both the formal and informal spheres (Oxhorn 1989, 5-6). At the same time, the term popular sector has the distinct advantage of avoiding a fundamental problem associated with other concepts like the urban poor, the informal sector, the working classes, etc. Concentrating on only one defining characteristic, such as poverty, participation in the informal economy, the condition as a worker, etc., these concepts are too

restrictive to capture the real heterogeneity of the urban popular sector and should be applied only to certain groups within it.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, urban popular movements are seen here as being part of the larger universe of social movements, which distinguishes them from other forms of collective action. While the notion of social movements is itself not without problems and competing definitions abound, it is nevertheless possible to identify some key features that all social movements share. For this purpose, the "clarifications" of the concept proposed by Kuechler and Dalton, who themselves draw on many others, such as Foss and Larkin (Foss and Larkin 1986, 2), provide a useful starting point. The two authors conceive social movements as

a significant portion of the population developing and defining interests that are incompatible with the existing social and political order and pursuing these interests in uninstitutionalized ways, potentially invoking the use of physical force and/or coercion. In this sense of the term, a social movement is a collectivity of *people* united by a common belief (ideology) and a determination to challenge the existing order in pursuit of these beliefs outside institutionalized channels of interest intermediation" (Kuechler and Dalton 1990, 277-278; italics in original).

There are at least three distinguishing qualities of social movements that can be drawn from Kuechler and Dalton's discussion. First of all, social movements are characterized by their potential for social and/or political change, which is embodied in the interests and demands of their participants. These interests and demands can reflect value orientations that are different from the rest of society, as in the case of the new social movements in western industrialized countries.

More frequently, however, they will express the desire of social movement participants to rectify their own political, economic, social, or cultural marginalization. Obviously, this point is particularly relevant with regard to urban popular movements in Latin America, but it applies equally to peasant or workers' movements, for example. In either case, profound changes to the existing social and political framework would be needed to accommodate the demands of these movements, which sets them apart from other forms of collective action. Interest or pressure groups, in particular, often represent more powerful social and political actors that have a stake precisely in the *continuity* of the existing social and political order.

A second key characteristic of social movements, their uninstitutionalized forms of action, is directly related to the one just mentioned. Institutional channels of interest intermediation are often inaccessible to social movements, given that their participants are often drawn from the most marginalized sectors of society, or such avenues are blocked off since addressing the demands of social movements would require a considerable degree of social and political change. Consequently, social movements frequently have little choice but to resort to uninstitutionalized forms of action in order to voice their demands, such as demonstrations, rallies, strikes, and the like. Depending on the response to their demands by other actors and especially the state, as well as a variety of other factors, the action repertoire of social movements will vary and may or may not include violent forms of protest. Interest or pressure groups, by contrast,

typically pursue their goals by employing established institutional channels, or, alternatively, by using informal links to put pressure on political decision makers.

While it is true that social movements rely mainly on uninstitutionalized forms of action, a number of factors often propel them to develop organizational complements, such as social movement organizations or movement parties. The tensions between these two poles have figured prominently in the social movement literature, and they are as present in urban popular movements as they are in most other social movements. Uninstitutionalized forms of action have the clear advantage of making social movements more open and of fostering the spontaneity and creativity of their members. This is particularly relevant in the case of mass mobilizations, during which social movements often acquire an astonishing force and vitality. At the same time, however, mass mobilizations are generally short-lived and often peter out before their objectives have been reached; therefore, an exclusive reliance on uninstitutionalized forms of action would make social movements relatively unstable and ineffective. Consequently, if social movements want to assure their own continuity and pursue their goals with any reasonable chance of success, it is essential that they achieve a minimum of organizational consolidation. Greater organizational coherence, however, entails its own risks: it can make social movements less accessible, increase the distance between leaders and the rank and file, and may even lead to their bureaucratic ossification.² Therefore, most social movements will attempt to strike a balance between accessibility and responsiveness on the one hand and

effectiveness and goal orientation on the other hand, with a changing emphasis depending on the specific case.

A third crucial attribute of social movements mentioned by Kuechler and Dalton is the existence of a set of beliefs, or what others have called a collective identity, that all participants of a social movement share, at least to a certain degree. As I will explain in more detail later on in this chapter, a common belief or identity is conceptually distinct from a set of shared interests, since the fact that a collective of people have certain interests in common is not sufficient to explain the emergence of a social movement. A collective identity, on the contrary, does not only serve as a unifying bond between the members of a social movement, but it also acts as a motivating stimulus. In fact, it is only via the emergence of such a collective identity that a social movement establishes itself as a collective actor (Jelin 1986, 18).

While urban popular movements share the same defining characteristics as other social movements, they also possess a number of distinct qualities, some of which social movement theories have only recently begun to recognize. One of these differences relates to the kind of social and political change urban popular movements can bring about. Traditionally, most social science theorizing has situated social and political change at the level of a transformation of the existing regime or political system. Dependency and modernization theories, for example, conceive of such changes as a move from one regime type or development model to another, usually following a struggle between two clearly identifiable

adversaries, such as the workers' movement and the bourgeoisie, or the traditionalists versus the modernizers. Social movement theories have long been framed in much the same way. Manuel Castells (Castells 1977, 1978, 1983), for example, who has been very influential especially in the Latin American context, has proposed to reserve the term urban *social* movements only for those urban movements that are able to have an impact on the overall system of "urban structure" or "urban meaning."

I will discuss Castells' theories in more detail later on in this chapter; at this point, it will suffice to point out two basic problems with his approach. First, social movements with a transformative impact in the global sense of Castells' definition are extremely rare, and Castells himself names but one such movement, the Madrid Citizens Movement, in his voluminous study *The City and the Grassroots* (Castells 1983). Consequently, his definition runs the risk of excluding most existing social movements from study and may therefore be of limited empirical use. Second, and more to the point, approaches such as the one put forth by Castells tend to downplay the significance of social and political change taking place at a level below outright regime or system transformation, which is precisely the kind of change that urban popular movements are involved in. Following Escobar and Alvarez (Escobar and Alvarez 1992b), as well as other authors employing a new social movements perspective, it is argued here that more emphasis should be put on the significant *incremental* changes that can be accomplished by addressing the nature of social and political practices

themselves.' Attention is thus directed away from the takeover of state power as the master switch for change and towards everyday social and political struggles. While the aspirations of the individual social movements involved in these struggles are often relatively modest and their potential for change is not even always realized, a multitude of such movements can have considerable clout (Escobar and Alvarez 1992b, 3; Bennett 1992, 242). Taken together, these movements may very well be able to affect more far-reaching changes and to have an impact on other actors or on political institutions.

Another important difference between urban popular movements and other social movements relates to the way in which their respective participants define their common interests, as well as to the construction of collective identities. With regard to the so-called "old" social movements, particularly workers' or peasant movements, there exists a widely held conception that collective identities are closely linked to clearly identifiable class interests, going back to Karl Marx' and Friedrich Engels' influential formulation of the move from a class in itself to a class for itself. According to this view, the position of the worker in the capitalist economy or that of the peasant in the agricultural production process, for example, constitutes the basis for the formation of collective class interests, the development of class consciousness, and the emergence of social movements.

In reality, the existence of such a link between socioeconomic structures and collective action is of course much more difficult to ascertain and has therefore been the subject of numerous debates. While structuralist Marxists have

tended to reduce this link to a quasi-mechanical connection by insisting on the determining influence of socioeconomic structures (Althusser 1965: Althusser et al. 1965), other authors have put more emphasis on the emergence of collective identities via social struggles. For E. P. Thompson, for instance, "class formations . . . arise at the intersection of determination and self-activity" (Thompson 1978, 298). Ira Katznelson, taking Thompson's analysis a step further, argues that economic structure has to be complemented by shared ways of life and collective dispositions in order to lead to collective action (Katznelson 1986, 13-22). However, despite their differences, all these authors would agree that socioeconomic structures and class interests are related and that they are crucial preconditions for the emergence of collective identities and therefore of social movements.

By contrast, in the case of urban popular movements, collective identities do not emerge on the basis of shared class interests, since these movements are rooted in the reproductive and not in the productive sphere and therefore do not represent a particular social class.⁴ As was explained above, urban popular movements emanate from the urban popular sector, which comprises elements of several classes and social groups and can therefore be more adequately described as a heterogeneous social collective. The fact that the urban popular sector cannot be defined conclusively along class lines and that the collective identities of urban popular movements are therefore not formed on the basis of shared class characteristics, does not mean that the formation of such collective identities and

of urban popular movements themselves would be impossible. Rather, in the case of urban popular movements, collective identities emerge *directly* from the social struggles that these movements are involved in, or more precisely speaking, they emerge around the *demands* that give rise to these struggles. Under certain conditions, these demands can provide a common rallying point for individuals with otherwise diverse interests, and they can serve to unite a wide variety of seemingly diverse movements.

The first urban popular movements in Latin America, for example, surfaced in the context of demands for adequate housing by urban squatters, who had arrived in the cities following successive waves of migration from the rural areas after the Second World War. The speed and the magnitude of these processes, a pronounced lack of resources on the part of the settlers, as well as outright opposition by the state and the established elites to the often illegal land occupations by rural migrants, left the new settlements in a precarious state. Apart from being in a legal limbo, the living conditions in these settlements were deficient in many ways, particularly with regard to the provision of urban services, such as paved roads, sidewalks, public transportation, safe water supply, sewers, electricity, and the like. Since these issues were obviously relevant for most residents of the newly-established popular settlements, they consequently lay at the heart of most early urban popular movements.

More recently, concerns for better housing, more secure land titles, and improved urban services have been overshadowed by demands related to material

survival, mainly as a result of the persistent and often deepening economic crisis. In this context, so-called survival movements emerged, such as soup kitchens or health groups, which were mostly led by women and aimed to secure elementary levels of nutrition and public health. In addition, a variety of other urban popular movements appeared, such as those centred around small-scale economic activities and the creation of employment possibilities in the urban informal sector. While the concerns and demands of all these movements are obviously not the same, they overlap in the sense that they are related to the living conditions in urban popular neighbourhoods (Mainwaring 1987, 132). Urban popular movements, then, are centred around a variety of demands, but their common territorial reference point can serve as a base for a shared territorially-based "popular identity" (Moisés 1982, 26).

Clearly, the demands made by urban popular movements with regard to improvements of urban living conditions imply a need for profound social and political change, since they point to the underlying problem of the political, social, and economic marginalization of the urban popular sector. More importantly, however, the collective identities that these demands give rise to pose a direct challenge to deeply engrained social and political practices. Especially in more recent years, urban popular movements have begun to resist the temptation to enter into clientelist relationships with other actors in order to reach their goals, refusing to let themselves be coopted in exchange for material benefits. At the same time, these movements have put more emphasis on the

democratization of their own structures, allowing for the participation of previously excluded groups, such as women, and undermining the position of autocratic leaders whose legitimacy stemmed largely from their ability to establish links to powerful patrons. Put differently, many urban popular movements have gone beyond simple demand-making and have begun to question the *context* in which their demands are made. In doing, these movements have challenged authoritarian and clientelist traditions that are a fundamental trait of the political cultures of many Latin American societies. The social and political practices of urban popular movements and the collective identities of their participants can therefore be regarded as an indication for processes of social change taking place at the grassroots level.

In this context, it is important to note that urban popular movements direct their demands principally at the state, which places them squarely in the political realm, whereas workers' and peasant movements operate chiefly in the economic sphere (Moisés 1982, 26-27; Foweraker 1990, 5). Urban popular movements have little choice but to do so: they cannot reach their goals relying exclusively on self-help, and other actors, such as NGOs, generally cannot replace or even match state funds, even in periods when state resources are extremely limited. Consequently, the state becomes the logical interlocutor for urban popular movements, especially since most urban services are still administered by state institutions, and the state, if anybody, will be expected to guarantee at least the material survival of its citizens. The fact that the demands raised by urban

popular movements are intrinsically political due to the nature of their concerns at least potentially enables these movements to project their critique of traditional social and political practices from the grassroots to the political arena and to influence other actors, such as state institutions or political parties. At the same, however, the need for urban popular movements to enter into negotiations with others in order to realize their objectives makes them more susceptible to cooptation, which could compromise their autonomy and negatively affect their potential for change.

As a result of this extensive conceptual discussion, it is now possible to summarize the main characteristics of urban popular movements and to advance a definition of the concept as it will be used in this dissertation:

Urban popular movements are social movements rooted in the urban popular sector whose participants share a territorially-based identity. They raise multiple demands related to urban living conditions which they direct mainly at the state, thereby invoking the necessity of social and political change.

As is the case with most definitions, the one proposed here does not profess to provide all the answers regarding the problem at hand; rather, it serves as a tool to ask further questions. Many of these questions revolve around the key issues of identity, strategy, and autonomy, which therefore deserve particular attention. Since these issues have long been central to the literature on urban popular movements and on social movements in general, I will address them only briefly here and discuss them in more detail in the following sections of this chapter.

The first issue to be addressed relates to the formation of collective

identities as the basis for the emergence of social movements. As was explained above with respect to urban popular movements, shared interests and demands can translate into the formation of collective identities and into collective action. However, this is of course only one out of many possible ways of addressing commonly shared grievances: people might also pursue their interests individually, they might resort to time-tested clientelist strategies, or they might decide not to become active at all. In order to understand why collective identities and urban popular movements emerge in some cases and not in others, it is crucial to view these movements against the background of the concrete social and political struggles in which they arise. The repercussions of these struggles can go a long way in explaining the formation of collective identities, as well as the way in which these identities evolve over time.

The fact that collective identities typically emerge in the context of social and political struggles also implies that they are rarely formed in isolation; rather, they are shaped at least to some extent by other actors that are involved in these struggles. These actors will not only attempt to mobilize urban popular movements around their own goals, but more importantly, they often interfere directly in the formation of collective identities within these movements and frequently exert a considerable influence on their development. For example, political parties often try to infiltrate urban popular movements in order to disseminate their own ideological and programmatic views and to win followers among their members and particularly their leaders. Other actors, such as the

Church or NGOs, frequently offer organizational support to urban popular movements, often coupled with other benefits such as donations of food or other goods.⁹ Obviously, such interference makes urban popular movements vulnerable to cooptation. On the other hand, given that urban popular movements are often relatively fragile and are subject to the ebb and flow of mass mobilizations around a number of specific demands, programmatic and organizational assistance from other actors can prove vital for the formation of collective identities within urban popular movements, as well as for their organizational consolidation.

The issue of what strategies urban popular movements should pursue in order to achieve their goals raises some further questions. While urban popular movements typically direct their demands at the state, they can do so in different ways: they can voice their demands in a confrontational manner, for example, via mass mobilizations or demonstrations, or they can try to establish direct contacts with state institutions and pursue their concerns through negotiations. Whichever course of action they choose, urban popular movements are faced with an additional choice to make. They can opt to rely solely on their own strength, or instead, they can seek alliances with other actors, especially political parties, and even try to become part of a broader-based political coalition. In the first case, urban popular movements will usually find it easier to protect their independence, albeit at the cost of limiting their influence, whereas in the second case, their influence would potentially be greater, but so would the risk of being coopted.

Obviously, the issues of identity and of strategy, which were discussed

above, are intimately related to a third one, namely, that of autonomy. Urban popular movements clearly have to possess at least a minimum of autonomy: otherwise, they would not be able to define interests and identities that are different from those of other actors, nor would they be in a position to devise strategies independently. Rather, without a certain degree of autonomy, urban popular movements would quickly be coopted and absorbed by the state, by political parties, or by other actors that would use them as a welcome tool to further their own agendas. In all likelihood, such cooptation would strip urban popular movements of their potential for social and political change.

At the same time, however, the idea that urban popular movements should strive for *complete* autonomy from others in order to avoid cooptation and to preserve their potential for social and political change, would be mistaken. This idea has long been popular among intellectuals studying these movements, especially those adhering to the new social movements paradigm, as I will explain in more detail below. For one thing, it would be unrealistic to assume that such complete autonomy could ever be achieved. As was explained previously, urban popular movements are generally relatively fragile and they often need help from others in order to achieve their objectives. Furthermore, urban popular movements typically make demands on the state, which implies a certain degree of interaction even if they eschew direct contacts with state institutions and instead voice their demands via protests and mass mobilizations. Moreover, since urban popular movements often arise in the context of more universal social and

political struggles, they will hardly be able to avoid dealing with other actors, especially political parties, that are also involved in these struggles.

Even if it were a viable alternative, complete autonomy from other actors would in all likelihood render urban popular movements sterile and ineffective. Totally autonomous urban popular movements would not only be sheltered from cooptation, they would also be cut off from the positive input that other actors can provide, such as new ideas, experiences from other struggles, organizational assistance, etc. As a consequence, the development of collective identities within these movements would probably remain stunted and their organizational structures would not evolve beyond an incipient stage, which, ironically, might even increase the possibility of cooptation by other actors. Conversely, and perhaps more importantly, these movements would not be able to project their own potential for social and political change into other spheres, and they would therefore forego the possibility of influencing other actors.

It follows from the above that the problem of autonomy, which has often been stated in absolute terms, should be rephrased as one of *relative* autonomy. In order to do so, it is necessary to overcome the popular misconception that the relations between urban popular movements and other actors have to function as a one-way street, be it in the sense that weak urban popular movements are inevitably coopted by overpowerful political parties or the state, or, alternatively, that totally autonomous urban popular movements single-handedly overturn the political system from the grassroots.⁶ More often, these relations will function

in a dialectical fashion, or, to use Ruth Cardoso's evocative term, they will resemble a "play of mirrors" (R. Cardoso 1992, 292). In other words, while most or all actors involved in social and political struggles will exert some kind of influence on others, their own identities and strategies will also be shaped by these interactions.

Therefore, what is really at issue is not the ability of urban popular movements to fend off any kind of interference from others in order to preserve their potential for change, but rather, their capacity to put their stamp on alliances with other actors and to influence the outcome of negotiation processes. In other words, the question is not how urban popular movements can remain completely autonomous, but rather, how they can maintain a sufficient *margin* of autonomy that would enable them to maintain their potential for social and political change and to maximize their influence on others, while at the same time safeguarding their identities and their ability to devise independent strategies. Whether urban popular movements are able to do so depends to a large extent on the context in which they operate. For one thing, urban popular movements are more likely to increase their leverage if they are not confronted with only one hegemonic actor, such as the state in most authoritarian regimes, but can instead exploit fissures between the ruling elites and/or strike multiple alliances with a variety of different actors. Furthermore, the room to manoeuvre for urban popular movements is affected by the existing regime type, or more precisely speaking, by the surrounding institutional framework. Urban popular movements are more likely

to escape cooptation and to maintain sufficient elbowroom if there exist significant institutional channels as well as clearly defined mechanisms for their participation. Such institutional channels would make it less tempting, or maybe even superfluous, for urban popular movements to enter into clientelist relations with others actors in order to realize their demands, and it would give them increased institutional leverage to influence these actors. I will return to these two crucial points in the conclusion to this chapter.

The State of the Discipline: Social Movement Paradigms and the Study of Social Movements in Latin America

The study of social movements in Latin America has changed dramatically over the last two decades. As recently as twenty years ago, such studies would have focused on a limited number of social actors, such as workers, peasants, or students, employing fairly rigid theoretical frameworks, often derived from structuralist Marxism and claiming universal validity. Nowadays, as these favoured subjects have receded into the background of history, recent co-edited volumes summarizing the field testify to a shift in focus to a multitude of actors that cannot be adequately analyzed using conventional theories (Escobar and Alvarez 1992a; Eckstein 1989). While attention has shifted to new social actors, the change in theoretical perspectives has been no less dramatic, reflecting growing scepticism in grand theory. Simply put, deductive, structural theories operating at a high level of abstraction and claiming universal validity have been replaced by inductive, often comparative, approaches based on empirical case

studies. As a consequence, the direction of theory development has been inverted: theories are not developed any more a priori and then used to analyze specific cases, but rather, these cases are analyzed from a comparative perspective in the search for patterns and commonalities. Almost by definition, theoretical generalizations derived from such empirical and comparative research have to be more limited than deductive theories, as they are derived from widely divergent national and historical contexts and cannot hope to ever encompass the complete empirical universe.

The study of urban popular movements in Latin America followed a similar pattern. At present, there exists no consistent theory of urban popular movements, nor is there reason to believe that such a paradigm will surface in the near future. Rather, most current studies of urban popular movements in Latin America derive their inspiration from various sources and make different, and usually limited, claims as to their own theoretical validity and empirical range.⁷ What most of these studies have in common, however, is the fact that they were influenced by the central paradigms of Western European and North American social movement theory, namely, the identity paradigm associated with the new social movements school, and, albeit to a much lesser extent, the strategy paradigm linked to resource mobilization theory. Most notably, these two paradigms have furnished some key concepts for the analysis of urban popular movements in Latin America, especially those of identity, strategy, and autonomy, which were discussed in more detail in the previous section of this

chapter. Before examining how these concepts were employed in the Latin American context, it is useful to take a brief look at the underlying theories, in order to get a better understanding of the significance of these concepts, as well as some of the problems they entail.

New social movement theories (Touraine 1984, 1985; Melucci 1985, 1988, 1989; Brand 1985; Brand, Büsser, and Rucht 1986; Hirsch and Roth 1986; Dalton and Kuechler 1990; Offe 1987)* are founded on the assumption that major structural changes in Western European societies have resulted in a set of new concerns which in turn provoked the emergence of new social movements. These structural changes are essentially two-fold. On the one hand, the economic model of western societies, based on an ideology of steady progress and growth, ever-increasing technological sophistication and rationalization, and unlimited control of nature, entered a profound crisis. From the first oil shock in 1973 onwards, stubbornly high rates of unemployment, recurrent bouts of "stagflation," and the disappearance of whole industries that had long been mainstays of the economy, cast long shadows on the idea of steady progress and prosperity. Furthermore, the sudden realization of the often incalculable risks inherent in many modern technologies, particularly nuclear energy, put paid to the ideals of unlimited technical "manageability" and boundless control over nature. As a result, new social movements like the anti-nuclear movement or the ecology movement appeared, calling not only for a critical revision of the economic model and more ecologically sound forms of production, but also challenging the model's

ideological and philosophical underpinnings. In particular, these movements criticized what they saw as an obsession with growth and material wealth, which was reflected in their participants' and sympathizers' post-material values and aspirations (Inglehart 1977).

Second, new social movements are perceived as a reaction to the proclivity of the modern welfare state to steadily increase its surveillance and control of the private realm or "life world" and to subject more and more of its spheres to some form of state involvement (Habermas 1987; Offe 1984, 1985).⁹ In the process, historically grown social milieus and the corresponding collective identities are destroyed and replaced by impersonal bureaucracies dealing with disconnected individuals. New social movements, most notably the women's movement, are frequently seen as attempts to escape such state interference and to provide spaces of solidary, face-to-face interaction where autonomous subjects and identities can be formed. For many theorists, such processes of identity formation, as well as the social practices that flow from them, constitute the core of the new social movements (Melucci 1988, 1989). In their initial stages, the new identities are often little more than reactive defense mechanisms serving to ward off an intrusive state and to secure the cohesion of the respective movement. However, they can also become instrumental for political and institutional change if they serve as a base to formulate demands on other actors (Touraine 1984, 165-180).

As its principal contribution, the new social movement school has drawn attention to the fact that processes of social change in industrialized western

societies have produced a variety of new identities, new social practices, and new social movements that differ markedly from traditional, class-based social movements. However, aside from its failure to properly theorize the precise link between social change and the emergence of social movements (Klandermans 1991), new social movement theory often assumes that new identities and social practices emerge almost in a vacuum, which prevents it from explaining how new social movements operate in practice and how they go about realizing their goals. At least in part, this is due to a wide-spread perception among new social movement theorists that new social movements constitute a sort of counter-culture which unfolds autonomously and often in confrontation to the rest of society. According to this view, contacts to other actors would raise the danger of cooptation and thereby threaten the budding new identities and social practices; therefore, such contacts are reduced to a minimum, except to put pressure on other actors from the outside. What this view obscures is the fact that new social movements, just like any other social movement, often entertain a multitude of relations with other actors. New social movement theory has little to say about the way in which these relations function, or, to put it more precisely, it does not shed much light on the strategies that new social movements employ in their relations with other actors in order to achieve their objectives.¹⁰ This question, along with others, is of course central to the resource mobilization approach, to which I will now turn.

Resource mobilization theory (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1988:

McCarthy and Zald 1977; Jenkins 1983) starts from very different assumptions than the new social movement school. Essentially, the theory holds that concerns or grievances are endemic in any society; consequently, they alone cannot account for the emergence of a social movement. Whether or not a social movement arises depends essentially on whether these grievances are harnessed and given organizational form. In the language of resource mobilization theory, social movement entrepreneurs will identify and approach target constituencies, that is, potential social movement sympathizers and supporters, to extract resources from them. These resources can take any form, such as money, time, voluntary labour, intellectual contributions, access to politicians and bureaucrats, etc. The resources extracted are then used to establish and sustain the social movement and to campaign for its goals, as well as for the maintenance of the social movement organization, its organizational superstructure. The social movement entrepreneurs and the core group of social movement participants involved in running the social movement organization will exploit the political opportunity structure and develop a keen sense of strategy. That is, they will make decisions as to what constituencies to target for a maximum extraction of resources, what strategies and tactics to choose for maximum efficiency and effectiveness, when and how to make allies, how to play the media, who to lobby, etc.

While the resource mobilization school has provided important insights into the strategic behaviour of social movements, relying mainly on rational choice theory, it has not been able to explain why people participate in social movements

to begin with. Most importantly, resource mobilization theory has been unable to overcome the free rider problem (Olson 1965) inherent in its narrow or "thin" conception of rationality (Ferree 1992). In brief terms, the free rider problem is based on the assumption that it would not be rational for individuals to participate in social movements, given the costs and risks involved. Indeed, it would be more rational for them to "ride free," that is, to let others lead the struggle and then reap the benefits that normally accrue not only to social movement participants." Paradoxically, then, resource mobilization theory seems to be more convincing in explaining why people do *not* participate in social movements than why they do.

There exist two attempts to overcome the free rider problem that are worth noting here. The first one by Ferree (Ferree 1992) traces the free rider problem back to the conception of rationality on which resource mobilization theory is based and proposes ways to alter and broaden it. Basically, what resource mobilization theory calls rational is the behaviour of self-contained individuals to engage in cost-benefit calculations to determine their course of action. According to Ferree, this "thin" or universalist notion of rationality is unrealistic since it fails to take into account the context in which individuals operate. What is rational for an individual depends to a large extent on the way she sees herself in relation to others. Consequently, there exist contextual, collective forms of rationality apart from the largely fictitious model of individual cost-benefit analysis. Especially for subordinate groups, what would be irrational behaviour

in terms of an individual cost-benefit analysis, such as the building of mutual support networks, sharing with others, even impulsive, identity-affirming acts,¹² can be very rational. Members of such groups, Ferree argues, support others because they might have to rely on such support themselves one day, given their subordinate position in society.

Several authors have proposed another way of sidestepping the free rider problem, by focusing directly on the ways in which people are mobilized into social movements.¹³ According to these authors, mobilization into social movements is the result of micro-level group processes, which are variously called frame alignment, consensus mobilization, and the like, in which actual or potential social movement participants arrive at the definition of a collective purpose and course of action. What these arguments have in common with the notion of a contextual rationality proposed by Ferree is the fact that they also entail a break with the classical rational choice paradigm underlying most resource mobilization theory. Rather than focusing on the hypothetical behaviour of fictitious individuals weighing the costs and the benefits of participating in social movements, these approaches draw attention to the complex social processes by which the effects of social change, commonly shared grievances, and the like, are translated into collective action. These processes cannot be convincingly explained as the result of a cost-benefit analysis by individuals; rather, they refer back to what Klandermans has labelled the social construction of protest (Klandermans 1991), or what new social movement school has called

the construction of collective identities.

In sum, then, new social movement theory and resource mobilization theory provide different, but equally important and indeed complementary insights into social movement activity, and it is not surprising that several authors have called for a fusion of the two paradigms (Cohen 1985; Salman 1990; Escobar and Alvarez 1992b, Klandermans 1991). While resource mobilization theory has shed light on the strategic behaviour of social movements based on the rational analysis of the costs and benefits of different courses of action, new social movement theory has drawn attention to the collective identities and new social practices that emerge as a response to processes of social change. Obviously, though, the two theories have been shaped by the specific historical and social backgrounds against which they were developed: resource mobilization theory has proved most adequate to describe the reality of North American social movements, which are often large, professionally managed operations marked by a pronounced divide between the core group of organizers and the supporters and sympathizers at large, whereas new social movement theory has better captured the situation of Western European new social movements with their often fluid and amorphous organizational structures, their strong emphasis on post-materialist values, and their deep distrust of the state. Since social reality in Latin America is obviously quite different, neither of the two theories can be applied directly to an analysis of social movements in Latin America. Nevertheless, as was said before, both theories provide important conceptual tools that can be used for such an analysis.

In the following, I will examine how these concepts have been employed in more recent theorizing on urban popular movements in Latin America and particularly in Peru. This will be preceded by a brief review of prior theories, whose demise paved the way for the ascent of some of the later approaches.

Theories of Urban Popular Movements in Latin America

Precursors to Current Approaches: Marginality Theory and Urban Social Movement Theory

Marginality theory¹⁴ (DESAL 1968, 1969; Germani 1980; Nun 1969, 1972; Quijano 1974, 1977; F. H. Cardoso 1971), which dominated the field in the 1960s and early 1970s, was the first theoretical attempt to come to grips with the empirical reality of growing urban shantytowns in Latin America. Arguing from a dualist perspective, marginality theory depicted the "marginals" as separated from the rest of society, socially fragmented and anomic, and politically volatile. Unable to organize on their own, they were seen as easy prey for totalitarian demagogues, or, alternatively, as a mass basis for a socialist revolution. Marginality theory unquestionably contributed to focusing attention on the plight of urban migrants in Latin America, which resulted in a number of follower debates¹⁵ and a renewed emphasis on promotional policies for the popular sector on the part of the state and international organizations. However, its theoretical foundations soon became deeply discredited, essentially on two grounds. First, the notion of duality became impossible to sustain, as it obscured a multitude of existing links between the so-called marginals and the rest of

society. Second, as Janice Perlman (1976) showed in her path-breaking study, marginals were not necessarily anomic, disorganized, and vulnerable to radical ideologies, but could be organized, rather conservative, and optimistic.

The demise of marginality theory was followed in the 1970s by the ascent of a new theory centred around the concept of urban social movements. Formulated mainly to account for a surge of urban-based social movements in Western Europe in the early 1970s and subsequently adapted to fit Latin American reality (Evers, Müller-Plantenberg, and Spessart 1979; Moisés 1982), the urban social movements school broke with the "myth of marginality" (Perlman 1976), by recognizing the potential of the urban poor to organize and to form alliance with other actors, such as political parties. The urban social movement approach is associated with the work of Manuel Castells (1977, 1978, 1983), and, to a lesser degree, that of Jean Lojkine (1977) and Jordi Borja (1975).¹⁶

Castells' early work owes a lot to the Marxist structuralism which was developed by Althusser and Balibar (Althusser et al. 1965) and later refined by Poulantzas (1971), an intellectual debt which becomes apparent in the concepts used, as well as in the basic line of argument. Essentially, Castells argues that social movements emerge in cities as a response to the intensification of urban contradictions that provoke a crisis in collective consumption. This is due to an interplay of various factors. On the one hand, increasingly complex and interdependent production structures under monopoly capitalism make a

compliant, adaptable, and qualified work force a basic requirement. The key to meeting this requirement lies in assuring the conditions for the reproduction of the work force in a wide sense, by providing public services, housing, transport facilities, education, and so forth. Given its structural role as the regulator of the total system and the guarantor of its continued existence under the hegemony of capital, the role of assuring the reproduction of the work force falls to the state. However, as the state's capacity to fulfil its growing role is limited, given financial and other constraints, a crisis of collective consumption ensues. As a result, the state becomes the logical target of protest movements.

Contrary to marginality theory, Castells acknowledges that the protest movements that arise during struggles provoked by urban contradictions can contribute to social and political change. However, they can only do so if they are incorporated into broader class struggles led by the workers' movement, which is precisely what separates urban *social* movements from other urban movements. Class struggles are seen as predominant over other social struggles, given their location at the level of primary contradictions between labour and capital, which, according to Althusser, are determinant "in the last instance."

As urban social movement theory was developed further and used in contexts other than the Western European one, its underlying and fairly rigid structuralist paradigm came to be eroded. This is particularly obvious with regard to the way in which the theory was applied to the Latin American context. For one thing, the key notion of urban contradictions was defined more and more

loosely. Authors following Castells' early lead, as well as Castells himself in his later work, often added elements of dependency theory to their analyses and frequently tailored the urban contradictions concept to fit the reality of the countries they studied. As a result, the stringency of the underlying structuralist argument was inevitably weakened: urban contradictions could mean just about any social, economic or political conflict in the city, and the term urban social movement could denote any urban-based protest movement. Furthermore, the predominance of class struggles over other social struggles began to be questioned. In a first step, the leading role of the workers' party, on which Castells, as well as Lojkin, had put so much emphasis, was attacked by authors who instead favoured broad-based, non-hierarchical alliances between parties, unions, and other movements (Evers, Müller-Plantenberg, and Spessart 1979). Subsequently, the notion of the centrality of class struggle itself came under fire. Moisés (1982), for example, argued that the principal struggle in Brazilian society was taking place between the state and popular movements, and not between capital and labour. In his later work, Castells joined his critics by abandoning his structuralist roots and arguing against any hierarchy between different forms of social and political struggles (Castells 1983, 311).

All this was no accident. Despite - or rather because of - its theoretical rigour and undeniable sophistication, structuralism had failed to provide the crucial link between an abstract and fairly neat theory and a complex, contradictory, and often confusing social reality. It comes as no surprise, then,

that students of urban-based social movements distanced themselves from the structuralist theoretical edifice and began to put more emphasis on the study of actual historical actors and social processes. Beyond the theoretical inadequacies of the urban social movements approach, however, there were also some more ideological motives that facilitated this shift. Many researchers had become deeply disillusioned with orthodox Marxism and its insistence on the central role of the working class and were actively searching for a "new historical subject" that could replace the working class as the motor force for social and political change.¹⁷ A great number of these researchers believed to have found such a new historical subject in the emerging new social movements. Consequently, they began to turn their attention to the new collective identities and new social practices that these movements represented, thereby paving the way for the ascent of new social movement theory. In the following, I will present three different examples of how this theory and its central concepts shaped the study of urban popular movements in Latin America, paying particular attention to the Peruvian case.

The Impact of New Social Movement Theory on the Study of Urban Popular Movements in Latin America

The first group of authors examined in this section tried to apply Western European new social movement theories more or less directly to the popular movements that had sprung up in many Latin American countries during and following the transitions to democracy (Kärner 1983; Mainwaring and Viola

1984; Slater 1985; Fals Borda 1986). It was hoped that the identity structures embodied in these movements, as well as the social, cultural, and political practices that flowed from them, could lay the groundwork for the autonomous construction of a new social fabric, parallel power structures, or at least a new, democratic political culture. These early approaches displayed a crucial weakness in not sufficiently distinguishing between European and Latin American movements. For one thing, the European scenario, with its focus on post-materialist value orientations, was very different from the Latin American context, where material demands related to housing, health, and increasingly material survival continued to be a major concern, particularly for the urban popular sector. If anything, the urgency of these demands rose in a time of economic crisis. Partly as a consequence of this, the state in Latin America continued to be a principal interlocutor for urban popular movements, while European new social movements could afford to sometimes withdraw from the political system in order to concentrate, in Touraine's terms, on "building society." Urban popular movements in Latin America, on the contrary, usually operate on both levels: while they are involved in social change, they also have to be viewed in relation to the political system.

A second group of authors (Armillas 1986; Ballón 1986c; Tovar 1986a, 1986b; Degregori, Blondet, and Lynch 1986) did not employ the new social movement approach as such, but instead used some of its central concepts to analyze the development and maturation of urban popular movements in Peru

since the 1950s. In more specific terms, these authors studied the emergence and the contents of new collective identity structures in the urban realm, which in their view resulted from processes of social and political change after the Second World War.¹⁴ Building on Moisés' notion of a popular identity, but considerably refining it, the authors distinguish three main types of collective identities: the *poblador* (settler) identity, the *vecino* (neighbour) identity, and the *ciudadano* (citizen) identity. In the following, I will briefly discuss these three identity types.

The *poblador* identity was seen to reflect the precarious situation of the migrants of the 1950s and 1960s, whose urban settlements were largely the result of land invasions. Devoid of economic, legal or political clout, the settlers formed neighbourhood associations in order to secure their settlements and to obtain urban services. In turn, they were willing to pledge their political support to the regime of the day. Typically, leaders were selected on the basis of their skills to negotiate with the authorities and to establish clientelist relations with civil servants or politicians strategically placed in the state bureaucracy. The practice of clientelism - exchanging benefits for the pledge of political support, mostly resulting in cooptation by the regime - was frequently encouraged by the authorities (Collier 1976) and was also expressed in the often personalist and undemocratic structures of early neighbourhood associations.

The *poblador* identity was followed in the early 1970s by the emergence of the *vecino* identity, after many settlements had achieved a certain degree of

stability and clientelist links to the state became less central. Moreover, Peru was undergoing a series of fundamental socio-economic changes associated with the end of oligarchical rule which resulted, among other things, in the politicization and increased militancy of the urban popular sector. Helped along by the organizational reforms of the neighbourhood associations imposed by the Velasco regime, the position of the clientelist leaders of the old neighbourhood associations was being eroded with a new emphasis being put on democratic organizational structures. In a parallel development, neighbourhood associations ceased to be the only popular organizations. More and more, urban popular movements and organizations would form independently around an ever-increasing variety of concerns related to the living conditions in popular neighbourhoods and address their demands directly at the state, often in the form of mass mobilizations. Without being linked to the membership in a particular movement or organization, to be a *vecino* in these conditions meant to live in one of the popular neighbourhoods, to share certain material demands with the majority of their inhabitants, and to take part in mobilizations that directed these demands at the state (Tovar 1986a, 144).

According to most authors mentioned above, the development of the *vecino* identity had ramifications that went far beyond the *barrio*. In a clear parallel to the new social movement debate, the democratic organizational structures of urban popular movements and their activities at the neighbourhood level, often referred to as "new democratic and social practices" or as "new ways of making

politics," were seen as a "counter power" or the beginnings of a "new social order" (Arnillas 1986, 36; Tovar 1986b, 101). Emanating from civil society, this new social order was seen to militate against the institutional order imposed by the state, first under the military regime and later during the democratic period (Ballón 1986c). Evidence for this view was the participation of urban popular movements in the struggle against the military regime at the end of the 1970s, the proliferation of these movements in the early 1980s, and their alliances with leftist political parties in some local governments, which were increasingly perceived as "bridgeheads" in the political system.

After the return to democratic rule, the growing importance of institutional politics and the opening up of "new democratic spaces," such as the right to vote for illiterates and the democratization of local governments, paved the way for the emergence of a *ciudadano* identity. As a consequence, material demands on the political system that had been made chiefly in a confrontational manner were increasingly being complemented by political demands, particularly for greater participation in institutional decision making processes. At the same time, the widening of political citizenship rights went along with a considerable redefinition and enlargement of the notion of citizenship itself.¹⁹ For one thing, material benefits that had been considered favours by the *poblador* and which the *vecino* came to demand, were increasingly perceived as rights to be expected from the state. On the other hand, it became clear that political citizenship rights alone were not enough to overcome discrimination that prevented some groups,

particularly women and the indigenous majorities in countries such as Peru, from exercising these rights. In order to guarantee citizenship for all, it was often pointed out, the sources of discrimination themselves would have to be addressed.

Before discussing some of the implications and problems of these arguments, a third approach to processes of collective identity formation in the urban popular sector shall briefly be examined. This approach differs in important respects from the theories discussed previously, in the sense that it focuses on the identities of specific groups within the urban popular sector, such as women or youth, and not on collective identities that could be shared by the urban popular sector as a whole.³⁹ Of the studies undertaken from this perspective, the ones concentrating on women's movements (Jaquette 1989a; Jelin 1990) have undoubtedly had the most impact and therefore warrant a closer look.

Popular women's movements received increased attention following their proliferation in the 1980s as a result of the economic crisis. Initially, the identities of the women involved in these movements were an extension of their established roles as being the ones responsible for the welfare of their families, and particularly their children. Traditionally, women and men had shared in the task of providing for the family, the men contributing financially, while the women took charge of the household and child rearing. However, due to the economic crisis, most of the men lost their employment and became less and less able to fulfil their role as financial providers. As a result, many women from the popular sectors began to assume this role in addition to the domestic and

educational duties they had performed all along. To supplement the shrinking incomes of their husbands, they started to work themselves, typically in the informal sector. Furthermore, popular women began to pool the limited resources at their disposal in order to guarantee what was often little more than the survival of their families, for example, by setting up soup kitchens and producing the family meals at the lowest possible cost. Many of these soup kitchens received financial and organizational assistance, among others, from the state, the church, NGOs, or feminist groups.

The growing involvement of popular women in the workforce, as well as increased contacts with other women and outside advisers, led to important changes in their identities. While being limited to a minority of women in the urban popular sector and subject to multiple obstacles, these changes are nonetheless significant. In the private realm, many women began to question traditional gender roles that confined them to the house, often having to overcome their spouses' resistance who did not want to accept their wives' growing independence and assertiveness. In the public sphere, women began to break down gender barriers that prevented them from running for public office, first in the neighbourhood association, but subsequently also in political institutions like local governments. Thus, women's movements contributed to social and political change, by redefining the identities of movement participants, and by changing the relations between these movements and political institutions.

To varying degrees, the three approaches discussed above have shown that

the identity concept borrowed from new social movement theory can be useful for an analysis of urban popular movements in Latin America. There can be little doubt that new actors, identities, and social practices do in fact exist.²¹ The identity notion serves to analytically capture this kind of social change taking place at the grassroots, superseding earlier structuralist approaches and taking into account the existing multitude of social actors and practices. At the same time, however, subsequent critiques of these approaches (Mainwaring 1987, 1989; R. Cardoso 1983, 1992) have highlighted the fact that the new collective identities were much less representative, more dispersed, and more fragile than what had been assumed earlier. Furthermore, these critiques showed that the search for a new historical subject had led the respective authors to often vastly overestimate the potential of urban popular movements for political change and to overlook the impact other actors can have on the formation of collective identities and strategies within these movements themselves. I will briefly discuss these two criticisms in the following.

With respect to the first point, four specific criticisms merit a closer look. First, the critics showed that processes of collective identity formation within urban popular movements are rarely linear; rather, they often follow the ebb and flow of mass mobilizations around specific demands. Consequently, given that the level of participation in these mass mobilizations frequently tapers off after their respective objectives have been reached, the formation of stable collective identities seems to be rather the exception than the rule. Often, such identities

will emerge only among the most active and politically aware segments of the urban popular sector, such as urban popular movement leaders. Second, the multitude of collective identities linked to different groups within the urban popular sector do not necessarily coalesce into one overarching popular identity. Often, different collective identities will produce a variety of urban popular movements that have little or no contact with one another. The difficulties of finding common ground between these different identities are compounded by the fact that urban popular movements frequently compete with one another for limited resources. Obviously, the resulting tensions make it all the more difficult for urban popular movements to unite and thus to achieve greater clout. Third, the new collective identities are threatened by older and sometimes deeply entrenched identities and practices, which often appear more conducive to achieving certain goals. For example, in a time of severe economic crisis, such as in most Latin American countries throughout the 1980s, it can appear more logical to pursue individualist strategies to assure one's own survival or to maintain clientelist relations in order obtain certain benefits, rather than to join others in urban popular movements and to refuse being coopted by state institutions and other actors. Finally, the new collective identities and budding democratic practices are often ambiguous and incoherent themselves; frequently, they are contradictory and laced with other practices and fragments of competing identities. As a result, urban popular movements have not been spared their share of problems with autocratic, unaccountable leaders, embezzlement of funds,

nepotism, and the like, that are so characteristic of the political system and the "old" political parties.

While these criticisms no doubt warrant some caution against overestimating the role that new collective identities and new social practices can play in effecting social and political change, one should not go so far as to deny that new collective identities are in fact being formed.²² Rather, students of urban popular movements should be more careful not to fall prey to wishful thinking and to take the emergence of progressive and democratic identities simply for granted, and instead put more emphasis on empirical research. More precisely put, future research should focus more on the structural changes that foster the emergence of new collective identities, the micro-level processes in which these collective identities are in fact being formed, and particularly the immense obstacles that the new collective identities face, in order to assess the possible impact of urban popular movement on other actors and on the existing political order.

In addition, the exact way in which urban popular movements would have such an impact needs to be rethought. As was explained, authors arguing from an identity perspective have often pictured these movements as being involved in the construction of an autonomous new social order based on democratic new identities and social practices, which would allow them to influence other actors and eventually to renew the existing political order almost single-handedly. These assumptions are hard to maintain, not only because the collective identities that emerged within urban popular movements turned out to be considerably weaker

and less widespread than the identity approaches had assumed. More importantly, the idea of an autonomous new social order at the grassroots obscures the multitude of existing links between urban popular movements and other actors, particularly political parties and state institutions. As was argued in the first section of this chapter, urban popular movements are political almost by definition: they have little choice but to engage in interactions with other actors in order to achieve their goals. Consequently, these other actors are in a position to influence the development of collective identities and the formulation of strategies on the part of urban popular movements, and not just the other way around. In fact, the relative strength of these actors raises the question of how urban popular movements can avoid being coopted and maintain a sufficient margin of autonomy, in order to preserve their capacity to formulate independent strategies, as well as their potential for social and political change. Before discussing this question against the backdrop of the return to democratic rule in most Latin American countries, I will take a brief look at a number of approaches which situate it in the context of previous authoritarian regimes, and which largely predate the identity approaches that were discussed in the foregoing.

Autonomy or Cooptation: Interactions between Urban Popular Movements and Other Actors

Early studies examining the interactions between urban popular movements and other actors, most of which were undertaken by American political scientists in the late 1960s and in the 1970s (Leeds 1969; Cornelius 1974; Collier 1976;

Powell 1976; Goldrich, Pratt, and Schuller 1976; Leeds and Leeds 1978; Stepan 1978; Dietz 1980), have generally focused on the relations between urban squatters and authoritarian military regimes. According to these studies, military rulers had good reasons to give heed to the demands of squatter movements for better housing, urban services, and the like, if they wanted to forestall potential social and political conflicts. At the same time, however, they usually found these movements to be easily coopted and controlled, given their dependence on state resources for the solution of their most pressing problems, as well as the willingness of their leaders to accept material benefits in exchange for the pledge of political support. Consequently, squatter movements are generally considered by these studies to be incapable of effecting social or political change; on the contrary, their cooptation is seen to contribute to the stability of military rule. In the following, I will examine two of these studies in more detail.

In his study of settlement policies in Peru from the Odría to the Velasco government, David Collier (Collier 1976) depicts squatter movements and the elites controlling the state apparatus as two sides of the same coin: both are seen as the result of processes of modernization and social mobilization which brought about the emergence of new economic and political groups and elites. Settlement policy in this scheme is no more than an instrument for the elites to coopt the lower classes and to diffuse potential social and political conflicts. The dominant elite group, Collier argues, "has shaped settlement policy to fit its overall strategy of rural and urban development and its particular conception of the appropriate

form of mass political participation and of the appropriate role of the state in society" (Collier 1976, 16). Accordingly, different dominant elites produce different settlement policies; yet, the cooptation and manipulation of squatter movements remains a constant.

While Henry Dietz' monograph on the urban poor in Lima under Velasco comes to similar conclusions, Dietz sees the urban poor "not only as vitally affected by the nature and structure of power at the nation-state level but also as capable of influencing policy" (Dietz 1980, 5). For example, while the policies of the Velasco regime towards the urban poor were clearly designed to provide channels for organized, controlled participation in support of the regime, they also helped in the creation of demands and consequently became a source of conflict when the state fell short of satisfying them. Nevertheless, squatter movements and particularly their leaders are generally far from radical and take care not to overstep institutional boundaries (Dietz 1980, 124ff.), which considerably limits their ability to devise independent strategies. According to Dietz, this is due to the fact that they are rational actors who believe in the possibility of incremental change via the institutions and know that moderate demands are more likely to be met than extreme ones (Dietz 1980, 166ff.).

In his analysis of urban populism in Latin America, Castells (Castells 1983, 173-212) echoes many of the views first expressed by Collier, Dietz, and others, while adding some valuable insights into the relations between squatter movements and political parties, particularly those on the left of the political

spectrum. Castells' principal argument, which he draws from a number of case studies undertaken during the 1970s,²³ is that the "dependency of squatter settlements upon state policies and the heteronomy of the squatter movement vis-à-vis the political system" is rooted in "the vulnerability of [the squatters'] status as urban dwellers. Without the state's tolerance, or without some effective political support, they would not even have the right to their physical presence in the city" (Castells 1983, 211). With respect to the Peruvian capital, Lima, for example, Castells explains how different regimes up to 1976 controlled and coopted various squatter movements, essentially following David Collier's line of reasoning, but going so far as to describe these movements as "a manipulated mob, changing form one political ideology to another in exchange for the delivery (or promise) of land, housing, and services" (Castells 1983, 193).

In the case of Santiago de Chile, Castells puts more emphasis on the role played by leftist political parties. Essentially, Castells contends that leftist political parties effectively created the squatter movements that existed in Santiago de Chile before the coup d'état of 1973, by organizing land invasions and by establishing squatter settlements around the Chilean capital.²⁴ In order to do so, leftist political parties used the political conjuncture to their advantage. On the one hand, the failure of the ambitious urban reform programme under the Frei government had resulted in the politicization of the urban popular sector, without providing the promised solutions to the problems of housing, urban services, etc. Consequently, leftist political parties found ideal conditions to broaden their

support. On the other hand, state repression of land invasions subsided considerably as the 1970 presidential elections approached, given the fact that the ruling Christian Democrats were also vying for support from the popular sector.

After the 1970 election victory of the Unidad Popular, the various leftist parties consolidated their hold on the respective settlements they controlled and used them as mobilization reservoirs for their own political initiatives. As a result, "the participation of the *campamentos* in the political process very closely followed the political line dominating in each settlement" (Castells 1983, 201), often replicating the divisions within the Chilean left.²³ This had some problematic consequences for the settlements. Most importantly, the fact that the leadership of the respective settlements entertained close links to only one political party and distanced themselves from others, reduced their capacity to broadly mobilize the settlement population around shared goals and amplified existing political divisions within the settlements. Mass participation in the squatters' movement came to depend on whether the Chilean left could bridge its internal differences and gather around a common cause, which proved to be less and less feasible towards the end of the Allende regime. When the divisions within the Chilean left came to a head after October 1972, "each sector of the *pobladores* aligned with its corresponding political faction, and the squatters' movement disappeared as an identifiable entity" (Castells 1983, 208).

Taken together, the evidence presented by the authors discussed above would appear to practically rule out any possibility for urban popular movements

to have an impact on social or political change. If one follows their arguments, urban popular movements appear virtually incapable of developing autonomous collective identities and of devising independent strategies, and their cooptation by the state or by political parties seems all but inevitable. Yet, while the case these authors present might seem compelling with respect to previous, particularly authoritarian, regimes, it is less so with regard to the democratic regimes that are now dominant in Latin America. In fact, there exist at least three reasons to believe that the dynamic of the relations between urban popular movements, political parties, and the state has profoundly changed since the return to democratic rule.

For one thing, notwithstanding the caveats that were discussed above, the collective identities of urban popular movements appear to be considerably stronger now than they were during much of the authoritarian period. As a result of their conflictive experiences with authoritarian regimes and not least due to their involvement in the pro-democracy mobilizations that were often instrumental in bringing authoritarian rule to an end, urban popular movements now seem to be much less willing to let themselves be coopted in order to obtain material benefits, and they place a higher value on their own autonomy. In addition, the new social and political practices that were developed by these movements in connection with the emergence of a *vecino* identity, and which were later supplemented by demands for greater institutional participation, differ markedly from established authoritarian and clientelist practices.

Second, the fall of the authoritarian regimes and the concomitant demise of the developmentalist state led to a breakdown of state hegemony over society, which lessened the dependence of urban popular movements on the central state apparatus for the realization of their principal demands. Most notably, the demise of the developmentalist state led to a diminished role of the central state in several policy fields that were of crucial importance for urban popular movements, such as urban development and social policy. As a consequence, urban popular movements were no longer confronted with only one dominant interlocutor, namely, the central state apparatus, but rather, they now faced several state institutions operating at different levels, as well as the newly invigorated political parties and a variety of other actors, such as NGOs or the Church. For different reasons, all these actors were interested in securing the support of urban popular movements. While the need to interact with more than one interlocutor is undoubtedly a more complicated and time-consuming task than having to deal only with the central state bureaucracy and might therefore prove to be demanding for the negotiation skills of some urban popular movements, it should also enable them to take advantage of frictions between other actors and thus enlarge their own political breathing space. If successful, urban popular movements would not only be able to obtain increased resources from different sides, but more importantly, they would avoid becoming dependent on one specific actor by striking multiple alliances.

Finally, while the return to democratic rule severed existing links between

authoritarian regimes and urban popular movements, it also resulted in the creation of new institutional channels for political participation, which have substantially altered the way in which urban popular movements relate to other actors. Most importantly, the democratization of local governments and the considerable increase in their powers and responsibilities due to political decentralization, resulted in the creation of new institutional channels for direct popular participation at the local level. The creation of such channels was particularly important from the perspective of urban popular movements, since these movements typically operate at the local level and therefore interact chiefly with this level of government. While the possibility to voice their concerns via institutional channels made it less tempting for urban popular movements to entertain clientelist relations with others in order to attain their goals, it may also enable them to project their democratic potential from the grassroots into the political arena and thereby contribute to political change. In more specific terms, the participation of urban popular movements in local political institutions may act as a counterweight to current clientelist and authoritarian practices, as well as exert a democratizing influence on other actors, particularly political parties. I will discuss the concrete ways of how such a project could be implemented, as well as the considerable obstacles that it faces, in more detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 2

LINKING THE STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY: DECENTRALIZATION AND THE PARTICIPATION OF URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The idea that was raised at the end of the previous chapter, namely, that political decentralization and increased popular participation at the local level can make local political institutions more democratic, as well as exert a democratizing influence on other political actors, is of course not entirely new. Similar ideas have been expressed in the literature on decentralization and local government in the third world for quite some time (Conyers 1983, 1984, 1986; Mawhood 1987). The intellectual roots of these ideas are deep; they can be traced back to the democratic city-states of Greek antiquity (Dahl 1989; Dahl and Tufte 1973) or, more recently, to 19th century liberal democratic thought, especially to de Tocqueville's musings on citizen participation in the towns of New England (de Tocqueville 1945) and to the writings of J.S. Mill (1912). In the Latin American context, however, popular participation in local government and decentralization are both relatively novel issues, which at least in part can be attributed to the long-standing obscurity of local governments in the region, together with an overwhelming presence of strong centralist states and a relative weakness of civil society.¹

There are some strong indications that this situation is beginning to change. While popular participation and decentralization have long been popular with the

international development establishment,² as well as with a relatively small circle of left-leaning academics and politicians sympathetic to popular movements. as of late, they have also become part of the policies of many governments in the region in the wake of the transitions to democracy. Not only that, the connotation of these terms has slowly begun to change: decentralization and popular participation are no longer regarded merely as techniques to improve the administrative efficiency of government bureaucracies or to ensure the efficient delivery of development projects. More and more, their social and political implications are being taken into account, frequently giving rise to the hope that decentralization and popular participation can be a means to achieve social justice and economic equity and to entrench and broaden democratic change.

At least until now, however, such hopes have often been left unfulfilled, for two main reasons. First, not enough attention has been paid to the fact that an increase in the political participation of the popular masses will inevitably raise the issue of governance, or in other words, the question of power. In order to be genuine, such participation would have to produce a real augmentation in the influence of the poor on the political decision making process, a project which in all likelihood would run into stiff resistance from entrenched elites unwilling to give up their privileges. Furthermore, increased *political* participation might very well intensify long-standing demands for a more equitable distribution of economic resources and the satisfaction of basic social and economic needs, and it could even result in calls for more fundamental political change that would

threaten the political stability of the regime.

Second, existing obstacles to increased popular participation, be it at the local level or elsewhere, have often been underestimated. Decentralization schemes are often hampered by the unwillingness of the central government and its agencies to give up some of their prerogatives. As a result, such schemes often do not go beyond deconcentration at the highest administrative level,³ that is, they merely shift around responsibilities within the central bureaucracy and stop short of effectively devolving decision making powers to lower levels of government. Furthermore, even decentralization initiatives that are in fact designed to devolve power to regional and local governments can have unintended effects, in the sense that they strengthen traditional local elites who have no interest in furthering the participation of the poor. Thus, decentralization might actually lead to a decrease in the political clout of the lower strata, and corrective action by the central government might be necessary. Finally, and most importantly, local elites, local governments and other actors operating on the local scene, such as political parties and even some NGOs, have often been prone to coopt popular movements in order to further their own agendas. The possibilities for doing so are endless: popular movements can be made dependent on the resources a particular organization provides or they can be enticed to establish clientelist links to one or several other actors in order to satisfy some of their demands and thereby compromise their autonomy. Alternatively, popular movements can be integrated partially into participatory programmes, for

example, as a source of cheap labour in the phase of project execution, without being given a real say in the direction these programmes take.

The issues raised above have not gone unnoticed in the literature on popular participation and decentralization, yet, they still await a satisfactory solution. In fact, they point to an old quandary facing popular and other social movements, namely, the dilemma of autonomy and cooptation. This dilemma, which was dealt with in more detail in Chapter 1, can be briefly be re-stated as follows: Should popular movements limit themselves to applying pressure on the political system from the outside, while keeping a distance from other actors in order to preserve their autonomy, or should they take advantage of opportunities to participate in political institutions and forge alliances with others in order to maximize their impact, but at the same time risk being coopted? There are no clear-cut answers to these questions. What I am going to argue in this chapter is not that popular participation in local governments is always ineffectual or leads to cooptation, in other words, that it is a dead end and should therefore be abandoned. Nor am I saying that complete autonomy is the course to take since in all likelihood, this would lead popular movements into marginalization and insignificance. Rather, what I am suggesting is that popular participation at the local level takes place in a very complex environment which is full of pitfalls. Consequently, popular movements will have to be very careful when choosing their course of action if they want to achieve some of their objectives and at the same time maintain their autonomy, not to speak of possibly exerting a

democratizing influence on other actors.

Seen against this background, the main purpose of the present chapter will be to examine more closely the conditions under which decentralization processes and local governments can indeed be vehicles for democratic political change. In particular, it will be asked to what extent decentralization policies can create or even widen political openings for greater political participation of the popular sectors at the local level, and under what conditions they are likely to serve the opposite purpose, namely, the integration and cooptation of the popular majorities into a political system that essentially remains unchanged. I will argue that up to now, the decentralization literature has failed to give a satisfactory answer to these questions, due to its failure to adequately account for the overall political setting in which decentralization schemes take place, as well as its reluctance to address the necessarily conflictive relations between popular movements operating at the local level, political parties, and state institutions. Following the critique of the decentralization literature, I will attempt to redress these shortcomings by proposing an "inventory" of possible courses of action for urban popular movements.

Decentralization and Popular Participation at the Local Level

Before proceeding, it will be helpful to take a brief look at the way in which the notion of popular participation itself has been employed in the literature. Despite the fact that the term has frequently been used

indiscriminately, often glossing over important differences in meaning, it is obvious that such differences exist and that they have a profound impact when the concept is used in connection with analyses of popular participation in local government.

Broadly speaking, two different usages of the term popular participation can be distinguished.⁴ One such usage sees popular participation primarily as a means to an end, that is, as a tool to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of development projects, public works programmes, and the like. In another, quite different sense, popular participation is defined not pragmatically in a means-ends fashion, but as an end in itself. Here, popular participation is interpreted politically; it is viewed as a lever to upset the established division of power and resources and to promote the empowerment of the lower strata. As was mentioned before, the former view has long been dominant among governments and international aid organizations, despite recent inroads by the second perspective, whereas the latter has been more popular with grassroots organizations, NGOs, and leftist politicians outside the political establishment. The two views led to two very different approaches to popular participation in local government, which I will examine in the following.

The Pragmatist Approach to Decentralization

The first approach to be discussed, which I will call the pragmatist school⁵ (Cheema and Rondinelli 1983; Rondinelli and Wilson 1987; Rondinelli,

McCullough, and Johnson 1989; Rondinelli 1990) approaches the issue of popular participation in local government in the context of decentralization processes. Primarily, this school is concerned with the way in which decentralization can contribute to local and regional development, and more specifically, how decentralization can improve the provision and maintenance of public services and infrastructure in developing countries (Rondinelli, McCullough, and Johnson 1989, 57). Essentially, decentralization is viewed here as a policy tool that can be used by the state in order to achieve these ends, often aided in these efforts by international organizations. However, despite the fact that most protagonists of the pragmatist school effectively adopt a top-down perspective, they generally consider popular participation to be crucial for decentralization to achieve its ends. In this context, it is emphasized that local voluntary organizations need to play a role in order for decentralization programmes to be successful. Apart from mobilizing local resources, these organizations are considered important intermediaries between the state and the local population, providing invaluable information about the target communities and allowing decision makers to better focus their policy measures. Therefore, state officials in charge of decentralization programmes are well advised to enlist their support in order to better tailor these programmes to the conditions at hand (Cheema 1983).

The political context in which decentralization takes place is not completely disregarded by the pragmatist school, but it certainly takes a back seat to the school's heavy emphasis on its "technical, spatial, and administrative aspects"

(Rondinelli 1990, 496). This preoccupation with the practical aspects of decentralization reflects a fundamental belief on the part of the pragmatist school that it is flaws in the planning and execution of decentralization programmes, and not the social, economic, cultural or political environment in which these programmes are set, which ultimately determine their success or failure. Consequently, any improvements made in this regard would greatly improve the effectiveness of these decentralization schemes.

The pragmatist school's emphasis on the design and implementation of decentralization programmes is most clearly expressed in the ambitious attempt by Rondinelli and his colleagues to develop a "political-economy framework" of decentralization (Rondinelli, McCullough, and Johnson 1989). Essentially, what Rondinelli and his colleagues are proposing is a meta-approach to decentralization in the sense of a universal model that can be used to design and implement decentralization programmes and to advise governments, independently of the specific political, social, and economic context. Their framework, which draws on public choice theory as well as policy analysis while trying to overcome their respective shortcomings, purports to include all variables relevant for the design of policy interventions and instruments as well as for the evaluation of their successes or failures. The most important of these variables are: the characteristics of local goods and services as well as their users, the existing institutional structure of service use, different financing arrangements and organizational forms of decentralization, as well as the feasibility of alternative

institutional arrangements for service delivery (Rondinelli, McCullough, and Johnson 1989, 64-65). Armed with such an "optimizing blueprint" (Fisette 1990, 33), the policy maker would have to do nothing more than fine-tune it to fit her needs, among other things, by determining the characteristics of the target community, selecting the proper policy instruments and identifying possible obstacles to their implementation.

The many studies of decentralization undertaken from the pragmatist perspective, often under the auspices or with the support of international organizations,⁶ have the undeniable merit of having accumulated a wealth of empirical evidence on the practical problems and obstacles that decentralization schemes can run up against. However, numerous critics have chided the pragmatist approach for disregarding the impact of politics on decentralization, or at least for relegating politics to the status of an "environmental variable." Such a separation between a policy instrument which is approached from a technical perspective and thought to be politically neutral, and political and other "environmental variables" that impinge on it from the outside, is unsound. Decentralization is *by definition* political, since it concerns the "territorial distribution of power" (Smith 1985, 1). Consequently, all of the various possible outcomes of decentralization processes are also inherently political, be it the empowerment of the poor, the fortification of the central state apparatus via an improvement of its administrative efficiency and increased outreach to the regions, or the strengthening of entrenched local elites. Obviously, these

outcomes will often be mutually exclusive, since they concern the relative power of different social classes and groups.

It follows from the above that it is impossible to view the material contents of decentralization policies in isolation from the technical aspects of programme design and implementation and vice versa. On the contrary, the actual goals of such policies have to be made clear from the outset, and they have to be made an integral part of the analysis. Principally, this means that one has to ask which social groups are thought to benefit from a given decentralization programme, and whether the success of this programme is likely given the political, social, economic, and cultural environment in which it is set. Failure to ask these questions would make the analysis meaningless, since a decentralization scheme might very well be successful in technical terms, while its material results could be highly undesirable. Furthermore, blindness towards the political and other implications of decentralization policies would make it impossible to understand why and how these policies are frequently used for purposes other than the ones stated, in other words, why they so often "fail," a fact which clearly cannot be attributed exclusively to flaws in their design and implementation.⁷

The pragmatist school's narrow emphasis on the practical problems of programme design and implementation, as well as its failure to adequately account for the political context of decentralization processes, has a profound impact on its treatment of the issue of popular participation. As was mentioned before, the role popular participation plays in the pragmatist view is largely

instrumental: it facilitates decentralization schemes that are planned and executed by state institutions, who are often aided in this by international organizations. Obviously, this perspective also implies that popular participation can easily be limited and controlled from above, since more far-reaching political goals are ruled out from the start. If one adopts such a perspective, it is not unreasonable to assume, as the pragmatist school does, that there will be openings for decentralization and popular participation under any type of regime, especially given the perceived benefits of these policies on administrative efficiency, political stability, and the like. What complicates the picture, however, is the fact that the pragmatist school also voices the hope that decentralization will be able, in the long run, to "strengthen the administrative capacity, and eventually the political influence, of larger numbers of organizations in developing countries, . . . [which] may create the potential for wider participation in economic and political processes" (Rondinelli 1990, 496). Eventually, such a widening of economic and political participation is likely to question the established distribution of power and resources and to produce serious social and political conflicts, an outcome that cannot be in the interest of the ruling regime.

It is difficult to see how this fundamental contradiction in the pragmatist school's line of argument could be resolved without addressing the political implications of decentralization and popular participation head-on. The reluctance on the part of the pragmatist school to do just that may not be surprising, since many of its protagonists are closely affiliated with international aid organizations

and are therefore hesitant to express views which could be construed as interventions in the internal affairs of recipient countries." Nevertheless, the least that can be said about the pragmatist school is that, as a direct result of its failure to fully account for the political and other implications of decentralization and popular participation, it is unable to provide the crucial link between incremental changes at the local level, which may or may not result from limited and controlled forms of decentralization and popular participation, and the more fundamental changes needed for the empowerment of the popular masses in the true sense of the word.' The second approach to be examined, on the contrary, claims to provide just such a link. I will turn to this approach now.

The Political Approach to Decentralization

Whereas the pragmatist school tends to avoid addressing the political implications of decentralization and focuses on the more immediate aspects of designing and implementing decentralization policies, what I will call the political approach (Boisier 1987, 1991; Borja 1988a, 1988b, 1989a, 1989b; Castells and Borja 1988) puts the political aspects of decentralization at the centre of its analysis. Essentially, the political school sees in decentralization a vehicle for political reform, or more precisely, a means to democratize a state apparatus which is considered the principal roadblock on the way to full democracy. Despite the recent return to representative democracy in most Latin American countries, the political school argues, the state continues to be heavily centralized,

permeated by anti-democratic traditions and controlled by the political elites. Under such conditions, representative democracy risks remaining formal and meaningless, since the state apparatus is likely to be used to perpetuate existing power relations as well as social, economic, and regional inequalities. By decentralizing the state apparatus and by opening up new channels for popular participation inside the political system, the political school hopes to infuse it with the democratic potential represented by local and regional movements operating at the level of civil society and thereby create the conditions not only for more equality between the regions, but also for the empowerment of the hitherto excluded popular masses.

There are two ways in which decentralization would achieve these goals (Borja 1988a, 47-48). First, the decentralization of the state apparatus would open the way for a thorough-going administrative reform, by which powers as well as resources would be devolved from the central to lower levels of government. As a result, the dependence of regional and local governments on the central government would greatly decrease, and they would be in a position to identify and meet most of their development needs autonomously. Not only would this help to redress existing regional disparities, but it would also lead to greater administrative efficiency, since lower levels of government are considered more apt at identifying existing problems and needs than higher ones and better capable of administering resources efficiently in addressing them. Furthermore, given their relative proximity to the population, regional and especially local

governments are seen by the political school as potentially more accountable and responsive to its needs.

Second, decentralization would create new avenues for direct popular participation at the base level, supplementing the opportunities for electoral participation provided by representative democracy. The establishment of such new channels for popular participation, which can range from simple consultative mechanisms to elaborate schemes of joint control and decision making, would have important implications. On the one hand, new openings for popular participation would serve as a means for the inclusion of the popular masses into the political system, providing a "practice ground for democracy," and thereby furthering political stability. On the other hand, new participatory mechanisms would allow for more direct input from popular and other social movements (Borja 1989b, 72). Given the democratic and participatory character of these movements, their participation in local institutions would exert a democratizing influence on the administration, helping to counter existing anti-democratic tendencies such as authoritarianism, clientelism, and corruption. Local and regional governments play a crucial role in this regard, since they constitute a sort of meeting place between the state and civil society. Opening up spaces for the demands for democracy, participation, and regional equality emanating from civil society, while at the same time providing new institutional channels to accommodate these demands, local and regional governments are seen as the place where a potential "new social contract" (Boisier 1987, 134) between the

state and civil society can be negotiated.

From a theoretical perspective, the political school consists of an interesting, if at times uneasy, mix of ideas borrowed from 19th century liberal thought on democracy and local government as well as from more recent theories of social and popular movements. The closeness of local governments to the population, their inclination to more direct and egalitarian forms of political participation, as well as the presumed consequences this has on good governance, the political education of the masses, and political stability, are all themes that were first raised by de Tocqueville, J.S. Mill, and Bentham.¹⁰ However, despite these obvious affinities to liberal thought, the political school at the same time breaches its confines by assigning a much greater role to collective action and the participation of popular and other social movements and their participation in the political system. Whereas liberalism is deeply suspicious of the popular masses and allows their participation in the political system only grudgingly and in order to stave off an otherwise inevitable social explosion, the political school agrees with theorists of social and popular movements in that these movements have an independent and crucial contribution to make to the democratization of the state. In other words, while the political school shares some of liberalism's concerns with political integration and stability (Borja 1989b, 72; Castells and Borja 1988, 41), it also considers popular and other social movements to be agents of social and political change, and even welcomes the relative disorder and unpredictability of political life this implies (Borja 1988b, 43). However, the tension between

political stability and social and political change is never fully resolved in the political approach, a point to which I will return below.

In more practical terms, the political approach stresses three principal challenges that have to be met in order for decentralization to achieve its goals (Castells and Borja 1988, 43ff.). First, decentralization has to be sweeping, that is, it must in fact entail a real devolution of powers and resources from the central to lower levels of government. If decentralization remains at the level of a statement of principle, as is often the case, or if it is understood merely in terms of administrative deconcentration or delegation, the discourse of decentralization would likely remain a dead letter and centralist control would hardly decrease. Furthermore, local administrations will have to be modernized quickly in order to be able to cope with their new responsibilities, a tall order given the state of affairs in most Latin American municipalities. Second, the autonomy of lower levels of government has to be guaranteed. In the main, this means that lower levels of government have to be protected against politically motivated interference by the central government and its agencies designed to undermine their powers as well as their resource base. In addition, the relations between local governments and other levels of government would have to be thoroughly reorganized to avoid bureaucratic duplication and bottlenecks as well as potential conflicts over competencies. Third, the autonomy of the agents of popular participation, namely, of local and regional movements, needs to be protected. Apart from a certain willingness on the part of other actors to refrain

from trying to coopt these movements, this would entail the institutionalization of popular participation via the establishment of clear and binding mechanisms (Borja 1988b, 43-44). Whether or not such mechanism for popular participation are in fact established depends principally on the political will of those in power; nevertheless, these mechanisms have to allow for the greatest possible input from popular and other social movements, while at the same time making popular participation independent of the political conjuncture and the support of others, such as political parties or sympathetic local administrations. Entirely symbolical or controlled forms of participation have to be avoided.

Obviously, decentralization thus conceived is an ambitious undertaking that faces numerous obstacles, since it simultaneously challenges existing power relations as well as the established distribution of economic and social resources. Undoubtedly, the fact that the political school makes the political character of decentralization a part of the analysis constitutes a significant advance over the pragmatist approach that was discussed before. However, it cannot come as a surprise that critics of the political school have accused it of being overly sanguine concerning the chances of decentralization to be realized and of underestimating the considerable resistance it would run up against. Likewise, these authors have charged that the analysis of the political school does not go far enough and that it ignores some crucial aspects regarding the political context of decentralization. Most importantly, they contend, the political school tends to idealize local communities and forgets that these communities are usually

characterized by very real differences relating to social class and political power (de Mattos 1989a, 124-125). De Mattos sums up the general thrust of these critiques, accusing the political as well as the pragmatist school, both of which he somewhat too conveniently subsumes under the same *localista* label (de Mattos 1989a), of falling victim to an institutional fetishism which overlooks the fact that political-administrative reforms cannot by themselves change the socioeconomic and political power relations of the societies they are implanted in (de Mattos 1989b, 29). Two variants of this argument merit a closer look.

On the one hand, several critics, among them de Mattos himself, have argued that decentralization policies are often part of neoliberal restructuring strategies aiming to dismantle the hard-won political and economic independence of third world countries (de Mattos 1989a, 1989b; Slater 1989; Coraggio 1989). For these authors, the notion of decentralization can be easily adapted to the neoliberal ideology of less state and privatization, which intends to roll back the capacity of the central state to define and implement national development strategies as well as to foster socioeconomic change. As a result, decentralization would effectively help to break down the defense of third world nation states against growing penetration by multinationals and increased control by international lending agencies, and it would further the dismantling of what remains of the welfare state in these countries. Without the protection by a strong central state, localities and regions would face this onslaught defenceless, which would erode their development potential, increase social disparities, as well

as further limit possibilities for popular participation.

It is not unreasonable to assume that decentralization can in fact have such dire consequences; however, it does not follow that this would necessarily be the case under any circumstance. According to the available evidence, the impact of international linkages on decentralization and vice versa seems to be more complex, with varying consequences depending on the concrete situation in a given country. Boisier, for instance, has argued that changes in the international accumulation of capital and structural changes in the international economy can actually *increase* the potential for regional and local autonomy. For one thing, Boisier contends, while new linkages to the world economy may very well result in an invasion by multinationals and economic concentration, this would also spark a "local and regional reaction" (Boisier 1987, 140). Furthermore, recent technological changes allowing for the globalization of production and a departure from economies of scale could lead to a deconcentration of productive activity which would favour the regions and localities. In the final analysis, given the absence of a widely accepted general theory dealing with these issues, the question of whether the international context furthers or hampers decentralization as proposed by the political school cannot be decided definitively and will have to be studied further. In any case, for several reasons that cannot be laid out here, the return to a state-centred development model of the past, which de Mattos and other critics seem to be advocating, seems highly improbable." Consequently, there might be no feasible alternative to decentralization.

A second and more profound criticism that has been levelled against the political approach, as well as against the pragmatist school, charges that decentralization has often been little more than a "mirage" and a "myth," and that it has served as an ideological "mask" disguising other political projects (Slater 1989, 510ff.). In other words, while decentralization policies may be couched in a jargon of regional equality, democratization, and popular participation, in reality, these policies are often little more than a welcome tool in the hands of the political and economic elites to further their own interests. As we have seen above when discussing the pragmatist approach, the danger that decentralization schemes are employed for other than their purported ends is indeed very real, especially when decentralization is understood exclusively in technical terms. The political school, on the contrary, not only recognizes the political character of decentralization in principal, but goes on to name three specific obstacles on the way to its realization. Nevertheless, according to critics like de Mattos, the political approach contains a similar problem as the pragmatist school, since it puts too much faith in the idea that social and political change can be implemented via the institutions. Consequently, while the this approach at least recognizes that decentralization faces important *political* obstacles, in the sense that it can run into politically motivated resistance and that it can be stunted and deformed (Borja 1988a, 48-49), it can never convincingly explain how these obstacles can actually be overcome.

For the critics, there are two related ways of dealing with these problems.

On the one hand, the political content of decentralization would have to be made much more explicit, by further distancing it from the idea of a purely administrative reform and by linking it more directly to an increase in the participation of popular movements and the empowerment of the popular classes (Slater 1989, 522). Additionally, and more importantly, the idea of decentralization as well as the local and regional movements supporting it would have to be integrated into a more universal political project designed to promote the interests of the lower classes as well as to propose a comprehensive political alternative to neoliberal and other conservative projects (Coraggio 1989, 520-521). In more concrete terms, this would mean that the political left would take up the banner and lead the struggle for decentralization and that local and regional movements would form an alliance with leftist political parties and possibly other members of the leftist block, such as trade unions. The idea of decentralization as well as the social forces advocating it would thus be incorporated into a political project of the left, a project which is often referred to as popular democracy or *autogobierno popular*.

The idea of such a coalition between locally and regionally-based popular movements and the political left has obvious appeal, for several reasons. For one thing, it would be hard to refute the critics' contention that without political support at higher levels, decentralization schemes cannot overcome the considerable resistance they face. As we saw above, decentralization in the sense of a real devolution of powers and resources to lower levels of government as

well as an increase of political participation from below is a political undertaking that *by definition* challenges the established distribution of power and resources as well as the privileges of the entrenched elites and their control of the central state apparatus. It follows that at least to some degree, political change at the national level is a precondition for decentralization to succeed. Since local and regional movements alone are too weak to enforce this kind of political change, an alliance with political parties becomes a necessity. In fact, it might very well be the only possible way to prevent the political and economic elites from blocking decentralization schemes outright or from exploiting these schemes for other than their intended goals.

Second, by arguing that popular movements have to be integrated into a broader political alliance, the critics highlight the particular importance of political parties as a link between the political system and popular and other social movements operating at the level of civil society. As we saw in the first chapter with regard to urban-based popular movements, due to the fact that these movements often emerge as a reaction to immediate and fairly particularistic concerns, they frequently lack continuity as well as organizational and programmatic coherence. As a consequence, urban popular movements have generally been unable not only to attain a higher level of *centralización*, or cooperation with one another, but also to identify a set of core objectives that a majority of urban popular movements would share, as well as to devise a mutually agreed-upon strategy of how to achieve these objectives politically.

Despite their own obvious weaknesses, political parties usually have less difficulty in devising such strategies and can therefore project the concerns of urban popular movements into the political arena and represent them there.

In so doing, political parties would not only bolster the more immediate demands of urban popular movements for an improvement of urban living conditions. They would also ensure that the movements' more far-reaching concerns related to a thorough democratization of the political system and an end to authoritarian practices would transcend the local sphere and find repercussions at higher levels of the political system, where they would ideally become part of a more universal project of social and political change. Linking urban popular movements and their concerns to such an overarching project is indeed crucial, since they would otherwise remain confined to the local context and continue to be relatively insignificant. Partial successes at the local level would do little to change this, in fact, they might even make meaningful political change at higher levels more difficult. As was mentioned previously, limited or token forms of decentralization and popular participation are often intended to neutralize potential sources of conflict by deflecting them from the politically more sensitive central sphere to the localities. If successful, such policies would effectively help to stabilize the status quo, instead of opening the way for more far-reaching political changes higher up.

Finally, the critics of the political approach are correct in portraying the political left as the most likely ally of popular movements. There exist clear

parallels between the interests of the respective partners in such an alliance, and by joining forces, they would undoubtedly give both the push for decentralization and the political project of the left increased clout. Strengthened by the political support popular movements can provide, the left could indeed be in a position to enlarge existing openings or even to create the institutional space needed for implementing far-reaching decentralist reforms, as well as to overcome the political resistance to them. Furthermore, the left might indeed prove willing and capable to create new mechanisms for popular participation and to tolerate or even encourage a stronger and more independent role of popular movements in them.

However, the idea of an alliance between popular movements and the left also contains an obvious problem, which mirrors some inherent difficulties of the political approach and which the critics fail to mention. In the main, this problem relates to the question of how potential conflicts within the alliance would be resolved, as well as how the divergent interests of the various partners would be negotiated and reconciled. Given their own political sympathies for the left, some critics apparently find it tempting, or politically expedient, to assume that such a potential for conflict does not exist, since the interests of the respective partners are somehow considered to be identical. Obviously, such a view is highly unrealistic, since it glosses over crucial questions such as who dominates the alliance, who makes the central decisions concerning the political direction it takes, etc.

Even in an optimistic scenario, the left would likely be the dominant partner in an alliance with locally or regionally-based popular movements. Given existing discrepancies in terms of organizational resources, ideological and programmatic coherence, etc. that were mentioned before, it is highly probable that the left would be in a position to determine how decentralization would fit into its overall political project, as well as to define the extent and the forms popular participation would take. Even if the organizational autonomy and integrity of popular movements are respected, which depends to a considerable extent on the strength of the movements' identities, but also on a certain willingness on the part of the left to do so, this would mean that popular movements would not have much direct input into the formulation of its political project. Rather, they would be presented with a certain model of popular participation, complete with advantages and drawbacks, which they could either take or leave. In practice, such a model of popular participation presented by the left would not be the only one; other political forces vying for the popular movement support are likely to present their own.

Moreover, if the historical record is any indication, the left will not always play the role of a benevolent partner; in fact, the left has as spotty a record as other political forces when it comes to respecting the autonomy of its allies. As we saw in Chapter 1, especially in the 1970s, the left was prone to dominate the popular fronts it formed with urban popular movements, based on a vanguard ideology derived from orthodox Marxist-Leninism. While there have been some

indications as of late that this attitude has begun to change.¹² the old dynamic of autonomy and cooptation is by no means a thing of the past; on the contrary, it is an integral part of any political alliance. In the context of decentralization policies, a loss of autonomy for local and regional movements would obviously have grave consequences, since these movements would also lose their potential for inducing democratic political change. As a result, the whole character of the project of decentralization could change, and local and regional movements would risk to be reduced to the same subordinate and dependent role they commonly play in decentralization schemes dominated by the right.

In only slightly different terms, the political approach to decentralization contains a similar problem as the argument advanced by its leftist critics. The political approach, too, is based on the assumption that local and regional movements alone are too weak to overcome the resistance against decentralization and popular participation, and that they therefore have to be propped up by benevolent allies.¹³ Boisier, for example, argues that successful decentralization "implies the need to 'construct' the region in social terms" (Boisier 1987, 143), by which he not only means the creation of structures of regional self-government, but also the development of *social actors* capable of self-administration and of developing a regional identity. For Boisier, the construction of such social actors, or at least the task of bringing them closer together, presents a "challenge to politicians and social scientists" (Boisier 1987, 135). Borja, for his part, insists that sympathetic state bureaucrats play a crucial

facilitating role in the implementation of decentralization policies and the creation of new spaces for popular participation. In fact, while both issues have been put on the agenda by social movements operating at the level of civil society, they can only come to fruition if they are backed up by the "political will" (Borja 1988a, 50) of a "democratic, honest, and efficient" administration (Borja 1988b, 26). The problem with such an argument is of course its inherent voluntarism: the political will of state bureaucrats, social scientists, or politicians can change, and neither Boisier nor Borja can explain why these allies would choose to respect and encourage the autonomy of popular movements instead of trying to control and dominate them. Borja himself at one point expresses a willingness to do just that: popular participation, he argues, should be restricted to consultation, information, and cooperation in the local administration, but it should not be extended to decision making, which is the prerogative of elected representatives (Castells and Borja 1988, 47).

Conclusion: An Inventory of Possible Courses of Action for Urban Popular Movements

The conclusions that can be drawn from the foregoing discussion apply to locally or regionally-based popular movements in a more general sense, but they are particularly relevant for urban popular movements. In brief terms, despite the widespread enthusiasm for the purported potential of decentralization and popular participation to contribute to the democratization of the state and the empowerment of the popular masses, the participation of urban popular

movements in Latin American local governments continues to run into some familiar problems. Urban popular movements that want to become involved in local politics are still wading into a minefield in which their participation risks to be either blocked or instrumentalized for other ends, and in which they themselves are likely to be coopted by stronger allies and thereby lose their autonomy. In other words, urban popular movements are still faced with the old dilemma of autonomy or cooptation. On the face of it, the return to democratic rule seems to have done little to change this, however, there is also some reason to believe that urban popular movements have been able to increase their own room to manoeuvre. In order to explore this question further, I will develop the contours of an "inventory" of possible courses of action for urban popular movements.

Basically, urban popular movements have four alternatives with respect to the question of whether or not they should participate in local government, none of which are mutually exclusive. First, while total independence and the construction of an autonomous social project from the grassroots is not feasible, as was explained in Chapter 1, urban popular movements can decide against institutionalized participation and alliances with others and instead try to put pressure on state institutions from the outside. This would mostly take the form of more or less spontaneous marches and mass mobilizations, since the resources and organizational capacities of urban popular movements are often limited, although at least in theory, it could also take the form of public relations

campaigns and other ways of influencing public opinion. Contacts with other actors would be restricted, with the possible exception of links to other popular movements and efforts to devise joint campaigns and strategies. As their main advantage over institutional participation, such pressure tactics would facilitate the defense of movement autonomy, precisely because contacts with others and therefore opportunities for cooptation are minimized. On the other hand, popular mobilizations often yield relatively few results, either because urban popular movements alone are too weak to extract substantial concessions from the state, or because they can be fairly easily repressed if their protests threaten to get out of hand. Ironically, this lack of practical results, which is associated with the political isolation of urban popular movements, actually heightens the likelihood of their cooptation. For many urban popular movements (or at least their leaders), it will be tempting to give up their autonomy, along with their potential for social and political change, in exchange for the satisfaction of certain demands and the establishment of clientelist links to influential patrons. On the whole, the most likely outcome of a strategy that relies exclusively on mass mobilizations outside the political system appears to be the marginalization of urban popular movements themselves. While they might be able to defend their organizational autonomy, they will not be able to achieve their goals, and their ability to effect political change in the sense of a democratization of the state and of political parties will be close to nil.

A second option open to urban popular movements would be to make use

of available options for institutionalized participation at the local level, but to simultaneously try to infiltrate political parties and/or state institutions in order to wield influence from within. If successful, such a strategy would enable at least some representatives of urban popular movements to rise to leadership positions within the political system, which could offer them a chance of achieving changes on a scale that would go beyond the often very specific demands of individual urban popular movements. The political parties of the left as well as local governments in popular neighbourhoods appear to be suitable vehicles for such a strategy. However, one main problem with this strategy is that political parties and state institutions are often impenetrable for lower class people. Furthermore, even if some urban popular movement leaders manage to overcome this initial hurdle, their overall impact will often be fairly limited, and the strategy could even backfire on the movements themselves. Many former leaders of urban popular movements have proved incapable of resisting the temptations associated with a position commanding influence and prestige, and have demonstrated the same authoritarian and personalist behaviour as "traditional" politicians. At the very least, these leaders would risk becoming alienated from their bases, and they would find it very difficult to juggle the different, and sometimes competing, loyalties to their movement, political party, and public office. Consequently, while not without potential benefits, an approach that wants to influence the policies of state institutions and of political parties by strategically placing urban popular movement leaders inside of them,

certainly has its limits.

Obviously, then, in addition to making use of existing openings for popular participation and trying to penetrate state institutions or political parties, urban popular movements will have to form alliances with other political actors, if they want to maximize their own influence. As was explained above, this third course of action has a number of distinct advantages. By allying themselves with other political actors, and especially with the political left, urban popular movements could amplify their own influence and gain more clout in the pursuit of their demands. Furthermore, such coalitions could make it easier to expand existing institutional spaces for popular participation at the local level, and they could help to overcome the particularism of many urban popular movements, by integrating their concerns into a more universal political project. At the same time, however, this strategy also bears some significant risks for urban popular movements, namely, that of losing their autonomy and simultaneously, their democratic potential. As we have seen, urban popular movements are often the weaker partner in alliances with other actors, given their organizational shortcomings and lack of resources, and political parties in particular tend to set the agenda of these coalitions, as well as to determine their overall orientation. As a consequence, alliances with other actors could effectively pave the way for the absorption or, more commonly in practice, the cooptation of urban popular movements. In the first scenario, urban popular movements would cease to exist as a distinguishable entity, while political parties would take up their concerns to

a greater or lesser degree, whereas in the second scenario, urban popular movements would lose their autonomy and become dependent support bases of a particular political party.

To counteract these dangers, urban popular movements could opt for a fourth alternative, namely, they could decide to form coalitions not only with one privileged ally, but with several other actors *simultaneously*. The fact that a multitude of political actors are now present on the local scene can be attributed to the return to democratic rule and constitutes a fundamental difference to the authoritarian period. The main benefit of such a strategy would be that all of these actors have specific strengths to offer, which can be exploited at the same time. As was explained before, political parties, for example, can integrate urban popular movements and their concerns into broader political projects and give them access to the political system. State institutions, like local governments or the agencies of the central government, can provide resources, whereas NGOs have a particular strength in capacity building, linking strategies, and lobbying. While some of these actors have a true interest in the promotion of urban popular movements and their concerns, they obviously also have their own agendas, for example, the building of a support base for a political party or an individual politician, or the legitimizing of an NGO in the eyes of donor agencies. Therefore, to avoid being instrumentalized and becoming dependent on any one of these allies, urban popular movements must be mindful to maintain some distance to all of them, by forging *multiple* alliances, by carefully balancing the

cooptive pressures put on them from various sides, and by trying to take advantage of the conflicting interests of various potential allies.

Although not a pretty picture, this strategy seems to be the most promising of the four. Multiple alliances with a variety of other actors are probably essential to safeguard the relative autonomy of urban popular movements, and they can be useful to enlarge opportunities for popular participation in an unfavourable environment. Despite their effectiveness as a defensive strategy, however, such multiple alliances cannot replace a political coalition with a principal ally. As was explained above, urban popular movements have to be part of a more universal political project, most likely one that is advanced by the left, if their potential for political change is to be fully realized. Whether or not urban popular movements will succeed in getting their voices heard, while at the same time weathering repression and fending off attempts at cooptation, will depend to a considerable extent on their skills at bargaining and negotiating with others. At the same time, urban popular movements will have to be careful to preserve their own integrity and autonomy, by strengthening their collective identities and practices, and most importantly, by demonstrating a greater aptitude to join ranks and to unite around some commonly shared concerns.

PART II

INTRODUCTION TO PART II

The previous two chapters have furnished a theoretical framework for analyzing the participation of urban popular movements in local government. The main elements of this framework can briefly be recapitulated as follows. In the first chapter, it was argued that urban popular movements harbour a democratic potential, which is contained in the collective identities of their participants, as well as in their social, cultural, and political practices. The significance of this democratic potential derives from the fact that under certain conditions, it can serve as a resource to democratize other political actors, particularly political parties, and to render local political institutions more democratic and more efficient. At the same time, as was explained in the second chapter, the realization of this democratic potential is conditional on effective political decentralization and the creation or enlargement of institutional openings for popular participation at the local level. Furthermore, in order to overcome their various limitations, urban popular movements have to form alliances with other political actors, such as political parties. Such alliances are indispensable to project the democratic potential of urban popular movements into the political arena; however, they also expose these movements to cooptive pressures from various sides. It was argued that multiple alliances with a variety of other actors could help to counteract these pressures, making urban popular movements less dependent on any one actor in particular, while at the same time protecting their autonomy as well as their innovative character.

The purpose of the following chapters will be to apply these theoretical insights to an empirical case study of popular participation at various levels of local government in Lima, Peru, from 1980 to the early 1990s. More specifically, the focus will lie on the ways in which urban popular movements in Lima interrelated with other actors operating at the local level, particularly leftist political parties and local governments. This choice of case study requires some justification, which I will give in the following.

To begin with, there are at least three compelling reasons for examining the relevance of the theoretical framework in the Peruvian context. First, Peru is the country that arguably has the richest tradition of popular movement activity in Latin America. After a long period of relative obscurity, popular movements entered the political scene in full force in the early 1970s and have since established themselves as a social and, albeit to a lesser degree, a political actor in their own right. Initially helped along by the reformist policies of the authoritarian regime under General Velasco and later part of a leftist-led alliance against military rule, popular movements have since stepped out of the shadow of other actors and by and large been able to maintain their independence. Most recently, popular movements have been crucial in organizing the struggle for material survival of a popular sector that was hardest-hit by the economic crisis of the 1980s and 1990s, and they have been one of the few organized responses of civil society against the terrorist and authoritarian project of Sendero Luminoso. Given this history, it is not unreasonable to expect the development

of relatively strong identity structures and the entrenchment of new social and cultural practices that were described in Chapter 1.

Second, the democratic regime in Peru is one of the least consolidated in all of Latin America. Even before the partial suspension of democratic rights and freedoms following Alberto Fujimori's *autogolpe* of April 1992 and the subsequent adoption of a new constitution that attributes a disproportionate weight to the executive vis-à-vis the legislature and the jurisdiction, the weakness of Peruvian political institutions was evident. Due to a variety of factors, such as the persistence of authoritarian and clientelist traditions, wide-spread corruption and bureaucratic inefficiency, as well as the persistent attacks on democratic institutions by both Sendero Luminoso and the military operating in the emergency zones, Peruvian democracy has been under constant pressure from various angles since the return to civilian rule. In addition, political parties in Peru have so far failed to perform their function as links between civil society and the state. With the partial exception of APRA, they are weakly structured and insufficiently anchored in civil society, and many are often little more than promotional vehicles for the political aspirations of their leaders. Lying dormant for most of the time, they usually awake to a brief flurry of activity during electoral campaigns, only to relapse into slumber shortly thereafter. Consequently, the argument advanced in Chapter 2 regarding a possible role of popular movements in the democratization of political institutions and political parties takes on added significance in the Peruvian context. In fact, given the

specific shortcomings of both political institutions and political parties in Peru, as well as the relative strength of popular movements, it is not unjustified to see in popular movements one of the few resources to draw on for democratic consolidation.

Finally, despite its obvious limitations, decentralization in Peru has been more far-reaching than in most other Latin American countries. While it is true that decentralization policies were initially motivated by the exhaustion of state-centred development models, as well as the financial crisis of the central state and its need to divest itself of some of its responsibilities, these policies also increased the stature of local and regional governments and created new openings for popular participation. To a certain degree, powers as well as resources were devolved from the central to lower levels of government. At the same time, new opportunities for direct popular participation were created at the local level that are generally more extensive than in other Latin American countries. Popular movements, particularly urban ones, were quick to move into these "new political spaces" at the grassroots, as they were sometimes called, while actively pushing for their further entrenchment and enlargement. These efforts were strongly supported by a political left that since the 1970s had considered popular movements to be one of its major allies. In sum, at least to some degree, decentralization in Peru seems to have produced the kind of openings for popular participation at the local level that were mentioned in Chapter 2 as preconditions for linking popular movements with the political system in a non-cooptive way.

For a number of reasons, aside from obvious ones relating to the scope of a dissertation, it makes sense to further limit the analysis to the context of the capital city of Lima, and to focus predominantly on the relations between urban popular movements and the political parties of the left. For one thing, urban popular movements are most developed, diverse, and vocal in the capital. Consequently, they are more likely than popular movements elsewhere in Peru to develop the identity structures and the new social and cultural practices that were mentioned before and that make up their democratic potential. Urban popular movements in Lima are also politically more relevant than others, given that Lima dwarfs all other cities in demographic terms, concentrating about one third of the Peruvian population within its city limits, and that it constitutes the undisputed centre of the Peruvian political system. As a result, the activities of urban popular movements and their participation in political institutions in the capital are more likely to have political repercussions than in the provinces.'

With regard to the second point, the left in Peru has traditionally been involved in political alliances with urban popular movements, and, more importantly, it has given stronger indications than other political forces that it would allow urban popular movements to play an independent role in such alliances. Since the early 1970s, when an emerging new left branched out from the rather narrow working class and trade union roots of the established Peruvian left and reached out to the population of urban shantytowns as a new popular base and as an ally in the anti-authoritarian struggle, urban popular movements and the

urban popular sector have figured prominently in the political strategies of the Peruvian left. Furthermore, leftist-led local governments, particularly in Lima, have championed some of the most extensive experiences with popular participation in Latin America in the 1980s, often stretching legal and institutional provisions to the limit, in order to allow for more input from urban popular movements.

In sum, popular movements in Peru seem to be stronger than in most other countries of Latin America, their possible impact on the democratization of political institutions and other political actors seems more relevant, and both political institutions and political parties appear more open to their input. In reality, however, the picture is of course more complicated. Popular movements in Peru continue to suffer from important weaknesses, their influence on political parties and political institutions is often limited, and openings for popular participation are still fairly narrow. The ambiguity of potential significance and real limitations which characterizes popular movements in Peru will be examined in more detail in the following chapter. This chapter will also serve as a link between the theoretical and the empirical parts of this dissertation by providing some historical background on the development of popular movements, particularly urban-based ones, political parties, and the institutional framework in which they operate.

In more specific terms, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, and Chapter 6 will go on to examine how urban popular movements and the political left actually tried to

make use of new institutional openings for popular participation at the local level in the concrete case of the Peruvian capital, Lima. More to the point, I will concentrate on the relations between these two actors, as well as local government institutions and other players operating in the local arena, and their shifting and often conflictive alliances. Putting the primary focus on these alliances is justified by the crucial role they play in linking urban popular movements with the political system. As was explained in the previous chapter, more so than institutional openings per se, the multiple alliances between urban popular movements and other actors are crucial to fully exploit the possibilities for popular participation created by decentralization policies, as well as to maximize the movements' potential for democratic political change, while at the same time preserving their autonomy.

Not surprisingly, alliances between urban popular movements and leftist political parties in Peru have rarely been smooth and free of contradictions, despite strong historic ties and a certain affinity of their respective goals. Quite frequently, the left has attempted to put its stamp on these alliances, trying to determine their overall direction and sometimes resorting to the same cooptive and manipulative tactics that are employed by other political actors in order to ensure popular movement support. In other words, the well-known dynamic of cooptation and autonomy that generally tends to dominate the relations between popular movements and other social and political actors is also present in the relations between urban popular movements and the Peruvian left. As a result,

urban popular movements in Peru have been forced to make strategic choices in their dealings with the political parties of the left, if they wanted to safeguard their autonomy and avoid being reduced to a passive and dependent mobilization reservoir. The character of these choices, as well as the implications they entail, were described in more detail in the inventory of possible courses of action for urban popular movements that was developed at the end of the previous chapter.

The relations between urban popular movements and the political left in Lima, and in Peru in general, can roughly be subdivided into three distinct phases, which will form the backbone of Chapters 4, 5, and 6, respectively. During a first phase in the early 1980s, the views of the Peruvian left on local government and popular participation were still heavily influenced by a revolutionary vanguard ideology that regarded local governments as "bridgeheads" inside the capitalist system. Popular movements were essentially assigned a subordinate role and reduced to the status of a political mass reservoir to be instructed and led by the vanguard party of the left. Towards the mid-1980s, following the espousal of democracy by large parts of the Peruvian left, a more moderate tendency came to the fore, which advocated a more independent role for urban popular movements and indeed saw in these movements a source of inspiration for the political practices of the left itself. Basically, this tendency regarded local governments as a means to increase the political participation of the previously excluded popular masses and thereby reform a political system that, despite the return to representative democracy, was considered empty and

meaningless. Following the breakup and subsequent decline of the Peruvian left towards the end of the 1980s, the latent tensions between these two orientations within the Peruvian left intensified. As a result, urban popular movements often found themselves confronted by different factions of the left that were increasingly willing to resort to cooptive and manipulative tactics in order to win their support. These tactics were sometimes successful; more frequently, however, popular movements maintained their independence, either by withdrawing into themselves or by intensifying their contacts with other actors in order to improve their own bargaining power. As a consequence of this, the previous two-way alliances between urban popular movements and the left have lost some of their significance and been partially replaced by an increasingly complicated network of multiple alliances that include a growing number of other actors.

My analysis of the forms of direct popular participation that were developed under leftist-led local governments in Lima during the 1980s will be organized around a number of key aspects. First of all, I will examine the political strategies and projects advanced by the Peruvian left in their alliances with urban popular movements. More specifically, I will explain the changing ideological orientations of the left, as well as the particular historical conjunctures in which these projects emerged. Second, I will assess the influence of popular movements in the formulation of these projects, as well as the role popular participation played in them. Put differently, I will show if, and to what extent, these projects

in fact drew on the new social and cultural practices developed by urban popular movements and how far they reflected the concerns of these movements. Third, I will survey the concrete forms and mechanisms of popular participation that actually emerged, seen against the backdrop of institutional, financial, and other constraints. In more explicit terms, I will ask whether popular participation went beyond mere consultation and included taking part in the making of decisions, as well as whether popular participation was institutionalized and thereby made independent of the support of a particular political party or local government. Finally, I will assess the overall impact of the participation of urban popular movements in local politics on the institutional make-up and the political practices of political parties and institutions. Conversely, I will ask whether the direct participation of these movements in local politics made them vulnerable to cooptation by compromising their integrity and autonomy, and if so, how they reacted to such challenges.

Chapter 3

URBAN POPULAR MOVEMENTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, AND THE STATE IN PERU

Urban popular movements in Peru truly came into their own only after 1968; however, their emergence can be traced as far back as the early 1940s. It was intimately related to the onset of mass migrations from the Andean highlands to the cities on the coast and in the interior of the country, following the long-term decline of Andean agriculture. The arrival of ever-increasing numbers of migrants from the *sierra* was viewed with abhorrence by the urban-based political and economic elites, but despite repeated attempts to halt or even to reverse what Matos Mar has called the *desborde popular* (Matos Mar 1988), it eventually proved to be unstoppable. Nevertheless, given the reluctance of the elites to accommodate the migrants in the cities and the resulting absence of concerted state policies to integrate them economically, socially, and politically, they risked remaining permanently marginalized.

One of the most pressing problems facing the newly-arrived migrants was undoubtedly the lack of affordable housing, which prompted many of them to squat on unused land on the city fringes. In this context, the first neighbourhood movements were formed, initially serving to organize illegal land occupations, and subsequently helping to defend the new settlements against eviction at the hands of state security forces or private militias set up by the previous landowners. If the new settlements could weather this early onslaught, the neighbourhood movements would then begin the lengthy process of lobbying

politicians and bureaucrats in order to obtain legal title to the occupied land and to secure the provision of urban services, such as roads, piped water, and electricity.

Most of the early neighbourhood movements were hierarchically structured and, despite the outward militancy displayed by some of them, generally clientelist in character. Their leaders often lacked democratic credentials and drew their legitimacy in the eyes of the rank and file from their ability to establish links with powerful patrons, such as politicians and strategically placed state bureaucrats. In exchange for protection from eviction and certain material benefits, neighbourhood movement leaders generally did not hesitate to forsake the autonomy of their movements and pledge their support to the political leaders of the day. Conversely, these leaders, starting with military dictator Manuel Odría in the late 1940s, soon realized that establishing clientelist relations with urban squatters was preferable to outright repression, since it allowed them to control and neutralize potential sources of conflict within the growing urban popular sector, as well as to create political support bases. In February 1961, squatter settlements acquired a certain degree of legal recognition beyond such purely clientelist links via the enactment of Law No. 13517. The new law granted land titles to the inhabitants of existing popular settlements and even provided a certain level of state support, with the explicit purpose of preventing illegal land occupations in the future (Collier 1976, 84-87).

The military coup d'état of 1968 and the following reformist military

regime significantly altered this panorama, ushering in a period of unprecedented popular movement activity which ultimately led to the transformation of urban popular movements into social and political actors in their own right. In the next section, I will give an account of this period, followed by an analysis of urban popular movements after the return to democratic rule in 1980. In the conclusion to this chapter, I will take a brief look at some of the more recent theoretical developments that accompanied these processes.

Urban Popular Movements in Peru since 1968

The reformist military regime under General Juan Velasco Alvarado, which was Peru's first and only experience with institutionalized military rule, differed substantially from previous military dictatorships in the country itself, as well as other, more repressive military regimes in the Southern Cone.¹ Its ideological and programmatic orientation derived from a particular interpretation of the doctrine of national security, which was seen as being inextricably linked with national development (North 1983). Consequently, while they could hardly be accused of communist leanings, the new military rulers were opposed to the strong presence of mostly U.S.-American multinational companies in the country, most of whom concentrated their activities around the mining sector and the extraction of other raw materials such as petroleum, and the alliance between these companies and the traditional oligarchies, which had their principal bases in the large, export-oriented agricultural estates on the coast.

In order to implement its reformist agenda, the new military regime needed to curtail the might wielded by foreign capital and, even more importantly, it had to break the back of the traditional oligarchies, which up to that point had held a stranglehold on political and economic power, often with the help of repressive military dictatorships. For this purpose, the new regime embarked on a series of large-scale nationalizations, the most spectacular one being the expropriation of the International Petroleum Company within days of the military coup, and enacted a number of fundamental structural reforms that affected almost all spheres of society and dramatically increased the relative weight of the state. Among these reforms, the agrarian reform of 1969 stands out as one of the most sweeping land reforms ever to be carried out in Latin America, leading to the expropriation of the large agricultural estates on the coast and in the Andean highlands and transforming many of them into agricultural cooperatives. The industrial reform of 1970, for its part, gave workers a share of the profits realized by their companies and mandated their representation on the board of directors, thus opening the door to joint decision making between workers and owners. Other reforms implemented during this period included the reform of the public administration and the creation of new public enterprises in 1969, the reform of the banking sector in 1970 and the reform of the educational system in 1971.

The structural reforms and the nationalization of foreign multinationals carried out during the early phases of the new military regime were initially very popular and left the principal actors of the previous regime, particularly the "old"

political parties AP and APRA, discredited and largely devoid of public support. However, heightened aspirations for rapid social and economic improvements that were fuelled by the reformist language used by the new military leaders, together with a renewed impetus for social movement activity flowing from the initial reform measures, quickly led to an upsurge of social protests for which the military government was entirely unprepared. Several violent labour conflicts in the coastal sugar cooperatives, numerous strikes in the mines of the Andean highlands, as well as the Pamplona land invasion in Lima in 1973, prompted the military government to rethink its relations with the population, specifically with its organized sectors.

The military government had at least two crucial reasons for doing so. On the one hand, it was vital for the long-term stability of the military regime to prevent future social outbursts, if only to keep traditional political actors, particularly political parties, from regaining their previous role as links between the political system and the population. In the eyes of the military leaders, this would lead to a return of the old "divisive" forms of political participation that were common under the previous regime, thereby undermining the military's stated objective of achieving national security via national development. On the other hand, the social upheavals had made it starkly obvious that the military government itself lacked institutionalized links with the population, which severely limited its ability to deal with popular demands peacefully and without resorting to outright repression. Consequently, if the military rulers wanted to

be able to prevent social unrest in the future, they needed to establish more stable and direct channels of communication particularly with the organized population. Not only would such mechanisms improve the regime's capacity of social and political control, but more importantly, they would incorporate the popular masses politically and thereby help create popular support bases for the regime and its programme.

The military government's main instrument to implement such a strategy, which Alfred Stepan has termed inclusionary corporatism (Stepan 1978, *passim*), was the Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social (SINAMOS), or National System for the Support of Social Mobilization (Collier 1976, 106-116; Guerra García 1983; Woy 1978; Stepan 1978, 158-189). The stated objective of SINAMOS, which was created via the Decree Law No. 18896 in June 1971, was to assist in the training (*capacitación*), orientation, and organization of the population, with the ultimate goal of creating "organizations of social interest" that would facilitate the communication and the dialogue with the military government (Guerra García 1983, 682). The mobilization and organization of the population via SINAMOS was explicitly seen as an alternative to the traditional party system (SINAMOS 1973), which explains why the military government had previously decided against the establishment of a political party of its own.

As the main institutional link between the population and the military regime, SINAMOS absorbed a variety of other state organisms and became involved in numerous policy areas, such as the agrarian reform and the

development of the cooperatives movement. However, despite its far-flung activities, SINAMOS acquired specific importance as the principal intermediary between the military government and the inhabitants of urban shantytowns, particularly those surrounding the capital, Lima.² For this purpose, SINAMOS united several previous government programmes addressed at urban popular settlements under one roof. Among other things, SINAMOS continued the efforts begun by the Organismo Nacional de Desarrollo de Pueblos Jóvenes (ONDEPJOV), encouraging the organization of shantytown dwellers down to the *manzana* or block level of their settlements, and promoting self-help activities in the construction of homes and other areas of urban development, often in cooperation with the private sector. At the same time, however, SINAMOS differed markedly from its predecessor in that it took a much more political stance in favour of the military regime, actively drumming up support among the settlers, for instance, by organizing huge political demonstrations. Through their constant presence in the settlements and their intimate knowledge of neighbourhood organizations and their leaders, SINAMOS *promotores* also provided the military heads of the agency with an invaluable source of information and a means of political control.

While it is debatable whether the establishment of SINAMOS made the military regime as a whole more amenable and responsive to popular demands, there can be no doubt that the agency's activities in urban shantytowns fostered the participation of shantytown dwellers in decision making processes at least at

the local level. Likewise, thanks to the support provided by SINAMOS, neighbourhood movements proliferated and were often able to democratize and consolidate their organizational structures.¹ Any further expansion of popular participation, however, despite being advocated by many SINAMOS activists, met with opposition from the agency's military leaders, most of whom viewed any form of popular mobilization with suspicion. The tension between the majority of SINAMOS *promotores* and their military superiors mirrored a more deep-seated rift within the military regime itself, pitting different tendencies against one another (Pease 1977; North 1983; McClintock 1983). A progressive group of officers around General Juan Velasco Alvarado, and particularly the President's chief civilian advisers (Delgado 1975; Franco 1979, 1983), favoured an increase in popular participation up to the point of establishing what was called in the Organic Law of SINAMOS, D.L. No. 19352, a "fully participatory social democracy." In other words, at least in theory, this group was in favour of a gradual transfer of economic and political power from the state to economic cooperatives and other popular organizations. The majority of the military leadership, however, independently of their affiliation with a particular ideological tendency within the regime, remained diametrically opposed to this view, regarding any such increase of popular participation as tantamount to growing political instability and therefore as a threat to national security.

The divisions within the military regime became more intense towards the mid-1970s, when a rapidly deteriorating trade balance and dramatically higher

levels of public debt announced the beginnings of an economic crisis. Aside from simple mismanagement, the economic difficulties were due both to the policies of the regime, as well as to external factors.⁴ On the one hand, while the military regime had significantly increased the role of the state in the economy and had made massive new investments in a variety of state-sponsored projects, its policies had not produced a corresponding increase in state revenue. Furthermore, the terms of trade for Peru's main raw material exports were deteriorating, and the state's capacity to bring new projects on stream proved to be limited, resulting in a worsening trade balance and further decreasing state revenue. In particular, the new petroleum reserves in the Amazon basin proved to be much smaller than anticipated and failed to generate the expected level of income. On 25 August 1975, President Velasco was finally disposed in a bloodless coup by General Morales Bermúdez, followed in 1976 by a return to more orthodox economic policies and an IMF-inspired adjustment package.

General Velasco's ouster had been preceded by a continuous erosion of the progressive faction's position within the military regime since around 1972.⁵ Simultaneously, public support for the regime as a whole had been tapering off, which was evidenced by an increasing number of work stoppages between 1973 and 1975 and particularly the Lima riots of February 1975, following a strike of the Guardia Civil, when no political force came out in favour of the regime. Aside from the economic difficulties just mentioned, this loss of public support can be explained by the failure of the military government to satisfy the

heightened expectations for social and economic change, which to a large extent had been created by its own pronouncements. Put more bluntly, the practice of the military regime had not been able to keep pace with its progressive, but often lyrical and imprecise rhetoric, and the population had become disillusioned with the regime's many unkept promises. SINAMOS in particular had antagonized many settlers, focusing increasingly on its role as a generator of public support for the regime and as a vehicle for political control, instead of lending practical support. The latent conflicts between the agency and the *pobladores* came to a head when SINAMOS refused to support new settlements that had been formed after October 1972 - the military government, just like its predecessors, tried to stem the flow of new land occupations - and furious settlers set fire to the SINAMOS headquarters responsible for their area of Lima (Collier 1976, 123).

The mounting resistance to SINAMOS among shantytown dwellers, which was especially pronounced in, but by no means restricted to, the regime's showcase settlement of Villa El Salvador,⁶ bears clear evidence for the failure of the regime's model of inclusionary corporatism. Moreover, the increasing resistance of the *pobladores* to state cooptation, their insistence on the autonomy of their organizations and their refusal to be conned and appeased by flowery rhetoric and empty promises, marked a major ideological shift and the emergence of a new *vecino* identity, which was described in more detail in Chapter 1. While SINAMOS had played a major role in mobilizing the settlers and had given a decisive push to the democratization of many neighbourhood organizations, it was

no longer able to put the genie back into the bottle and to channel the mobilizational potential it had helped to create.

The shift to orthodox economic policies under the new government led by General Morales Bermúdez, which ushered in the second phase of the military regime, did little to quell the popular opposition against the regime. On the contrary, the adoption of a harsh economic stabilization package in July 1976, which nevertheless failed to resolve the economic crisis and instead led to a deep recession, wide-spread unemployment, a severe drop in wages and salaries, as well as a decline in public services and price rises for many consumer goods due to the reduction of public expenditures and state subsidies, fanned the flames of public unrest and led to renewed strikes and anti-regime rallies. The new military government was unable to contain these protests, despite the declaration of a state of emergency and the adoption of much more repressive tactics than under Velasco (although they never approached the level of repression customary in the Southern Cone countries at the same time).

Within about a year, what had begun as a series of relatively isolated and unconnected strikes and demonstrations centred around specific issues, such as salary cuts, job losses, or price hikes for construction materials and basic public services in urban shantytowns, evolved into a coordinated political mass movement encompassing labour unions, neighbourhood organizations, as well as regional movements or *frentes de defensa* that had sprung up in many provinces of the coast and the interior over the previous years (Tovar 1986a; Valdeavellano

1981). Under the leadership of the labour unions and strongly influenced by the new left, which had also won followers among the leadership of many neighbourhood movements, the popular opposition against the regime underwent a process of rapid politicization and radicalization, increasingly combining issue-based protests with a challenge to military rule as such. The extent of popular mobilization against the regime and the impressive capacity of the anti-regime movement to act in a coordinated fashion became most starkly visible during a series of militant general strikes between July 1977 and May 1978, which largely paralyzed the country (Tovar 1982a, 21-26; Valdeavellano 1981, 25-31). Neighbourhood movements played an integral part in the planning and coordination of these strikes, participating in the strike leadership, the Comando Unitario de Lucha, via the Comité de Coordinación y Lucha Barrial (CCLUB), as well as by manning street blockades and confronting state security forces. Together with the worsening economic crisis and growing divisions within the military, which were exacerbated by divergent demands placed on the regime by different social groups and began to threaten the institutional unity of the armed forces themselves, the popular uprisings against the regime were instrumental in forcing the Morales Bermúdez government to embark on a process of controlled transition to democracy.

With the beginning of the return to institutional democratic rule,⁷ the street mobilizations against the military regime began to run out of steam and the locus of political activity shifted to the Constituent Assembly founded after the elections

of June 1978. At the same time, the traditional political parties, particularly APRA and the PPC - former President Belaúnde's Acción Popular party had decided to boycott the Constituent Assembly - reassumed their place at the centre of the political system. It was in the sessions of the Constituent Assembly and in back room deals involving military leaders and the representatives of the main political parties, particularly General Morales Bermúdez himself and APRA leader Haya de la Torre, that the precise conditions for the return to democratic rule were hammered out. The outcome of this astounding cooperation, which overcame the deep mutual enmity between the armed forces and the APRA party that dated back to the Trujillo uprising in 1932, was reflected in the Constitution of 1979.

The political parties of the left, for their part, were largely marginalized in the Constituent Assembly, despite their surprisingly good showing in the 1978 elections, in which they captured nearly one third of the popular vote. Shut out of the negotiations between the military and other party leaders and constantly outvoted by the majority of APRA and the PPC, the left took little part in shaping the Constitution of 1979 and increasingly resorted to using the Assembly merely as a sounding board for popular demands. At a more basic level, the left was highly ambivalent towards representative democracy as such, without, however, being able to present a coherent political alternative (Nieto 1983). After it had become clear that the popular mobilizations of 1977 and 1978 would not immediately result in a transition to socialism, as some had hoped, the left

became increasingly embroiled in internal ideological struggles, deeply alienating its supporters within the popular sector. Subsequently, when the left was unable to present a unified list for the first general elections after the return to democratic rule in May 1980, the popular sector proved that it was no captive constituency and threw its support behind Belaúnde's Acción Popular.

Aside from the relative decline of the left, the popular protest movement against the military regime was further debilitated by the dismantlement of some of the labour legislation passed during the Velasco era by the Morales Bermúdez government, which severely affected the powerful labour unions (Parodi 1986, 48-51). The dismissal of about 5,000 union leaders after the general strike of July 1977 dealt a severe blow to the union movement, and the labour federations' subsequent inability to halt the rapid erosion of wages and salaries in the late 1970s proved to be highly disillusioning for a membership that had grown accustomed to growing union power and easily achieved wage and salary increases during the Velasco years. Consequently, labour militancy levelled off substantially towards the end of the decade, foreshadowing the even further decline of the workers' movement in the 1980s, and the unions were less and less able to provide the same kind of leadership and direction to the anti-military protest movement as before.

Neighbourhood movements, on the other hand, experienced a new dynamism towards the end of the 1970s, largely as a response to the enactment of Decree Law No. 22612 by the military government on 25 July 1979. The

essence of the new law, which profoundly altered the status of urban popular settlements, was contained in its first two articles. On the one hand, D.L. No. 22612 considerably facilitated the distribution of land titles to urban squatters, thereby accelerating the legalization of previously illegal popular settlements. At the same time, however, the new law decreed that the newly legalized settlements would be subject to the same laws and regulations governing all other residential areas, thereby eliminating the special status that the *pueblos jóvenes* had enjoyed since the Velasco era. Among other things, what this meant was that the inhabitants of urban shantytowns were no longer exempt from paying municipal taxes, but would be treated in much the same way as the residents of well-to-do areas, despite the huge differences between their respective neighbourhoods. Furthermore, shantytown dwellers could no longer count on receiving support from state agencies such as SINAMOS or ONDEPJOV to consolidate and develop their settlements, especially with regard to the provision of urban services such as roads, piped water, and electricity. Finally, and maybe most importantly, the new law broke with the declared goal of both SINAMOS and ONDEPJOV to promote the organizational development of popular settlements. Under the terms of D.L. 22612, existing neighbourhood organizations were no longer considered legitimate interlocutors of the state and its agencies, once the distribution of land titles was completed.

In a sense, the enactment of D.L. No. 22612 shortly after the dissolution of SINAMOS in 1978 can be seen as one of the clearest indications for the

military government's intention to dissociate itself from the reforms of the Velasco era. Undoubtedly, the new law implied that the regime was burning its last bridges to the urban popular sector, and that the central state was extricating itself from the responsibilities that the Velasco government had previously assumed with regard to the consolidation and urban development of the *pueblos jóvenes*.⁸ Not surprisingly, D.L. No. 22612 spawned a new wave of urban popular mobilizations against the regime. While earlier protests by neighbourhood movements had often been relatively spontaneous and unorganized, with the exception of the general strikes of 1977 and 1978, these later mobilizations were characterized by a significantly higher level of coordination between different movements. From 1979 to 1980, numerous federations and *frentes* sprang up all over the country, uniting neighbourhood movements at the level of districts, departments, or *conos* in the case of Lima (Tovar 1982b, 25-33; Henry 1981; Henry 1982, 142-143).⁹ In November 1979, the centralization process led to the foundation of the Federación de Pueblos Jóvenes y Urbanizaciones Populares (FEDEPJUP) in Lima, and in July 1980, culminated in the establishment of the nation-wide Confederación General de Pueblos Jóvenes (CGPP). During the same period, neighbourhood movements became more actively involved in the ongoing anti-centralist struggles waged by local and regional movements in the provinces (Ballón and Filomeno 1981; Henríquez 1986).

In sum, the decade of the 1970s witnessed the emergence of popular

movements, and of urban popular movements in particular, as social and political actors in their own right, marking a sharp break with the dependence of these movements on populist politicians and other powerful patrons in previous years. Most notably, after 1975, neighbourhood movements in urban shantytowns shook off the cooptation by the Velasco government, which had unsuccessfully tried to combine a stronger commitment to the urban development of the *pueblos jóvenes* and the promotion of their social organization with the mobilization of support for the military regime and tighter political controls. The increasing autonomy of neighbourhood movements from the state, as well as their potential to mobilize and organize growing numbers of people, were demonstrated during their participation in the general strikes of 1977 and 1978, as well as by the centralization processes towards the end of the decade. Neighbourhood movements also proved that they were capable of moving from relatively isolated and specific demands to more global and political ones, and that they could form alliances with other actors, particularly leftist political parties, unions, and local and regional movements.

Urban Popular Movements in the 1980s: Proliferation and Relative Decline

In the period immediately following the transition to democracy in 1980, the political influence of urban popular movements decreased considerably. Given the vigour of the anti-military protest movement of the late 1970s and the relative strength of urban popular movements at the end of the decade, this may

seem somewhat paradoxical, especially if one considers that the return to democratic rule implied a decline of political repression and greater opportunities for legal political activity, not to mention the significant electoral weight of the popular sector.¹⁹ Nevertheless, as O'Donnell and Schmitter have pointed out, it is by no means uncommon that popular movements lose sway in the course of transition processes, since the return to democratic rule usually goes along with a decline of political mass mobilizations and a new focus on institutional politics (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). In the Peruvian case, as was explained previously, the popular opposition movement against the regime lost much of its force following the 1978 elections to the Constituent Assembly. Conversely, the traditional political parties reassumed their place at the heart of the political system and came to dominate the negotiations with the military over the conditions for the retreat of the armed forces to the barracks. Urban popular movements, on the other hand, found themselves shut out of this process. Their political influence was further minimized due to the fact that the disintegration of the anti-regime movement was followed by the decline of the labour unions and by the fragmentation of the political left, which could have served as a link to the new democratic institutions.

Following the severing of their links with the central policy making process, urban popular movements turned their attention away from the political scene and began to focus again on more immediate concerns relating to the living conditions in low-income urban neighbourhoods. Fortified by their experiences with

grassroots organizing gained in the 1970s, first under SINAMOS and later during the anti-military protest movement, and buoyed by their success in opposing a powerful military regime, urban popular movements thrived and a plethora of new movements emerged. These new movements considerably broadened the rather narrow focus of the established neighbourhood organizations on infrastructural improvements and the provision of urban services, addressing a wide range of other issues, such as nutrition, public health, education, small-scale economic activities, and the preservation of Andean culture.¹¹ Not only that, there was a much stronger emphasis put on democratic forms of organization, the political and institutional autonomy of the individual movements, as well as on the stronger participation of those groups that had previously been excluded. This is particularly relevant with respect to women, who came to play a much larger role after having been marginalized in the often male-dominated neighbourhood movements of the previous decade.¹²

The flourishing of urban popular movements in the post-transition phase and the proliferation of what was often called "new social practices" or "new forms of making politics" (Ballón 1986a, 1986b; Pease et al. 1981; Pease 1983a) prompted many observers to proclaim the emergence of a "new social fabric" at the grassroots, even raising the hope that there was a new political order in the making.¹³ However, aside from being overly optimistic with regard to the democratic character of urban popular movements and their potential to influence others actors, many of these observers failed to see that these movements could

only develop in the way they did in the early 1980s because other actors were largely absent from the local scene. While the presence of the central government in urban popular neighbourhoods had been virtually nil since the dissolution of SINAMOS in 1978, the traditional political parties were competing with one another for control over the newly democratized political institutions at the national level. The political left, for its part, was mired in internal ideological disputes and likewise paid little attention to the local scene. Consequently, urban popular movements were more or less left alone and attempts to manipulate or coopt them were relatively feeble and infrequent. In other words, these movements benefitted from the existence of a political vacuum at the local level, which only slowly began to be filled by the parties of the newly founded Izquierda Unida, or United Left, as well as by the APRA party after Alan García's victory in the 1985 presidential elections.

Aside from the return to institutional politics in 1980s, a profound shift in economic policy under the new government led by Acción Popular's Fernando Belaúnde Terry had an equally important impact on urban popular movements. The economic policies that were implemented by the Belaúnde government, together with even higher public spending than before, plunged the country into the worst economic disaster it had ever experienced (Stein and Monge 1988, 21-86; Reid 1985, 81-105). As a consequence of lower tariff barriers and the opening up of the economy to foreign competition, domestic industry took a severe beating, resulting in job losses on a large scale, decreasing wages and

salaries, and the rapid expansion of the informal economy. At the same time, the level of public debt was rising steadily, mainly to finance a huge state-sponsored infrastructural building programme. Since export returns were falling again and tax revenues were also declining, public spending was increasingly financed by external borrowing or simply by printing money, thereby fuelling inflation.

Following a combination of external shocks and natural disasters, this economic strategy quickly became unsustainable. The crash of world market prices for Peru's principal raw material exports at the beginning of the 1980s, a particularly strong *El Niño* current in 1983 which hurt the fisheries and caused flooding that wiped out most of the cotton crop, as well as rising interest rates on Peru's foreign debt, brought on an acute crisis in the external balance of payments and made the country unable to meet its debt service payments to foreign creditors. In 1982, the government turned to the IMF for assistance and subsequently implemented a harsh austerity programme, consisting of cuts in public spending and state subsidies, a devaluation of the sol, higher interest rates, and a reduction in the money supply. These measures did little to improve the overall economic situation; on the contrary, they threw the country deeper into recession and led to a further deterioration in the living standards of the lower classes.

The impact of the economic crisis on the living conditions of the popular classes was truly devastating. By 1984, the gains of the Velasco period had been wiped out and real per-capita incomes had fallen back to the level of twenty years

earlier. Wages for blue-collar workers in the formal sector stood at about 40% of their 1973 peak, while salaries for white-collar workers had decreased to a mere third of their 1973 level (Reid 1985, 94). Still, formal sector workers at least had access to collective bargaining mechanisms and were protected by what remained of the labour legislation of the Velasco years. The approximately two thirds of the workforce that were under- or unemployed, on the other hand, most of whom worked in a variety of odd jobs in the informal sector (Carbonetto, Hoyle, and Tueros 1988), enjoyed no protection whatsoever and whole families often had to work exceedingly long hours just to ensure their bare survival. As a result of radically reduced wages and salaries and widespread under- and unemployment, poverty and extreme poverty were rampant, and large parts of the population were becoming increasingly destitute, especially in urban shantytowns and in the rural areas of the central Andes. At the same time, health standards were becoming critically low, which was evidenced by a rapid rise of infant mortality and infant malnutrition, among other indicators (Reid 1985, 97-98; Haak 1987, 58-59; Tovar 1986a, 158).

In response to the rapidly deteriorating living conditions of the popular sector, a growing number of so-called "survival movements" sprang up in the popular settlements around Lima, as well as in other large urban centres. In their overwhelming majority, these movements were made up of women, who were prompted into action by the concern that their husbands' decreasing salaries were no longer sufficient to feed their families. Many of these women saw the answer

to the problem of material survival in the establishment of communal soup kitchens or *comedores populares*, which enabled them to pool what little resources they had in order to buy larger quantities of food more cheaply in the market and to save on other expenses, such as cooking fuel. At the same time, the sharing of cooking and child rearing duties with others made it possible for them to leave the house and to take on paid employment, usually in the informal sector, in order to supplement the family income.

During the early 1980s, the number of *comedores populares* multiplied; by January 1986, almost 800 communal soup kitchens existed in Lima alone (Allou 1989, 74). Most *comedores populares* were run independently by their members, democratically structured and politically independent, even if they received organizational assistance and food donations from the outside, for example, from Caritas, various other NGOs, or through the FOVIDA programme administered by the municipality of Lima. The same can be said about the *vaso de leche* committees in Lima, which were set up by the municipal government in cooperation with existing women's groups after Izquierda Unida's victory in the 1983 municipal elections. The *vaso de leche* committees, which numbered about 7,500 in late 1985 (Allou 1989, 74), provided a daily glass of milk for children of a certain age, as well as for pregnant women. While the municipality assured the delivery of the (powdered) milk to the popular districts of the capital, the day-to-day management of the programme was largely left to the *vaso de leche* committees themselves.

Apart from their growth in sheer numbers, it soon became clear that survival movements were replacing neighbourhood movements as the most dynamic element within urban popular movements as a whole. This had several reasons. For one thing, the need for material survival was a more pressing concern in a time of severe economic crisis than the distribution of land titles and the improvement of urban services, which had traditionally been the domain of neighbourhood movements. Furthermore, the traditional demands of neighbourhood movements were becoming less urgent, since a considerable number of land titles had already been distributed by the early 1980s and many popular settlements were becoming increasingly consolidated. Finally, the militancy of neighbourhood movements declined somewhat due to the fact that many of their activists had become involved in local politics, some of them joining leftist-dominated local governments after the first democratic municipal elections in 1981. In a sense, local governments were taking over the role of neighbourhood movements in coordinating popular protests and channelling popular demands to the central government. I will come back to this issue in more detail in the following chapter.

The explosive growth of survival movements had a number of important consequences: most notably, it profoundly affected the gender relations within urban popular movements and led to the empowerment of women.¹⁴ Despite the fact that many women had initially been motivated to participate in survival movements by their concerns for the material well-being of their families, many

of them were later able to move beyond this rather traditional interpretation of their gender role and to shake off some of the limitations it entailed. At a very basic level, to participate in survival movements for many women meant quite simply that they could leave their homes and become more independent from their husbands, who often viewed their wives' new activities with suspicion." Furthermore, many women, particularly those involved in the leadership of the respective committees, gained invaluable organizational experience, as they practised how to address public meetings and recruit new members, and they learned how to stand up for themselves when negotiating with state officials, representatives of NGOs, and others. For many women, these experiences served as an important boost to their self-confidence, which enabled at least some of them to penetrate neighbourhood organizations, where they had traditionally been marginalized, to make inroads into political parties, or even to enter local politics.

Especially in Lima, where survival movements were stronger and more dynamic than elsewhere in Peru, these movements also achieved an impressive level of centralization. Both the *comedores populares* and the *vaso de leche* committees established multi-tiered organizational structures, ranging from the grassroots to the district and metropolitan levels, which consisted of democratically elected coordinating committees, the so-called *coordinadoras*. Along with their organizational consolidation, survival movements also refined their programmatic capacities. More specifically, they branched out from their initial focus on survival issues and the distribution of emergency relief funds,

which had motivated some to qualify them as "assistentialist,"¹⁶ and proved that they could develop concrete policy proposals, particularly in the fields of nutrition and public health. In some cases, survival movements even spun off small businesses, such as bakeries, which made them more independent from food donations and created employment possibilities for their members.

In sum, survival or women's movements in a more general sense can be regarded as the clearest expression for the gestation of a *ciudadano* identity among urban popular movements, as was explained previously in Chapter 1. Due to the practices of these movements, many lower-class women regarded material survival no longer as the subject of demands that were addressed at the state, much less as a favour that could be granted or refused. On the contrary, they began to see material survival as a right that should be guaranteed as such, along with other guarantees for basic social and economic living standards. In addition, the programmatic evolution of women's movements and their shift away from simple demand making was symptomatic for similar developments within other popular movements, indicating a stronger push for democratic participation and greater influence on institutional decision making processes.

Despite these impressive achievements, urban popular movements in Peru in the 1980s were also plagued by some serious weaknesses and shortcomings. To begin with, while some urban popular movements, particularly the survival movements just mentioned, displayed an impressive dynamism, relatively high levels of participation, and substantive programmatic development, participation

in urban popular movements as a whole remained sporadic and linked to specific and relatively narrow demands. At the same time, the organizational development of most urban popular movements lagged behind that of the more successful examples. Not surprisingly in these conditions, the centralization of urban popular movements likewise made little progress. Apart from some noteworthy exceptions, such as the various federations of neighbourhood movements at the beginning of the decade, the *comedores populares* and the *vaso de leche* committees in Lima later on, or the CUAVES in Villa El Salvador, which united most urban popular movements in the district under one roof, urban popular movements as a whole remained relatively fractured and fragmented. Several attempts to lend greater unity to urban popular movements met with limited success, such as the *Encuentro Metropolitano de Organizaciones Vecinales*, which was organized in September 1986 by the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima (González 1986; Carbajo 1986; Frías 1986), or the *Asamblea Nacional Popular* (ANP) in November 1987, in which survival movements and neighbourhood movements participated, but whose agenda was largely set by unions and various leftist parties (Centralización del Movimiento Popular 1987; Zolezzi 1988). As a consequence of their failure to unite and to arrive at a shared political agenda, the overall impact of urban popular movements on the political system and on other actors, particularly political parties, remained relatively limited.

The principal cause for the relative weakness of urban popular movements

in the 1980s can be found in the economic crisis, which continued unabated for most of the decade, aside from a brief economic upturn at the beginning of Alan García's presidency. While the crisis in some sense spurred the growth and the dynamism of survival movements, as was explained above, its overall impact on the development of urban popular movements was decidedly negative. For one thing, the increased economic hardship that resulted from the crisis made urban popular movements and their members more dependent on material benefits that they could obtain from others, such donations of food, medicine, or financial payments, and therefore heightened the danger of political cooptation. For example, the APRA government had some success in drawing participants of urban popular movements into its PAIT programme, offering them a small salary for their labour, while at the same time expecting them to take part in political rallies in support of the APRA-party (Graham 1991, 105).

Furthermore, the economic crisis had a detrimental impact on the level of participation in urban popular movements, which relied on voluntary labour by their members to function. By pushing the standards of living of the urban poor down to a point where their bare survival was at stake, the crisis fostered the search for individualist solutions, or in other words, it made it more likely that individuals would abandon collective pursuits and put their own survival and that of their families before that of others. At a more practical level, the crisis pushed many individuals out of their jobs and forced them to work longer hours, usually in a variety of low-paying jobs in the informal sector, and to spend more time

looking for work. Consequently, these individuals had less time to spend on collective activities, and the level of participation in urban popular movements therefore decreased.

One result of this decline in participation,¹⁷ was a growing rift between the leadership and the rank and file of many urban popular movements. Typically, leaders of urban popular movements were not only more politicized, but also economically somewhat better off than most of the membership and could therefore afford to spend more time on organizational activities (Ponce 1989). Consequently, their influence within the respective movements was often disproportionate, notwithstanding the existence of democratic structures and control mechanisms. When the participation of the rank and file began to level off, the leadership became even more powerful, often willy-nilly and despite the best efforts on the part of many leaders to oppose this trend and to involve the membership more strongly in the activities of the movement.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the increase of the relative weight of the leadership vis-à-vis the rank and file posed at least a potential threat to the democratic character of many urban popular movements.

Aside from the impact of the economic crisis, urban popular movements were further debilitated by the violent campaign waged against them by the Shining Path guerrilla movement, which in the case of Lima became especially intense between 1991 and 1992. Sendero had previously undergone a critical strategic shift: after years of focusing on the central Andean highlands, its

leadership had decided to carry the insurrection from the countryside to the urban areas and particularly to the capital.¹⁴ The guerilla movement was confident that it was strong enough to challenge the state security forces concentrated there and to reach the stage of the so-called "strategic equilibrium" in its struggle.

Obviously, though, in order to follow through with its strategy of "encircling" the big cities, Sendero needed to obtain a foothold in the urban shantytowns surrounding them, and for that, control of urban popular movements was crucial. In the polarizing logic of Sendero Luminoso, which distinguished only between friend and foe, urban popular movements could play one of two roles. They could either submit to the supreme authority of the party, in which case they would become valuable political support bases, or they could insist on their independence, in which case they deserved to be destroyed like all other political enemies. In line with this thinking, Sendero Luminoso adopted the same double strategy towards urban popular movements that it had used earlier in its dealings with peasant communities in rural areas, concentrating on ideological work and persuasion first and moving on to pressure tactics and more violent methods if this was not sufficient to win them over.

Throughout the 1980s, Sendero Luminoso attempted to infiltrate urban popular movements in Lima by becoming involved in ongoing popular struggles, often via one of its legal front-line organizations, while at the same time trying to take control of their leadership. This tactic produced some remarkable successes, most notably in the districts of Ate-Vitarte, where Sendero Luminoso

went so far as to stage its own land occupation on a plot adjacent to the strategic central highway linking Lima with the Andean highlands, and subsequently established a popular settlement which it controlled in its entirety.³⁹ Short of such complete control, the more or less overt presence of Shining Path activists was felt in many other urban popular movements, often intimidating their members, who knew that opposition to Sendero was potentially dangerous and could result in reprisals.

In the context of its urban offensive in Lima in the early 1990s (Morales 1991; Cosecha Roja 1991; La Batalla de Lima 1992), Sendero started to attack urban popular movements directly, particularly those that it had not been able to penetrate before. Shining Path hit squads began to assassinate select urban popular movement leaders, often in a grotesque fashion, mowing them down with machine guns in front of their families or supporters and blowing up their bodies with dynamite afterwards. Frequently, these assassinations were preceded by a slander campaign designed to discredit the victims in the eyes of the public by accusing them of mismanagement and corruption. Among Sendero's favourite targets were women operating communal soup kitchens and other leaders of survival movements, whom the guerrilla group accused of complicity with the system. In the jargon of Sendero Luminoso, survival movements served as a *colchón* (mattress) to cushion the impact of the crisis, thereby making the desperate living conditions of the popular masses somewhat more palatable and undermining their revolutionary potential. The most prominent victim of

Sendero's assassination campaign against urban popular movements was Maria Elena Moyano, who had risen through the ranks of the women's movement of Villa El Salvador to become vice-mayor of the district and a potential candidate of the Movimiento de Afirmación Socialista (MAS) for the Senate. Her brutal killing in February 1992 caused a public outcry all over Peru, as well as in many other countries around the world.

Undoubtedly, the attacks by Sendero Luminoso had a detrimental effect on urban popular movements in Lima; they weakened their organizational structures by forcing some leaders to go into hiding or to resign, and they caused widespread fear among their members, provoking a certain decline in the level of participation. Nevertheless, Sendero's overall influence on urban popular movements in the capital seems to have been relatively limited. It appears that the Shining Path was unable to generate much genuine political support, except among the youth of the popular sector and the most destitute of the recent migrants. Likewise, its terror campaign to debilitate urban popular movements was only partially successful, and only in those areas of the capital were Sendero was particularly active. While the true influence of the Shining Path in the popular neighbourhoods of Lima is of course difficult to assess, it is probably safe to say that the guerrilla group was never able to control more than a minority of urban popular movements, notwithstanding its sustained presence and the significant inroads it made in some cases. As in the case of many rural communities previously, Sendero Luminoso had severe difficulties in penetrating

popular movements that were relatively consolidated and were strongly anchored in the population. Most urban popular movements in the capital refused to be turned into mere appendices of the Shining Path or one of its various front-line organizations, and they continued to function independently, despite the threats against their members and the murderous attacks on their leaders.

Conclusion: The Continuing Relevance of Urban Popular Movements

The present chapter has provided an historical sketch of the development of urban popular movements in Peru, examining their emergence in the late 1940s following the onset of mass migrations from the countryside to the urban areas, their insurgence onto the national political scene during the reformist military government of Juan Velasco Alvarado and the ensuing opposition movement against military rule, as well as their proliferation in the early 1980s and their subsequent relative decline, due to the double onslaught of the economic crisis and the violent attacks of the Shining Path guerrilla movement.

It is instructive to take a brief look at some of the more recent theoretical developments that accompanied these historical processes, since many of the theories that were developed against the empirical background of the Peruvian case mirror more general trends in the field of social movement theory and thereby confirm some of the principal arguments that were developed in the first chapter of this dissertation. This last point is particularly relevant with respect to the question of whether urban popular movements have a potential for social

and political change. Towards the end of the 1980s analysts of urban popular movements in Peru began to agree that these movements were in fact much weaker than some of them had thought earlier, and that their ability to influence other actors and to induce social and political change was relatively limited.²¹ In a clear parallel to the new social movements debate earlier, urban popular movements were now often seen as harbouring various conflicting logics (Ballón 1990, 1992; Tovar and Zapata 1990; Tovar 1991), or as a sort of last-ditch defense against the imminent danger of complete social disintegration (Rodrigo 1990).

The more recent work of Eduardo Ballón and Teresa Tovar, both of whom in the early 1980s championed the view that urban popular movements were the standard bearers of a new political order, is indicative of the replacement of the earlier enthusiasm with a more cautious assessment of the potential of these movements to help bring about social and political change. Offering some important revisions to his earlier views, Ballón in his recent writings portrays urban popular movements as often self-centred, increasingly fragmented, and devoid of strong links to other popular movements or other actors, such as political parties. Instead of one dominant trend towards new social practices and new forms of making politics, Ballón now sees urban popular movements as riddled with "tensions" (Ballón 1990, 46; Ballón 1992, 128), in the sense that demands for a new citizenship and clientelist and authoritarian forms of behaviour, solidarity and individualism, and autonomy and cooptation often exist

side by side. Consequently, while it is still possible that urban popular movements can contribute to the construction of a new social and political order, their further decline might speed up overall social disintegration and decay.

Teresa Tovar echoes Ballón's argument in the sense that she, too, stresses the diversity of urban popular movements, which for her is no more than an expression of social reality. For Tovar, the search for one single logic behind the practice of these movements has always been erroneous, since their diversity is the product of different ways of adapting to an adverse social, economic, and political environment. Not surprisingly in a situation of extreme crisis, these processes do not always result in what Susan Lobo has called "positive adaptation" (Lobo 1982); on the contrary, they often produce even greater individualization and social decomposition. At the same time, however, Tovar sees a potential for resistance against further social disintegration in the ongoing struggles for social mobility, better living conditions, and cultural affirmation (Tovar 1991, 31). Therefore, it would be false to focus only on the current weaknesses of urban popular movements and to interpret them solely as a product of social disintegration and social anomie; rather, they should be read as an expression of the "common sense" of the popular masses in the Gramscian sense of the term, or of a developing alternative modernity.²²

While both Ballón and Tovar acknowledge that urban popular movements are more diverse and ambiguous than they originally thought, Guillermo Rochabrún goes beyond these self-criticisms by charging that the idea of a

democratic potential of urban popular movements was little more than a "myth" in the first place (Rochabrún 1992). Rochabrún attributes the emergence of this myth to the need for a legitimizing ideology on the part of leftist intellectuals, who increasingly abandoned academic research in the early 1980s to become actively involved in politics and promotional work in the urban popular sector. The more these intellectuals committed themselves to building a political alternative, Rochabrún argues, the more their theorizing reflected their own political practices and preferences and not social reality; in other words, sociology degenerated into some sort of "high-level social work" (Rochabrún 1992, 104). Consequently, the imputed democratic character of urban popular movements and their assumed potential for social and political change may have little basis in fact. Quite possible, Rochabrún suggests, these movements are little more than a new form of self-help groups, in other words, they could be interpreted as an expression of some kind of neo-mutualism (Rochabrún 1989, 24). In order to arrive at more substantiated analyses of urban popular movements, and of social movements in general, Rochabrún calls for a return to disinterested academic research that examines social movements in the context of an overarching analysis of the class structure of society (Rochabrún 1992, 110).

Maybe the fiercest assault on the old orthodoxy came from a group around Luis Pásara (Pásara et al. 1991; Pásara 1991). As opposed to Guillermo Rochabrún, who shares at least some of the assumptions of the authors he criticizes (Rochabrún 1988, 92), Luis Pásara and his co-authors attack them head-

on. Drawing on three empirical case studies of associations of small entrepreneurs in the informal sector, women's groups, and peasants' self-defense leagues, the so-called *rondas campesinas*, Pásara et al. confirm many of the limits and weaknesses of popular movements that were mentioned by other authors, including Ballón and Tovar. Likewise, Pásara and his co-authors concur with Rochabrún's assessment that the capacity of popular movements for social and political change has often been overstated due to the inclination of many observers to substitute their own ideological biases for solid empirical research. Where Pásara et al. part ways with Rochabrún and most other critics of the 1980s paradigm, however, is when they assert that leftist intellectuals not only idealized popular movements, but that for all intents and purposes, they *created* them. According to Pásara and his co-authors, leftist intellectuals needed popular movements not only as a mass base for their own political projects, but quite simply as a clientele for the NGOs they controlled (Delpino and Pásara 1991). Since these NGOs had to demonstrate to mostly foreign donor agencies that they had links to organized groups within the popular sector which could effectively use the considerable funds that these donors provided, they often insisted that popular movements adopt certain organizational structures before they became eligible to receive any benefits.

Pásara et al. paint a decidedly bleak picture of popular movements, which has some interesting parallels to the catastrophic visions of the marginality debate of the 1960s (Pásara 1991, 66-67; Pásara and Zarzar 1991, 197-203). In a

context of profound social disintegration and social anomie," they contend, popular movements emerge as loosely structured self-help groups designed to assure the survival of the family or other closely-knit collectives. These groups establish more sophisticated organizational structures only when this is a precondition to obtain subsidies from others, as is often the case with resources provided by NGOs. As a consequence, popular movements are *necessarily* self-centred and particularistic, that is, they focus only on the needs of their participants, and they are dependent on others, since their whole *raison d'être* revolves around subsidies obtained from the outside. Given that these subsidies tend to decrease - the state is less and less able to generate any social policies and the resources managed by NGOs are on the decline as well - the tendency for pragmatic negotiations on the part of popular movements might soon be replaced by violent protests, which of course would militate against any sort of institutional stability. Therefore, instead of fostering the emergence of a new order of any kind, the practices of popular movements are in fact more likely to further accelerate social decay and to produce even more profound social anomie.

The principal flaw of this argument is that it is as ideological as the one that it tries to refute. To be sure, Pásara and his co-authors have a point when they insist on the various limitations and shortcomings of rural and urban popular movements, many of which were previously acknowledged by Ballón and Tovar themselves. They are also right, as is Rochabrún, to caution against the idealization and reification of these movements and to be wary of a mythology of

lo popular that has often proved to have little basis in fact. What Pásara et al. fail to recognize, however, is the fact that the practices of popular movements are also evidence for social and political change. As was argued in the present chapter, as well as previously in Chapter 1, it would be hard to deny the existence of new identities, new forms of struggle, and new social actors, even if these actors are often weak and incipient and their democratic practices and demands for democratic participation are often interspersed with authoritarian and clientelist forms of behaviour. Consequently, to completely deny popular movements any potential for social and political change, as Pásara and his co-authors do by insisting on a virtually inexorable slide into social anomie, is not only defeatist, leaving no alternative other than a violent social upheaval or an authoritarian coup d'état. It also neglects the real diversity of social reality and therefore amounts to replacing one ideological interpretation with another; again, one might add, on the basis of a very limited empirical sample and not an exhaustive study of social reality, as the authors claim.

Rather than erecting yet another myth, that of social anomie, after successfully debunking the previous ones of the proletariat and the people, the real challenge is to identify more clearly what Nicolás Lynch has called "las tendencias sanas del mundo popular" (Lynch 1989, 26) and to carefully distinguish them from the more destructive elements that also exist. In other words, the challenge consists in carefully weighing the considerable limitations of popular movements against their true potential for social and political change.

and to examine if and how these movements could play a role in the democratization of other actors and the strengthening of political institutions. This is of course the principal argument that was developed in Chapter 1, and it is also the sense that transpires from Ballón's and Tovar's later work. It is from this perspective that I approach the analysis of popular participation in local government in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

THE PERUVIAN LEFT AND POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT I: THE EARLY 1980s

From the early 1980s onwards, political decentralization, the strengthening of local governments and the creation and further enlargement of opportunities for popular participation at the local level have been central programmatic planks in the political platforms of the Peruvian left (Izquierda Unida 1983; Izquierda Unida 1985; Barrenechea 1989). On the face of it, this would hardly seem surprising. As we have seen in the foregoing, the Peruvian left, at least since the early 1970s, has always entertained links to popular movements operating at the grassroots level and supported their activities. In addition, the creation of "new political spaces" at the local level by the Constitution of 1979 and subsequent decentralization programmes constituted a strong stimulus for all political parties, not just the left, to become involved in local politics and to push for a further revaluation of local and regional governments.

However, there were also some more specific reasons that propelled the Peruvian left to take an interest in local politics. As was explained in the previous chapter, since the beginning of the transition to democratic rule, the Peruvian left had been virtually eclipsed on the national political scene by APRA and the parties of the right and centre-right, which came to dominate the newly created democratic institutions. Consequently, if the left wanted to remain a

major political player, it needed to secure a foothold in the institutional system for itself, which local governments seemed to provide. At the same time, local governments could play an important part in the long-term political strategies of the left to gain power at the national level, despite the seemingly mundane nature of local politics. In particular, local governments could provide the left with an institutional link to popular movements operating at the grassroots, thereby facilitating the building or the consolidation of political support bases.

In this chapter, I will, first, provide a brief summary of the principal factors that motivated the left to become involved in local politics and then go on to explain how the status of local governments changed following the enactment of the Constitution of 1979. Second, I will analyze the changing strategic orientations of the Peruvian left and explain how they shaped the left's approach to local politics and to the participation of popular movements at the local level. More specifically, I will focus on what I will call the revolutionary and the radical-democratic approach to local government and popular participation. Finally, I will examine the involvement of the left in five district governments of Lima during the period from 1981 to 1983. I will focus chiefly on the forms of popular participation that were developed during that period and the way in which they related to the then dominant ideological and strategic orientations of the left.

Local Government Reform and the Political Conjuncture of the Early 1980s

The political conjuncture of the early 1980s provided strong incentives for

the Peruvian left to turn its attention to the municipalities. As we have seen in the previous chapter, following the return to institutional politics, the left saw its grip on the national political process seriously loosened. This was due in large part to the decline of mass mobilizations during the transition period and the corresponding reassertion of the traditional political parties at the centre of the political system. To make matters worse, the left proved unable to translate the extensive popular support it had built during the mass struggles of the 1970s into electoral successes. Due in part to internal divisions and ideological feuds, but also to its inability to propose a credible political alternative to centrist and conservative political parties, the left could not repeat its surprisingly strong showing in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in 1978 and lost a considerable part of its share of the popular vote, as well as a large number of its seats, in the presidential and congressional elections of May 1980.¹ Largely shut out of the policy making process at the national level and deprived of its traditional means of influencing politics via mass mobilizations, the left had every reason to fear a rapid erosion of its popular support base. For one thing, radical trade unions, which were dominated by the left and had been the mainstay of the 1970s mass movement, were losing clout due to the persistent economic crisis and the increasing prevalence of the informal sector. Even more importantly, the results of the elections of May 1980 had exposed a growing rift between leftist parties, which were often dominated by middle-class intellectuals, and their supporters in the popular sector. While many leftists reacted to the electoral

defeat by withdrawing into their respective organizations, intensifying ideological debates over often arcane subjects and thereby amplifying existing divisions within and among leftist parties, their popular supporters were increasingly unwilling to tolerate such sectarianism and factionalism. As some leftist activists began to realize (Nieto 1983), the internecine feuds over matters of ideology and "correct" revolutionary strategy were harmful, not only because they conflicted with a strong desire for unity at the base, which they saw expressed in the decline of the divided left's share of the popular vote in the 1980 elections. The fixation on such abstract and increasingly irrelevant matters also prevented the left from proposing viable solutions for the very concrete and ever more pressing needs of the popular masses.

In sum, if it wanted to remain a political force to be reckoned with and halt the slide into sectarianism and political irrelevance, the Peruvian left at the beginning of the 1980s faced a double-sided challenge. On the one hand, it urgently needed to shore up its mass support base by reinvigorating its links with the various popular movements operating at the level of civil society. At the same time, despite its critical stance towards the new democratic regime and towards representative democracy in general, the left had little choice but to try to somehow break the institutional dominance of the traditional political parties. Becoming involved in local politics offered a chance to achieve both ends simultaneously.

While obviously not on par with national level political institutions in terms

of power and prestige, local governments had made substantial gains in their institutional stature since the implementation of the 1979 Constitution and were therefore a political sphere of considerable, and possibly growing, significance. For one thing, the new Constitution mandated the democratic election of municipal councillors and mayors, who previously had been appointed by the central government. This was a momentous change, given that municipal elections had last been held in 1919, with the exception of a brief period between 1963 and 1968 during Belaúnde's first presidency.² The return to democratic elections at the local level, together with new possibilities for direct citizen participation in local affairs, enabled the population to exert some influence on the running of their municipality and thereby enhanced the democratic legitimacy of local governments. By the same token, the municipalities became politically more significant, which furthered the involvement of political parties in local politics and increased the level of partisan competition.

Aside from the return to democratic local elections, the new constitution recognized the economic and administrative autonomy of local governments from the central government and assigned them fairly extensive new powers and prerogatives, many of which were to be exercised in cooperation with other levels of government (Mejía 1990, 137-139; Castro-Pozo and Delgado 1989, 38-46). In particular, local governments were put in charge of the development of their constituencies in the broad sense of the term and were given new responsibilities in fields such as public education, public health, urban transport, public utilities,

and urban planning, over and above their traditional responsibility for civil registration or the provision of local public services, such as garbage disposal, public hygiene, etc. At least potentially, these legislative changes transformed local governments from dependent and purely administrative entities into political decision making centres, even if their endowment with resources usually did not match their new responsibilities (de Althaus 1987).

Nevertheless, by leaving it up to future legislation to define the prerogatives and functions of local governments more clearly, the Constitution of 1979 also left some room for different interpretations of constitutional norms. Two such interpretations became the basis of subsequent laws regulating local government, namely, the Decreto Ley No. 051 of 1981, which replaced the old Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades of 1892, and the Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades, Ley No. 23852, of 1983 (Mejía 1990: 122-126; Delgado and Olivera 1983; Castro-Pozo and Delgado 1989, 38-45). In the first case, local governments were essentially seen as efficient providers of local services, or "service enterprises," centred around the mayor and the municipal bureaucracy with little or no input from councillors or the citizenry. The second law, on the contrary, opened the door to a more modern notion of democratic local *governments* in the true sense of the word, allowing for the participation of municipal councillors in the running of the local administration, as well as making it easier for the citizenry to participate in the making of decisions at the local level. I will discuss these two legal norms in more detail later on in the present as well as in the following chapter.

The revaluation of local governments after the return to democratic rule has to be seen in the wider context of decentralist reforms contained in the new Constitution of 1979. In fact, by enshrining political decentralization as an organizing principle of the Peruvian state in article no. 79, the new Constitution not only strengthened the existing municipalities, but effectively created a whole new layer of government at the regional level.¹ The fact that political decentralization was included in the Constitution of 1979 can largely be attributed to the pressure brought to bear on the Constituent Assembly by local and regional movements opposed to the long-standing centralist bias of the Peruvian political system (Caravedo 1988, 210-216). The concerns of these movements were embraced not only by the parties of the left, for reasons just explained, but to a certain extent also by President Belaúnde's Acción Popular party, which wanted to retain some of the political support it had received in the 1980 general elections (Wilson and Garzón 1985, 332).

While pressure from local and regional movements was essential to put political decentralization on the agenda of the Constituent Assembly, there existed at least three other reasons, some of them long-standing ones, that had made political, as well as economic, decentralization an enduring preoccupation for most political forces in Peru. On the one hand, the levelling of the profound economic and social disparities between the different regions of the country, which had long been recognized as an impediment to national unity (Mariátegui 1971, 153-181; Flores Galindo 1981), was a concern that many political forces

shared.⁴ Especially during the second half of the twentieth century, the capital Lima had developed into the undisputed political and economic centre of the country, concentrating about one third of its population as well as attracting a disproportionate share of its financial resources, industry, and public services. The other regions, on the contrary, were politically subordinate to the capital and suffered from a relative lack of resources, which was reflected, for example, in slower economic growth or economic stagnation, fewer or non-existent public services, lower per-capita incomes, and lower standards of living. Most national governments in the past, authoritarian as well as democratic ones, had tried without much success to redress these regional imbalances, largely by way of administrative deconcentration or delegation. These attempts had produced a variety of regional organisms with differing powers and resources, for instance, the departmental public works boards (JDOPs) founded in 1956, the regional development organizations (ORDES) created under the Morales Bermúdez government in the late 1970s, or the development corporations (CORDES) which were first established under Manuel Prado in the 1950s and 1960s and re-installed under the second Belaúnde government as transitional organizations leading to regional governments (Caravedo 1988; Schmidt 1989a, 17-36; 1989b).

A second factor favouring political decentralization in the early 1980s was the emergence of a broad consensus opposing the concentration of political power in the hands of an increasingly unwieldy central state apparatus. The historical dominance of the central state had its roots in a long tradition of political

centralism and the establishment of a development pattern based on raw material exports and dependent semi-industrialization (González de Olarte 1989). However, it was the experience with the previous military regime that had cast a particularly stark light on the limitations of a state-centred development model, making it more and more obvious that the state had neither the resources nor the managerial capacities to fulfil the host of new responsibilities that it had taken on. While the heavy involvement of the public sector in the economy and the resulting inefficiency and waste of resources was the object of particularly severe criticism, a down-sizing of the central state apparatus was favoured not only by those who espoused neo-liberal economic theories. Many believed that a smaller central state and a devolution of powers to regional and local governments would improve overall administrative effectiveness and efficiency and thereby contribute to the building of a more modern state (Mejía 1990, 118). Even more importantly, a cash-strapped central administration had little choice but to delegate responsibilities - if not always scarce resources - to lower levels of government, hoping that it would thus be possible to deflect potential conflicts from the central level and thereby prevent a repetition of the social mobilizations of the late 1970s. In fact, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, the Morales Bermúdez government had provided an early example for such a strategy by transferring the responsibilities for urban shantytowns from the central state agency SINAMOS to the municipalities.

Finally, in a context of transition from authoritarian rule, political

decentralization was also seen as a means to complement the democratization of a political system that had concentrated power at the central level for too long, while permitting little or no participation by its citizens. By devolving powers and responsibilities to lower levels of government, it was hoped that the regions and municipalities would be given a greater chance to defend their interests vis-à-vis the powerful central government, which was of course one of the key concerns of the local and regional movements mentioned before. At the same time, the return to democratic elections at the local and regional levels would allow for greater citizen participation in political decision making processes, making local and regional governments more responsive to the concerns of the population. Taken a step further, political decentralization was seen by some as a means to introduce new forms of *direct* popular participation that would coexist with or even replace the existing representative political institutions. Such propositions, which were of course much more controversial than the previous two, were defended chiefly by parts of the political left as the embodiment of "real" democracy.

Given the existence of at least three strong reasons favouring political decentralization in Peru, it is no surprise to find support for it across the political spectrum (Iguitiz et al. 1986). However, this is not to say that the same political actors that embrace political decentralization in principle would actively push for decentralization policies to be implemented once they have been elected to power. In fact, as was discussed in Chapter 2, it is rather the rule than the exception that

political leaders either scuttle political decentralization altogether, or at least mould the respective programmes to accommodate their own political needs.'

Notwithstanding these caveats, the widespread support for political decentralization following the transition to democratic rule nevertheless constituted a window of opportunity for the Peruvian left. Local governments in particular had become much more relevant than before, and the left was well positioned to make inroads at the local level. To do so was crucial, given that national power had eluded the left in 1980 and there was no chance of gaining it before the next general elections scheduled for 1985. However, at least as significant was the fact that the municipalities as the first level of government were the logical interlocutors for popular movements. Consequently, leftist-controlled local governments would be in a privileged position to identify popular sector demands and to rejuvenate existing alliances between leftist political parties and popular movements. In this context, local governments could fulfil two different functions: they could serve as an institutional means to address some of the needs of the popular sector, or, if local resource scarcity made this impossible, they could be used as sounding boards that would amplify popular demands and redirect them at higher levels of government. In fact, these two options reflected some more fundamental political orientations within the Peruvian left, which I will examine in the following section.

Local Politics and the Political Strategies of the Peruvian Left

Despite the importance of local politics for the Peruvian left, its long-term ambitions of course went considerably further than the local arena. Both municipal politics and popular participation at the local level were incorporated by the various factions of the Peruvian left into their respective overall political projects. While the ultimate goal of these projects was clear, namely, the ascent of the left to power at the national level, there was considerable disagreement over the appropriate strategy to attain this goal, as well as over the underlying political projects themselves. These disagreements within the Peruvian left, which, not surprisingly, resurfaced as fundamentally different views on the role of local governments and of popular participation, are closely related to similar divisions within the Latin American left as a whole.

Basically, what lay at the root of these divisions were different views with respect to representative democracy and a critique of traditional conceptions of the role of the vanguard party of the left. Fissures along these lines had been developing within the Latin American left since the 1970s, however, they became more accentuated in the following decade, when large parts of the Latin American left abandoned orthodox Marxist-Leninist positions in favour of at least a partial embracement of democracy.⁶ This shift had important implications for the ideological and strategic outlook of the Latin American left. First and foremost, the revalorization of democracy as a good in and of itself and the espousal of the fundamental principles of representative democracy by the left

entailed a break with the tactical and instrumentalist stance that had dominated leftist thinking during the 1970s. By accepting the procedural rules of the democratic game, such as free elections and the alternation of different political forces in power, large parts of the Latin American left renounced revolutionary violence as a means to overthrow the democratic system and ceased to regard the democratic political process simply as an arena to accumulate forces for the anti-system struggle.

Likewise, the acceptance of political pluralism and the recognition of the indeterminate character of the democratic political process facilitated the move away from economic determinism and other forms of teleological Marxism that had been prevalent before. Crucially, this entailed a redefinition of the role of leftist political parties and their relations to other actors within civil society. Without the idea of a predetermined course of history, there was no need any more for a vanguard party of the left that by definition possessed the correct analysis for any given political situation and represented the single objectively progressive historical subject, namely, the proletariat. The debunking of the notion of the vanguard party, along with an almost exclusive focus on the state as the prime lever for political and economic change, also led to a reconsideration of the idea of political and economic change. Political and economic change was no longer thought possible solely via the seizure of the state apparatus by the armed proletariat and its party and the implementation of its revolutionary programme, but via a long-term strategy of building political hegemony, or, in

Gramsci's words, a war of position. Among other things, such a strategy involved the construction of alliances between one or several political parties of the left, as well as other actors, particularly new and old social movements."

It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of the Latin American left's embracement of democracy; however, this embracement was by no means unanimous. Traditional leftist positions remained fairly strong and continued to command a sizable mass following in- and outside of the organized left, a fact that is often overlooked in the literature. This was particularly evident in a country such as Peru, where traditional criticisms levelled against representative democracy continued to ring truer than elsewhere.* Not only had democracy proved to be incapable of addressing the more deep-seated socioeconomic causes of poverty and inequality and could therefore be dismissed as merely "formal," a condition that was shared by almost all other Latin American countries. In addition, democracy in Peru had also failed to produce at least a minimum of *procedural* fairness, openness, and impartiality. In fact, given the extent of human rights violations committed by the Peruvian army in its fight against Sendero Luminoso, as well as rampant institutional chaos and inefficiency, one could indeed doubt whether democracy would ever be able to keep its procedural promise.

A further complicating factor in the Peruvian case was the presence of several armed guerilla groups, such as the MRTA and Sendero Luminoso. The activities especially of Sendero Luminoso not only showed that violent anti-system

opposition was still viable, but its relative success in attracting mass support, first among the Andean peasantry and later among recent urban migrants and the impoverished youth of urban shantytowns, provided a constant challenge to the strategy of the "institutional" left to achieve change from within the system. As a result of this challenge from the extreme left, the democratic commitment of some of the more radical factions of the Peruvian left, which rightly feared losing some of their mass support to the armed opposition, remained tenuous and the option of revolutionary violence was never completely renounced.

As a result of these contradictions within the Peruvian left, a wide variety of ideological viewpoints and strategic orientations developed. It would go too far at this point to try to analyze these complex developments in detail, especially given the fact that to date, there exists no comprehensive analysis of the left in Peru.⁶ Instead, I will focus on only two distinct positions within the Peruvian left, which I will call the revolutionary and the radical-democratic approach, respectively. These approaches merit special attention, since they were most influential with regard to the formulation of leftist policies concerning local government and popular participation at the grassroots. I will outline the two approaches in an exemplary fashion at this stage of the dissertation, concentrating chiefly on the writings and public pronouncements of two of their main representatives, namely, Javier Diez Canseco for the revolutionary approach, and Henry Pease García for the radical-democratic one. Both occupy a leading role in their respective part of the leftist party spectrum and their views can therefore

be taken as representative. Later on in this chapter, as well as in the two following chapters, I will provide further details on the two approaches, seen against the backdrop of the concrete experiences with popular participation under leftist-controlled local governments in Lima.

The revolutionary approach, which dominated towards the beginning of the 1980s and experienced a resurgence as the decade grew to a close, is nurtured by a deep scepticism towards democracy (Adrianzén 1990). The transition from authoritarian to electoral regimes is welcomed, but representative democracy is at the same time faulted for being unable to change the underlying class divisions that are seen as the root causes of widespread poverty, social injustice, and international dependency. Therefore, representative democracy from the revolutionary vantage point amounts to little more than a formal electoral game in which different factions of the ruling classes compete with one another for power. Since achieving fundamental socioeconomic and political change is considered impossible within the confines of this system, the revolutionary approach advocates its ultimate destruction and replacement by a system based on the self-government of the people (*autogobierno de masas*), that is, the establishment of direct democracy exercised via popular movements.

The replacement of the old system, or the *viejo estado* (Diez Canseco 1992, 82),¹⁰ would be brought about by a broad popular alliance, comprising popular movements, as well as trade unions and leftist political parties. It could, but would not necessarily have to take the form of a violent overthrow. At least in

theory, this popular alliance would be completely democratic, since it would be governed by its members, who would exercise their decision making power via the popular movements or other organizations they belong to. However, while the revolutionary standpoint explicitly denounces the old vanguardism of the 1970s and advocates political pluralism within the left as well as intra-party democracy (Diez Canseco 1987, 80-81), there is a definite tension in its view of the relations between leftist parties and popular movements. This tension is evidenced by the fact that while all decision making power theoretically derives from the bases, it is deemed equally important that the political party or parties of the left *lead* the alliance. Quite frequently, the revolutionary approach emphasizes that "the" popular movement (sic) has to be "constructed" and "fortified" by the political parties of the left (Diez Canseco 1990, 32). Obviously, such a process of constructing and shaping popular movements would throw them open to political manipulation of all kinds and would likely turn them into more or less dependent support bases.

With respect to democratic political institutions, among them local governments, the revolutionary approach essentially adopts a tactical stance. These institutions are considered "trincheras al servicio del pueblo" (trenches in the service of the people) (Delgado 1982a, 8); in other words, they are seen as political spaces inside the system which can and should be occupied by the left to prepare for its ultimate transformation. Basically, this could take two forms. On the one hand, political institutions, such as local governments, could serve as

anti-system tribunes in the sense that they would be used to denounce the inadequacy of the existing institutional system in dealing with the most pressing problems of the popular majorities. On the other hand, by participating in political institutions, popular movements could acquire the organizational experience needed to administer their own affairs. In this context, local alliances between popular movements and leftist-controlled local governments, while developing within the existing institutional framework, are considered embryonic forms of a future popular self-government or *autogobierno popular*.

The radical-democratic stance, which was prevalent towards the mid-1980s and since then has shared an uneasy coexistence with the revolutionary approach, concurs with the latter view that fundamental changes are indeed needed to alter the situation of the popular majorities. However, it is assumed that such changes are possible *within* the context of representative democracy, even if the required reforms are radical and would cut to the bone of the existing political system." In fact, the procedural guarantees and civil liberties on which representative democracy is based are seen as a precondition for such reforms. Therefore, what the radical-democratic approach proposes is not to replace, but to *supplement* representative democracy with various forms of direct democracy. In essence, this would enable popular movements, which are seen as the expression of democratic practices that have developed within civil society, to participate directly in the political system and thereby help democratize political parties and institutions. The revalorization of local governments, as well as political

decentralization at all levels, are considered important elements in such reforms, producing a redistribution of power away from the central state and established political actors and opening up the political institutions to participation from below (Pease 1984).

Local governments fulfil two specific functions in the radical-democratic project. First, instead of being used primarily as anti-system tribunes, they would serve as an institutional means to pragmatically address some of the basic needs of the popular sector, thereby demonstrating the capacity of the left to govern (Pease 1991). Given existing class divisions and inter-institutional power differentials, this would almost certainly entail confrontations with higher levels of government and other political actors over the allocation of sufficient powers and resources. However, in contrast to the revolutionary approach, these conflicts would stay within the boundaries of representative democracy, even if leftist local governments should decide to resort to extra-institutional forms of struggle, such as marches or demonstrations. Second, exercising power at the local level would give the left a chance to build its political support base, or, to put it in Gramscian terms, to lay the foundations for political hegemony and to pave the way for an eventual takeover of political power at the national level. In contrast to the revolutionary view, this form of political hegemony is not to be understood simply as a euphemism for rallying "the" popular movement behind the party or parties of the left. Rather, popular movements are viewed as equal partners in this endeavour. Crucially, they are credited with moving the left

away from the vanguardist ideologies of the 1970s and towards a re-conceptualization of how to "make politics" (Pease 1983c, 36), a view which reflects a growing recognition for the autonomy of individual popular movements as well as for the often heterogeneous viewpoints they express.

Both perspectives, the revolutionary as well as the radical-democratic one, are crucial for an understanding of the Peruvian left's stance towards local government and popular participation in the 1980s and beyond. Obviously, the two perspectives, which were outlined above in somewhat simplified form for analytical purposes, are not always as clearly spelled out and distinguished from one another in political reality. Reflecting the complicated alignments and realignments within the Peruvian left, which produced numerous ideological and programmatic shifts, they frequently appear muddled, informing the programmatic stance of a particular leftist party or the policies of a specific local government sometimes simultaneously, if not to the same degree. Obviously, ambiguities and contradictions can also result from tactical considerations, inducing political leaders to clothe relatively moderate goals in radical political language so as not to lose mass support, or to hide an uncompromisingly anti-system stance behind somewhat more conciliatory rhetoric in order to justify competing in elections over political spaces inside the system. In short, political rhetoric should always be carefully distinguished from political practice.

Keeping these caveats in mind, I will examine how the revolutionary and the radical-democratic perspectives shaped the Peruvian left's involvement in local

politics and its stance towards popular participation at the grassroots. Seen against the background of the theoretical framework that was developed in the first and second chapters of this dissertation, my analysis will focus chiefly on the way in which the strategic and programmatic orientations of the Peruvian left shaped its alliances with urban popular movements. In what remains of this chapter, I will briefly examine the period from 1981 to 1983, a period during which the revolutionary view was clearly dominant, shaping the policies of the five district governments of Metropolitan Lima that were controlled by the left. In the next chapter, I will concentrate on the period from 1983 to 1986, when the radical-democratic view gained the upper hand. This view found its clearest expression in the policies of the municipal government of Metropolitan Lima under mayor Alfonso Barrantes Lingán. Taking this discussion as a base, I will then go on to present the results of a case study of popular participation in the local government of El Agustino, a low-income district of Metropolitan Lima, during the period from 1987 until 1992. Here, the emphasis will lie on the consequences of an absence of a dominant party strategy with regard to popular participation, and the resulting struggles between different parties of the left.

Leftist local governments in Lima 1981-1983

The first municipal elections after the return to democratic rule, which took place in November of 1980,¹² ended with a qualified success for the Peruvian left. Only six months after its crushing defeat in the general elections of May of

the same year, the left regained a considerable share of the popular vote, enabling it to win a number of mayorships at the provincial and the district level all across the country, five of them in low-income or "popular" districts of Metropolitan Lima. Notwithstanding the decisive victory of Acción Popular, which reasserted its electoral dominance by winning the majority of constituencies and virtually sweeping Lima, this electoral comeback of sorts achieved two important objectives for the Peruvian left. On the one hand, it consolidated the presence of the left on the electoral scene as the second strongest political force in terms of the popular vote, while at the same time opening the door to gaining a foothold in the institutional system. On the other hand, and maybe more importantly, the remarkable turnaround of its electoral fortunes just months after the formation of the electoral alliance Izquierda Unida, served as a stark reminder to the Peruvian left of the absolute necessity to maintain organizational, if not always programmatic, unity to attain electoral success.

Nevertheless, when the five victorious mayoral candidates of Izquierda Unida assumed their offices in the low-income districts of Comas, Carabayllo, San Martín de Porres, El Agustino, and Ate-Vitarte, they took on no easy task. For the first time in its history, the Peruvian left, which had emerged from the anti-military struggle of the 1970s profoundly sceptical towards representative democracy and marked by a political style of confrontation and mass mobilization, found itself in a position to assume the role of government, to administer resources, and to exercise power, albeit on a very limited scale.

While there had been little quarrel within the Peruvian left before the elections about the necessity of occupying such "political spaces," there was little consensus afterwards on how to fill them. Not surprisingly, it proved difficult to reconcile a predominantly anti-system rhetoric and ideology, often centred around the construction of an autonomous *poder popular* outside of the institutions of the democratic state, with the requirements of public office, that is, with the necessity of finding solutions for the basic needs of the population from within these very institutions. During the period from 1981 to 1983, the tension between these two factors proved to be determinant for the policies of the five district governments, including their approach to popular participation.

Before returning in the last section of this chapter to the particular strategic choices and dilemmas that characterize the revolutionary approach, I want to first explain the concrete impact it had on the left's involvement in local politics between 1981 and 1983. In order to do so, I will concentrate on two main aspects. First, I will shed some more light on the principal assumptions and prescriptions of the revolutionary approach to local politics. Second, and more importantly, I will examine the actual policies that were implemented by the five district governments with regard to popular participation, seen against the background of institutional and economic constraints. In this context, I will also show to what extent urban popular movements were involved in the formulation and implementation of these policies.

The Revolutionary Approach to Local Politics

At the beginning of the 1980s, the way in which the Peruvian left approached the issues of local politics and popular participation at the local level reflected the ideological and strategic orientations that had carried over from the mass struggles of the 1970s. As was mentioned before, the Peruvian left was deeply sceptical of representative democracy, due in part to previous negative experiences, and basically regarded the transition to democratic rule as merely a change from one form of bourgeois domination to another. Consequently, for large parts of the Peruvian left, the main goal of its struggle had not really changed: its prime objective was still to forge a broad popular alliance led by the political left in order to substitute representative democracy with some form of socialism, usually called *autogobierno popular*, *democracia popular*, etc. What *had* changed, however, was the terrain on which the struggle was waged. With the decline of the mass mobilizations of the 1970s, the left had to try to exploit the newly opened political spaces at the local level in order to confront the democratic regime and to reassemble a revolutionary popular alliance.

Maybe the most developed formulation of this perspective was provided by Luis Chirinos. In a frequently cited work (Chirinos 1980), Chirinos questions the purportedly democratic character of the reforms concerning local government contained in the Constitution of 1979 and subsequent legal norms. Far from being genuinely democratic, Chirinos contends, these reforms as well as the transition to representative democracy that made them possible, are mere elements

in the struggle between different factions of the bourgeoisie over the imposition of a new form of bourgeois hegemony. According to this view, while the transition to representative democracy allowed one faction of the bourgeoisie to substitute its economic model of world market integration and stronger links with "imperialism" (Chirinos 1980, 14) for the previous import substitution strategy favoured by the reformist military regime, the internal logic of this model, most notably its social and economic costs, called for increased repression and therefore less, not more, democracy. Almost inevitably resulting in a radical deterioration of the living conditions of the working population, the opening up of the economy would likely lead to major social upheaval, especially given the recent experience with popular unrest during the transition period. Since such social protest could conceivably threaten the very survival of the economic model as well as the political system to which it is linked, it would have to be repressed, something which could hardly be done within the confines of representative democracy.

Local government reform, including the introduction of democratic elections at the local level and the investment of local governments with new powers and, to a lesser extent, resources, has to be seen against this background. Following Chirinos, these "technical-capitalist" reforms are designed to de-politicize the demands of the popular sectors by deflecting them from the central state and towards the municipalities. In other words, the main purpose of these reforms is to "create the illusion that the fundamental problems and contradictions of the

capitalist system can be solved in the municipal realm,"¹¹ thereby transforming the municipalities into a sort of "barrier against the popular movement" (Chirinos 1980, 15). While the bourgeoisie is far from being interested in "real" democracy, a condition Chirinos seems to equate with full and direct popular participation, it is willing to allow a certain degree of democracy at the local level in order to maintain its stranglehold on the political process higher up.

Clearly then, local government reform opens only limited spaces for popular participation and democratization. Despite these limitations, however, Chirinos believes that it still makes sense for the left to step into the municipal arena. After all, the reforms nevertheless strengthened local governments and created some room for political activity, thus transforming the municipalities into a sort of bridgehead inside the political system, or, in Chirinos' own words, into "area[s] of confrontation with the bourgeoisie and its state" (Chirinos 1980, 17). Taking popular demands related to the improvements of urban living conditions as a starting point, the left could use local governments as sounding boards to amplify these demands and to challenge the central government. The resulting mobilizations would not only increase popular participation; at the same time, democratic and participatory local governments would enable the population to acquire experience in government and in the administration of their own affairs, thereby laying the bases for the creation of autonomous "local powers" (Chirinos 1980, 17). Ultimately, Chirinos hopes, these experiences will enable the people to transcend the municipal horizon and "to find the ways to its liberation"

(Chirinos 1980, 81).

Chirinos' analysis is echoed by other authors who expressed similar views at the time, while putting more emphasis on the necessity of revolutionary change and of developing parallel institutions outside the existing political framework.¹⁴ Julio Calderón, for instance, maintains that "the urban problem today in our country is an important element in the accumulation of forces in the revolutionary process" (Calderón 1980a, 59). Angel Delgado, for his part, states that "the [municipal] councils, which are theoretically part of state domination over society, can . . . revert to favour the population and convert themselves into levers to help further the democratic struggle." Democracy as it is understood here does not reside in existing democratic institutions: "For the people, the struggle for democracy consists of the strengthening of its own organizations, imposing them on bourgeois legality" (Delgado 1982a, 8). César Rojas, finally, sees the participation in the municipalities as "part of the great task of accumulating revolutionary forces in order to further the material and subjective conditions for the revolution in our country" (Rojas Huaroto 1982, 12), which finds "its most mature expression in revolutionary violence" (Rojas Huaroto 1982, 11). In sum, the return to representative democracy and municipal reform seems to have little intrinsic value for these authors. The reforms open certain political spaces which can be used in a tactical way to broaden popular participation, to amplify popular demands confronting the central government, and to point out the contradictions of the capitalist system. The ultimate goal, however, remains some form of

socialism, superseding capitalism and representative democracy.

Experiences with Popular Participation at the Local Level

While the Peruvian left's anti-system stance stemmed largely from ideological and strategic considerations, the institutional and economic environment in which local politics was set rendered a confrontational strategy vis-à-vis higher levels of government more plausible. First of all, the Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades, Decreto Legislativo (D.L.) No. 051 of 1981, which had been inspired by a very narrow interpretation of the provisions of the Constitution of 1979, severely limited the autonomy of local governments and therefore did not go much beyond the authoritarian conception of local governments as dependencies of the central government. Essentially, the D.L. No. 051 did not envisage autonomous agents of local *government* in the true sense of the word, but hierarchically structured and dependent "service enterprises" (Delgado and Olivera 1983; Mejía Navarrete 1990, 122ff.). Consequently, the D.L. No. 051 stressed managerial and bureaucratic aspects of local government, such as administrative reform and the effective management of urban services, over other issues, such as democratic institutional reform. City councillors, for example, were kept from interfering directly in the municipal administration, which was controlled by the mayor and his *director municipal*, a newly created position to oversee the administration. In the field of urban services, local governments were reduced to mere appendages of the central government

agencies and as such made unable to fulfil their constitutional role as autonomous agents of development.

Apart from these legal constraints, local governments, especially at the district level, had virtually no independent resource base at the beginning of the 1980s and were therefore almost totally dependent on transfer payments from higher levels of government. While resources were severely limited to begin with, due to the acute economic crisis of the early 1980s, the five leftist-controlled district governments found themselves in an even more difficult situation. Both the provincial government of Metropolitan Lima as well as the national government and its agencies were in the hands of Acción Popular, and there was little hope for municipalities governed by Izquierda Unida to increase their share of the resource pie via an inter-institutional bargaining strategy. Since the D.L. No. 051 had only recently been passed by the AP national government and quick changes in the overall political panorama seemed improbable given the institutional dominance of AP, this situation was unlikely to change. Consequently, it made sense to push for greater municipal autonomy as well as an increase in municipal resources by using extra-institutional means, even only in the interest of an effective and efficient local government.¹⁵

A further handicap for the practice of the five leftist-led district governments was the fact that the D.L. No. 051 severely restricted the right to popular participation, which had previously been guaranteed by the Constitution of 1979. It did so in two ways: first, by failing to specify the concrete

mechanisms through which the rights of initiative and of information would be exercised and, more importantly, by refusing to recognize existing popular movements as the legitimate agents of popular participation. Instead, D.L. No. 051 stipulated that any organized participation of the population had to be channelled through *juntas de vecinos* or *comités comunales* specifically created for this purpose. These new committees, whose basic role was to ensure that the population contributed their labour to municipal projects and to supervise the provision of services by the local government, were completely lacking in autonomy, since the municipal council determined their composition as well as their precise functions. In other words, apart from being subordinate to the municipality and limited to what was essentially a consultative role and the provision of free labour, the committees could easily be instrumentalized and used by the municipality to bypass existing popular organizations.

In the face of such significant constraints on popular participation, it is difficult to see how the five district governments controlled by Izquierda Unida were able to implement even parts of their strategy. As was explained in Chapter 2, the devolution of powers and resources to lower levels of government, the autonomy of local governments from the central government, as well as the institutionalization of clear mechanisms for popular participation are crucial preconditions for the success of any participatory strategy. Given that such preconditions did not exist, the five leftist district governments would have had to break existing laws, or at least stretch them to the limit, in order to reach their

goals. The latter is precisely what happened. While accepting the premise that local governments are part of the state and therefore subject to its laws (Távora 1983, 251), the five leftist district mayors nevertheless found ways of interpreting the existing legal regulations in order to accommodate some of their own goals. Essentially, these goals were: first, to establish stronger links and to intensify the communication between the municipality and the population, especially that part of it which was organized in urban popular movements, and second, to connect with the demands voiced by popular organizations over the provision of urban services and to forge a common front between these organizations and the municipality against the central government and its agencies.

Several instruments were used to achieve these ends (Chirinos 1986, 6ff.; Chirinos 1991, 101ff.; Rojas Julca 1989, 10ff.). One such instrument were reunions between the mayor and/or members of the district council and the popular organizations of the district, the so-called *cabildos abiertos*. These reunions, which took place once or twice in each district during the period from 1981 to 1983, served principally as a means to inform and consult the population about the policies of the municipality. To participate, popular organizations simply had to register with the municipality prior to the event; no further restrictions were imposed on them. The *asambleas populares*, or popular assemblies, fulfilled a similar function as the *cabildos abiertos*, with the important difference that they were open to the population at large. As a consequence of this, the role of popular organizations was somewhat diminished and the

municipal authorities, especially the mayor, could exert greater control over the proceedings. In several cases, district mayors exploited this tactical advantage, using their personal prestige to sway a popular assembly to support their own positions, most notably when they were facing opposition in the district council at the same time.

Another form of popular participation implemented by the leftist district governments, and maybe the most far-reaching one of all, were the *comisiones mixtas*. These joint commissions were composed of representatives of the respective municipality as well as of popular movements, mostly neighbourhood movements, again without imposing restrictions on their participation. The commissions, which had often grown out of a *cabildo abierto*, had the mandate to develop a common strategy as well as to coordinate the activities of the municipality and the neighbourhood organizations in their demands on the central government and its agencies for improvements in urban infrastructure and services. Typically, the *comisiones mixtas* would organize mass mobilizations and marches that were openly supported by the local district government, thereby putting pressure on central authorities, often with surprisingly positive results. In Comas and Carabayllo, for example, the *comisiones mixtas* generated enough pressure to make SEDAPAL, an agency of the central government, accept bids for the execution of works designed to improve the provision of the two districts with piped water and sewers, as well as to assign sufficient resources. In San Martín de Porres, a *comisión mixta* had some success in speeding up the process

of granting land titles to residents of this district (Chirinos 1991, 102-103).

More significantly than their relative success in having their demands heard, the *comisiones mixtas* helped to alter the hitherto dominant relation between local governments and the population. On the one hand, by investing long-standing popular demands, which previously had been expressed chiefly outside the political system, with the authority and prestige of the institution of local government, these demands obviously gained clout and respectability. Not only that, by recognizing the existing popular organizations as the legitimate representatives of the population and its demands and by refraining from applying the provisions of the D.L. No. 051 concerning the *juntas de vecinos* and the *comités comunales*, the district governments elevated the stature of these organizations: in other words, they strengthened the agents of popular participation. Among other things, this new attitude on the part of the local authorities allowed for a greater degree of cooperation between different popular movements, which had previously often operated in complete isolation from one another, concentrating only on the needs of a particular settlement or *pueblo*. At the same time, local governments themselves gained legitimacy and prestige in the eyes of the population, if only as efficient instruments in the struggle to address its basic demands and not in the sense of truly democratic legitimacy.

De la Protesta a la Propuesta:“ The Shift from the Revolutionary to the Radical-Democratic Strategy

While the five leftist district governments undoubtedly pushed the frontiers

of popular participation further than the D.L. No. 051 and the ruling Acción Popular party had ever intended, the resulting experiences were nevertheless limited in a number of ways. For one thing, popular participation in the five districts essentially remained restricted to neighbourhood organizations; other popular movements and their concerns, particularly survival movements and other women's movements, were effectively excluded. The dominance of neighbourhood movements can be seen as a carry-over from the mass struggles of the 1970s, in which the *frentes barriales* had played an important role. Also, survival movements were still relatively weak in the early 1980s. Not surprisingly, rather narrow demands relating to urban services and infrastructure predominated, be it with regard to piped water and sewers, transport facilities, or land titles. More complex problems, such as devising a strategy for the social and economic development of the district as a whole, were rarely tackled, and the difficult question of how to democratize the municipal administration itself via popular participation was not even touched.

Another important weakness of the participatory structures developed from 1981 to 1983, which is directly related to the foregoing question, lay in their eventuality and lack of permanence. None of these structures were ever formally institutionalized, which de facto gave the municipal council and especially the mayor important discretionary powers over when to activate them. As was mentioned above, some district mayors tried to use participatory organisms in a cooptive and clientelist manner to shore up their own personal support base

(Chirinos 1991, 106). The strong position of the district mayors within their municipal councils and their relative freedom to develop such practices was substantially reinforced by the fact that the local committees of Izquierda Unida proved to be almost inoperative after the elections and therefore could exercise only little control (Salcedo 1981, 94ff.). Furthermore, there were instances in which the municipal authorities demonstrated a certain *verticalismo*, or in other words, a tendency to interfere with the autonomy of popular movements and impose some political control on them from above (Rojas Julca 1989, 12). These flaws motivated Luis Chirinos, who cannot be described other than as an ardent supporter of the left, to qualify the kind of participation developed by the five district governments as collaborative and not truly democratic (Chirinos 1991, 105).¹⁷

To a certain extent, it is probably justified to attribute these defects to a pervasive personalist and clientelist bias which the left shares with all other political parties in Peru, if to a lesser degree. However, they also flowed from vanguardist ideological orientations that dominated the thinking of the Peruvian left at the time and that were discussed in more detail above. As was explained, these orientations entailed a certain paternalism or what Távara, the district mayor of Carabayllo from 1981 to 1983, calls a "pedagogical and constructive . . . relation" with popular movements (Távara 1983, 253), in the sense that the left considered it its responsibility to build and lead these movements. It is not hard to see how such attitudes could enter into conflict with the otherwise professed

respect for the absolute autonomy of popular movements (Távora 1983, 252-253), especially in cases of disagreement over goals and strategy. The fact that the five district mayors themselves had been members of urban popular movements before running for public office did little to change these attitudes and did not significantly increase the weight of these movements in their relations with the local administrations.

Consequently, it may be asked to what extent the left in the five districts would have in fact implemented its project of local *autogobierno popular*, even if existing laws had allowed it to do so. Popular movements in this scheme are considered equal partners of the municipal authorities, since they are not merely informed and consulted over municipal policies, but play an active role in the decision making process via public assemblies and referenda. As Távora explains, a network of district-level organizations would discuss, approve, supervise, and execute the general policy of the municipality, while not taking charge of every single aspect of it (Távora 1983, 253-254). Moreover, the project of *autogobierno* would institute the full recall powers, thereby giving the electorate the right to remove district councillors and mayors from office between elections. Taken to the extreme, popular movements could even be considered superior to local governments in the alliance, with public forums practising direct democracy and effectively taking the place of the institutions of representative democracy. Quite rightly, José Távora remarks that such a form of joint decision making goes far beyond the conventional meaning of the term participation.

which is precisely why he prefers to speak of *autogobierno* (Távora 1983, 251ff.).¹⁸

More so than the inherent contradictions in its view of popular participation, however, it was the underlying strategic dilemmas of the revolutionary approach that proved decisive for its ultimate decline. As was explained before, the revolutionary approach is based on the assumption that meaningful changes in the situation of the popular majorities are impossible within the framework of representative democracy. Consequently, in order to be plausible, the revolutionary approach has to show that democratic institutions do not and cannot produce results. While this is relatively unproblematic for a revolutionary left operating outside of the democratic political system, it becomes increasingly complicated when the left becomes a part of these very institutions, which is of course the situation that the five leftist-controlled district governments in Lima found themselves in. If the left wanted to maintain a credible anti-system stance under these conditions, it had little choice but to opt for a confrontational strategy vis-à-vis the central government.

The main difficulty with this perspective was that it proved to be unable of addressing the problems that the inhabitants of the five districts were faced with every day. Given the urgency of these problems, it became less and less possible to defend a confrontational strategy which essentially postponed practical solutions to the day of the revolution. Consequently, a more pragmatic, reform-oriented approach slowly began to replace the old anti-system stance. This change was

helped along by the fact that the left, which before 1980 had never been involved in institutional politics, was now able to look back on some concrete experiences and was less equivocal in its condemnation of representative democracy. Furthermore, by 1983 the political panorama had significantly changed. Popular support for Acción Popular had dwindled and the United Left began to look more and more like a serious contender in the upcoming municipal and maybe even the next national elections. With its electoral prospects looking brighter, the left began to tone down its anti-system rhetoric and to slowly move away from some of its more radical positions. Grooming themselves for a possible future role in government, leftist politicians put more and more emphasis on concrete policy proposals and stressed the capacity of the left to govern within the existing representative democratic system.

This shift, which could be described as the move *de la protesta a la propuesta* or *de la reivindicación a la gestión* (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1992, 13ff.),¹⁹ had important consequences for the left's view of local government. With the likelihood of revolutionary change seeming ever more remote, and a leftist municipal administration or even a leftist national government being a distinct possibility, it no longer made much sense for the left to see local governments merely as platforms in its struggle against a political system that it had found difficult to penetrate and impossible to topple. The new approach to local government was particularly evident in the programmes and policies of the new city government of Lima led by Alfonso Barrantes Lingán, which assumed

office after Izquierda Unida's victory in the 1983 municipal elections and on which the following chapter will focus.

Chapter 5

THE PERUVIAN LEFT AND POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT II: THE BARRANTES ADMINISTRATION OF METROPOLITAN LIMA 1984-1986

The municipal elections for new provincial and district councils of November 1983 continued the upward trend in the electoral fortunes of the Peruvian left that had begun with the municipal elections of November 1980. Izquierda Unida was able to increase its overall share of the popular vote from 23.90% to 28.83% (Tuesta 1985, 117) and to win 22 new provincial councils, the most significant of them being Lima and Cuzco, while only losing four it had held previously, among them Arequipa. With this triumph, Izquierda Unida stabilized its position as the second strongest electoral force in the country, only slightly behind APRA, which had made even more significant gains to replace Acción Popular at the top of the electoral pyramid.¹

Without any doubt, the left's victory in Metropolitan Lima, where Izquierda Unida under its president and mayoral candidate Alfonso Barrantes Lingán took 36.63 % of the popular vote at the provincial level, as well as 19 of 41 districts (Tuesta 1985, 176),² was one of the most significant outcomes of the electoral contest of 1983. By winning the nation's capital, which concentrated a third of the country's population and an even larger share of its industrial and financial resources, the Peruvian left, for the first time in its history, had a relevant institutional forum to put its political programme into practice. Given the

centrality of the national capital in the overall political framework, its special status among Peruvian municipalities according to the Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades, Ley No. 23853, and the almost inevitable repercussions political events in Lima had on the national political scene, many leftists also saw in the municipal elections a warm-up for the struggle for overall political hegemony that was shaping up between APRA and Izquierda Unida in anticipation of the national elections of 1985. Not surprisingly, therefore, IU's victory in Lima was greeted enthusiastically by the leaders of the leftist alliance, many of whom took the defeat of the ruling centre-right Acción Popular as proof that the popular masses had at last come to accept the left as their natural political representation, even if they acknowledged that APRA also had a claim on the popular vote (Bernales 1983, 86).³

However, if it wanted to win nation-wide elections in the future, the Peruvian left first had to meet a double-faced challenge in the more immediate term. On the one hand, it needed to demonstrate its ability to govern from within the institutional framework of representative democracy. What this meant was that the left had to find pragmatic solutions for the main problems facing the Peruvian capital, particularly in the fields of public nutrition and health, public hygiene and garbage disposal, water supply, transport, and informal commerce. Only if the left could demonstrate that it was capable of administering the *gobierno chico*, or the small government, of Metropolitan Lima, was there a chance that the electorate would later entrust it with the greater responsibility of

leading the national government. Seen against this background, it is no surprise that Alfonso Barrantes, the new mayor of Lima and presidential hopeful of Izquierda Unida, was at pains to dispel the public image of the left as a force of confrontation and disorder, promising instead to lead a government of "order, discipline, and responsibility" (Barrantes 1983a, 30).⁴

Furthermore, in order to have electoral success at the national level, the Peruvian left needed to broaden its support base beyond the popular sector. As we have seen, even in the municipal elections of 1983, where the left was highly successful, it failed to attract more than one third of the popular vote nation-wide. Consequently, if it wanted to gain a majority, the left had to try to attract votes from other social groups, particularly the middle classes, and/or to strike alliances with other political actors. In order to achieve these goals, it was imperative for the left to convince others of its willingness to compromise and to work for the broadest possible consensus. Its campaign slogan, *Lima - una ciudad para todos*, as well as the fact that the new municipal administration favoured democratic openness and professional efficiency over political allegiance, clearly expressed such a willingness.⁵

At the same time, however, it was clear that such an approach implied a certain trade-off of popular sector interests against those of other political actors. In fact, it was maybe the most obvious risks of the leftist strategy that in order to gain respectability and legitimacy, the left would have to go too far in compromising its agenda for change, which in the end would make it

indistinguishable from other political forces.' Obviously, the left could not be content with proving its capacity to govern, if this meant nothing more than being as good an administrator as other political forces. Likewise, it was of little use for the left to demonstrate its ability to arrive at compromises with other political forces, if it ended up sacrificing most of its ideas and goals. Consequently, the second major challenge facing the left was to prove that despite the limitations of an institutional strategy, as well as the relative weakness of local governments in the overall institutional framework, it was nevertheless possible to achieve fundamental political, social, and economic changes in the interest of the popular majorities. Apart from the implementation of a number of wide-ranging social and economic reforms, the left also needed to show that an institutional strategy would substantially widen the possibilities for popular participation.

Not surprisingly, the inherent risks of an institutional strategy were stressed by the radical left. Javier Diez Canseco, for example, and with him the more radical sectors of the Peruvian left, continued to advocate a confrontational strategy vis-à-vis the central government. In his view, the popular support that the left had received in the 1983 municipal elections should have been used to "impose [the left's] triumph in the streets" (Diez Canseco 1983, 88). In other words, it should have been channelled into street mobilizations that would have forced the ruling AP-government to abandon its neo-liberal economic policies. Diez Canseco's views were echoed by Herrera, who saw in the 1983 municipal elections merely a first, if crucial step on the "vía de la revolución peruana"

(Herrera 1986, 90), that is, on the way to the left's takeover of power at the national level and the subsequent road to socialism.

What finally tilted the balance in favour of an institutional strategy was the fact that the prospect of electoral victory and a future leftist government lent unity of purpose to the delicate endeavour that Izquierda Unida was at the time. Alfonso Barrantes, who was probably the most influential figure on the Peruvian left throughout the 1980s, played a crucial role in this regard. While he was not himself a member of any of the parties that comprised Izquierda Unida, it was precisely his status as an independent that enabled him to stay above the fray of ideological struggles between different member parties and to rally the considerable number of militants without party affiliation that formed part of the Izquierda Unida alliance. In fact, it would probably not be an exaggeration to see in Barrantes the linchpin that held Izquierda Unida together.⁷ In sum, focusing on immediate electoral challenges helped to paper over internal controversies and to stave off the danger of reopening the divisive and sectarian debates of earlier years.

This chapter has been divided into three main sections. First, I want to show how the new institutional orientation of the Peruvian left influenced its approach to local government. More specifically, I will analyze the radical-democratic character of this approach, as well as examine some of its more reformist elements. Second, I will focus on the endeavours of the Barrantes administration to secure the legal, institutional, and economic preconditions for

effective and efficient local government, which constituted a *conditio sine qua non* for the realization of its political programme. In particular, I will examine the impact of a new law regulating local politics, namely, the Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades, Ley No. 23853, and the efforts made by the Barrantes administration to guarantee a larger and more independent resource base for local governments. Third, and most importantly, I will concentrate on the forms of popular participation that were developed by Izquierda Unida between 1984 and 1986. I will examine the most important policies that were implemented during that time, such as the *vaso de leche* (glass of milk) programme, paying particular attention to the extent to which urban popular movements could exert their influence on the design and the management of these policies.

Effective Local Government, Social Reform and *Protagonismo Popular*: A Radical-Democratic Approach to Local Politics

The Peruvian left's radical-democratic approach to local politics, which informed the political programme of the new municipal government of Metropolitan Lima (Izquierda Unida 1983), rested on three principal pillars. First, the programme stressed the need for an effective and efficient local government in order to address the principal problems facing the Peruvian capital. Second, it contained a social emergency programme, the *Programa Popular de Emergencia*, which was geared to alleviate the critical social and economic situation of a large part of the inhabitants of Lima. Finally, the programme pointed to the necessity of democratizing the municipal administration itself, and

for that effect proposed to widen the scope of popular participation in local government.

With respect to its diagnosis of the principal problems confronting Metropolitan Lima, the left differed surprisingly little from other political parties. In fact, since many of these problems were of a technical nature, there was relatively little quarrel between *técnicos*, or specialists, across the political spectrum over the policies that would best address them (Barrantes puede ganar 1983, 9-10).⁸ The left seemed well prepared to tackle these problems in a pragmatic and efficient manner: for over a year, a team of specialists, many of whom later became part of the municipal administration, had been involved in the elaboration of detailed policy proposals, an effort which resulted in the formulation of the *Programa de Gobierno Municipal* (Izquierda Unida 1983). The intention of the new local government to put pragmatism and professional efficiency above political criteria was further evidenced by its decision to appoint opposition councillors to head some of the newly created municipal secretariats, if they seemed better qualified than their counterparts from the governing party.⁹ In addition, the Barrantes government emphasized a spirit of cooperation and compromise with the opposition: for the most part, decisions in the municipal council were taken with votes from one or several opposition parties, despite the fact that Izquierda Unida held the absolute majority (Barrantes 1991; Pease 1992).¹⁰

In several other important respects, however, IU's approach to local

government was fundamentally different from that of other political actors. First, the left did not content itself with measuring the success of a municipal administration simply in terms of the *obras*, or public works, that it accomplished during its term in office. Instead of focusing exclusively on material results, the left put more emphasis on the creation of the political and economic preconditions that would make the running of an efficient and effective local government actually possible. Apart from a thorough administrative restructuring of the municipality of Lima itself, this basically meant to confront the central government over the reappropriation of powers and resources which the Constitution of 1979 had assigned to the municipalities, but which in practice had never been fully devolved. The left was clearly more willing than other political parties to take a firm stance with the central government in order to increase the institutional weight of local governments. I will return to this point below.

Furthermore, the left differed from other political actors in its determination to use local government as much as possible for social reform and the democratization of the state. On the one hand, the left planned to make full use of local public institutions in order to alleviate the drastic social and economic inequalities of Peruvian society, which in its view prevented a majority of Peruvians from fully exercising their democratic rights as citizens (Barrantes 1984, 250). Among other things, the left intended to prioritize public works to improve the infrastructure in popular neighbourhoods and to speed up the distribution of land titles to squatters. Additionally, the left planned to implement

its social emergency programme, which was designed to improve nutritional and public health standards, especially with regard to children (Izquierda Unida 1983, 15-24; Barrantes 1984, 187). The *vaso de leche* scheme, which will be discussed in more detail below, can be regarded as the centrepiece of this programme.

Beyond these more traditionally reformist goals, the left also planned to democratize the municipal administration by throwing it open to direct popular participation. Over and above the implementation of new and improved mechanisms to consult and inform the inhabitants of Lima about municipal policy, this involved giving urban popular movements decision making powers in certain fields, even turning over to them the administration of entire programmes, as well as putting urban popular movements in charge of supervising and controlling certain aspects of the municipal administration (Izquierda Unida 1983, 10-13). This attitude, which was described as radical-democratic in the previous chapter, and which Henry Pease and others have labelled *protagonismo popular* (Pease 1983b, 27), grew out of the conviction that without such democratic input from the grassroots, the new leftist city administration would not only be unable to achieve its goals, but that before long, it would exhibit the same familiar traits of bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, and authoritarianism as other public institutions at the local and national level.

In more specific terms, popular participation in municipal politics was to be expanded in four different ways, which can be distinguished according to the amount of decision making power that they transferred to urban popular

movements.¹¹ First, the Barrantes administration planned to implement an "open door policy," that is, to adopt an attitude of dialogue and consensus and to institute improved mechanisms for the information and consultation of the population about municipal policy. In so doing, it was hoped that the municipal administration would be made more accessible to the population as well as more receptive to its concerns. Second, representatives of urban popular movements were to be given limited control functions (*fiscalización*) in a number of fields that fell under municipal jurisdiction, such as public hygiene and garbage disposal, the administration of public markets, etc. The purpose of these "public inspectors" was to either act as a substitute for municipal officials in cases where the municipal administration did not have enough personnel to fulfil these functions, or to control municipal officials themselves. It was hoped that by subjecting municipal officials to such control from below, corruption and inefficiency of the municipal bureaucracy could be alleviated. Third, in a number of cases, urban popular movements were to co-administer entire programmes together with the municipality of Metropolitan Lima or with one of the district municipalities in the province. The most notable examples of this practice, which will be discussed in more detail below, were the distribution of land titles to urban squatters and the *vaso de leche* (glass of milk) programme. By participating in joint programme management, urban popular movements would exert considerable influence over the way these programmes were administered, while at the same time relieving municipal administrations that were strapped for

qualified personnel and financial resources and could not have administered these programmes alone. Finally, the potentially most far-reaching aspect of popular participation were a variety of mechanisms that would allow urban popular movements to participate *directly* in the running of the municipal administration and in decisions that affected the overall direction of municipal policy. In the case of Metropolitan Lima, the *agencias municipales* in the central district of El Cercado were the most significant example of this practice. It was hoped that these "municipal agencies," which I will examine more closely later on, would unite the various neighbourhood movements of the district and thereby serve as permanent interlocutors for the municipal administration.

All three elements of the leftist platform hinged for their success on the achievement of a common objective, namely, effective political decentralization and a substantial elevation of the institutional stature of local governments. As was explained in more detail in Chapter 2, the effectiveness and efficiency of local administrations depends to a large extent on the prior devolution of powers and resources from the central government, as well as on firm guarantees for their autonomy from central government interference. Clearly then, if Izquierda Unida wanted to make good on its promise of leading an effective and efficient local government, as well as tackle its ambitious social reform programme, it needed to be successful in its struggle with the central government to effectively appropriate the powers that local governments had only theoretically gained in the Constitution of 1979. Furthermore, the new local government had to brace itself

for a protracted struggle with the central government and its agencies in fields of shared jurisdiction, such as urban services, urban transport, etc. Finally, the new leftist administration had to make sure that any transfer of powers was backed by a corresponding transfer of resources. In other words, it had to be guaranteed that the central government would not simply divest itself of bothersome obligations by passing them on to local governments, without at the same time enabling them to actually fulfil their new responsibilities.

In order to accomplish its participatory goals, the new leftist city administration likewise depended on the prior strengthening of local governments as such. A stronger role for popular participation in local affairs did not make much sense without a meaningful devolution of powers and resources to local governments. Otherwise, there would be few programmes worth participating in, and popular participation would risk remaining an empty ritual. Furthermore, as was explained in Chapter 2, popular participation needed to be given explicit legal and institutional content. In particular, existing urban popular movements needed to be recognized by the local administration as legitimate interlocutors, in order to better protect their autonomy. Furthermore, permanent and binding mechanisms had to be instituted that would make popular participation independent from the political conjuncture and the support of specific allies.

The main question was of course how these objectives could be achieved from within an institutional system that in the past had worked quite well to prevent such changes, by concentrating power at the top and by protecting the

interests of the political and economic elites. The obstacles to such a project were considerable. In particular, the task of leading an efficient and effective local government, which was complicated enough due to the reluctance on the part of higher levels of government and other political actors to accord the municipalities the necessary powers and resources, was made even more difficult in a time of severe economic crisis. Given that resources were low and shrinking for all levels of government, a redistribution in favour of the municipalities would likely run into even fiercer opposition than usually. Naturally, this was also bound to affect the capacity of local governments to accomplish social reforms.

The participatory agenda faced even greater obstacles. Any genuine increase of popular participation, be it in the form of improved mechanisms for consultation and information or in the form of joint programme management, was bound to increase the power of previously excluded social groups and was therefore likely to be opposed on political grounds. Moreover, popular participation that went further than that and included a transfer of decision making powers from elected authorities to urban popular movements, could be seen as exceeding the confines of representative democracy as established in the Constitution of 1979. It was therefore likely to arouse even stiffer political resistance than the realization of other goals of the Barrantes administration, such as the reshuffling of prerogatives and resources between central and local institutions of government and the prioritization of popular concerns. The political compromises needed to overcome such resistance might very well leave

popular participation stunted, which would raise some fundamental questions as to how far popular participation can be pushed via an institutional strategy in a hostile political environment.

However, despite the magnitude of these obstacles to a successful implementation of its political programme, the position of the Barrantes administration was not quite as bad off as it might seem. In fact, two major developments towards the beginning of its tenure significantly altered the legal and economic context of local politics in Peru. On the one hand, a new law governing municipal politics, the *Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades*, Ley No. 23853, considerably increased the institutional stature of local governments. Furthermore, the Barrantes administration was quite successful, against all odds, in its attempts to secure new and increased resources for local governments. In the following, I will examine these two developments in more detail.

Local Organs of Government or Local Service Enterprises: Ley No. 23853 and the Struggle for Increased Local Resources

In comparison with the previous legal framework governing local politics in Peru, the new *Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades*, Ley No. 23853, significantly strengthened the position of local governments vis-à-vis the central authorities. Ley No. 23853 was enacted on 8 June 1984 to replace the short-lived D.L. No. 051, which had met with universal opposition from municipal governments across the political spectrum since it had been passed as a decree law by the national government on 15 March 1981.¹² The new law contained a number of important

changes to the legal situation of the municipalities. Most importantly, Ley No. 23853 broke with the guiding principle of D.L. No. 051, which, as was explained in the preceding chapter, considered local governments to be "service enterprises" that were essentially dependent on the central government. Contrary to this rather restrictive view of local government, article 2 of Ley No. 23853 explicitly recognized the character of the municipalities as "local organs of government" that are democratically elected and represent the political will of the inhabitants of a given locality. In so doing, Ley No. 23853 provided a much closer approximation of the principles that were expressed in articles 252 and 253 of the Constitution of 1979. Not only that, by recognizing the municipalities as local organs of government, Ley No. 23853 also sanctioned the view that power within the Peruvian political system did not emanate solely from the central government, but that it was shared to a certain extent by other organs of government.

Consistent with this view, the new law provided stronger guarantees for the autonomy of local governments and delineated their powers more clearly. Without recognizing the *political* autonomy of local governments explicitly, the municipalities were nevertheless accorded economic and administrative autonomy with regard to matters that fell within their jurisdiction.¹³ With respect to their responsibilities, local governments were most notably put in charge of the development of their respective constituency and the elaboration of corresponding development plans, aside from a set of responsibilities that had traditionally fallen under the municipal purview, such as the administration of local public services,

public hygiene and garbage disposal, and urban transport. Furthermore, local governments were made accountable for the management of their own financial resources as well as given the right to determine their own internal administrative structure.

Despite these advances with regard to the powers and the autonomy of local governments, Ley No. 23853 also presented a number of serious limitations. Maybe the most important drawback of the new law lay in its failure to clearly separate the prerogatives of the municipalities from those of other levels of government. Basically, Ley No. 23853 merely listed the responsibilities of local governments, often simply by restating the relatively general provisions of the Constitution of 1979. What the law did *not* do was to explain if and how the prerogatives of local governments would be affected in cases where other levels of government had been accorded similar responsibilities by different legal norms. Such cases of joint jurisdiction were numerous. Since Ley No. 23853 did not furnish clear *legal* guidelines for the resolution of inter-institutional conflicts, such conflicts had to be solved via political negotiations.

The consequences of these omissions were serious. For one thing, due to a lack of joint planning, the activities of local and central government authorities were often uncoordinated or contradictory,¹⁴ if they did not duplicate one another. More importantly, the failure of Ley No. 23853 to clearly define and delimit the respective prerogatives of different levels of government allowed the central government to bring its superior political and economic resources to bear

and to shape the relationship in its favour. In more concrete terms, the lack of a clear delimitation of these prerogatives provided the central government with a pretext to either delay the devolution of powers to local governments, or, more frequently, to continue interfering in municipal affairs. Obviously, this constituted a serious threat to local government autonomy and limited the capacity of the municipalities for integrated urban planning. The central government had several instruments at its disposal to carry out this practice, be it administrative organs of the central government proper, such as the prefecturas, or public enterprises, existing central government agencies or new ones specifically created for this purpose.

The examples of central government interference in municipal affairs during the Barrantes administration are legion. For instance, while the provision of local public services fell under local jurisdiction according to Ley No. 23853, the most important public services in the capital, particularly water supply, sewers, and electricity, continued to be provided by central government agencies such as SEDAPAL and ELECTROPERU. Consequently, these agencies were in a position to control the extent and the quality of service provision in the different *barrios* of Lima and could either thwart or at least hamper the efforts of the Barrantes administration to achieve improvements for the popular neighbourhoods. Such interference in municipal affairs was not only due to the reluctance on the part of the central government to relinquish some of its powers, much less to simple bureaucratic inertia. Rather, what was at stake, particularly

in the capital city of Lima, which comprised about a third of the national electorate, was the political fallout from the success or failure of specific policies. This was particularly evident in another notorious case of central government interference in municipal affairs, the so-called *tren eléctrico* (electric train). While urban transport was clearly a responsibility of the municipal government, the central government under Alan García proceeded to implement its own project of urban mass transportation in Lima, without sufficiently coordinating its design and implementation with municipal authorities.¹⁵ Again, the conflict was not just over who wielded authority over matters of urban transport, but also about the political capital that could be gained from a project of this magnitude.

Apart from often politically motivated interference in municipal affairs by the central government and its agencies, the lack of adequate resources did its part in preventing the municipalities from fully assuming their newly-won powers and from living up to their role as autonomous local organs of government as prescribed in Ley No. 23853.¹⁶ At the very beginning of its tenure, the Barrantes administration of Metropolitan Lima was immediately confronted with an acute crisis in the financial situation of the municipality. Due partly to the economic downturn of the early 1980s, municipal revenues were at their lowest level since 1965 (Municipalidad de Lima n.d., 55) and the deficit carried over from the previous administration under Orrego amounted to almost 30 % of the budget for 1984 (Delgado 1991, 156). The immediate problems created by this financial shortfall seemed almost insurmountable; nevertheless, the Barrantes

administration desperately needed to find solutions quickly if it did not want to risk its credibility at the very outset of its term in office. As conservative observers noted not without glee, what was on the line was the proof that the left was indeed fit to govern (Delgado 1991, 152).

In addition to the financial difficulties inherited from the Orrego administration, Barrantes and his team had to contend with another familiar problem. Following the adoption of Ley No. 23853, the central government immediately delegated a series of responsibilities to the municipalities, without at the same time transferring the corresponding resources. The administration of Metropolitan Lima, for example, was suddenly saddled with the responsibility for 350 employees in fields such as the maintenance of urban parks and gardens, while it was in no position to actually pay their salaries (Pease 1992). As a result of these and other problems, the financial situation of the municipality of Metropolitan Lima remained precarious during all of 1984.

This picture began to change somewhat in December of 1984, when the financing of local governments was put on a new footing by the Ley del Financiamiento, Ley No. 24030. The Barrantes administration had lobbied hard for the new law and for this purpose had joined forces with local governments of various political stripes from all over the country (Pease 1992). Apart from the creation of several other new sources of income, the most notable change contained in Ley No. 24030 was the replacement of direct transfer payments by the central government with the Impuesto de Promoción Municipal, which

consisted of a one percent share of the Impuesto General a las Ventas (IGV), a value added tax levied nationally. Until then, direct transfer payments had provided an essential supplement to resources raised by the municipalities themselves, such as various local taxes, service fees, and fines. By making the resource base of local governments less dependent on the budgetary discretion of the central government and by putting it on a more constant footing, Ley No. 24030 helped strengthen local autonomy and therefore increased the governmental capacity of the municipalities.

In addition to the new revenues created by Ley 24030, local governments gained another important source of income from a major World Bank loan, which had been negotiated before the municipal elections of November 1983 and which was finally signed by President Belaúnde after much foot-dragging at the end of 1984 (Pease 1992). Out of a total credit volume of about US\$ 140 million, more than 40% or US\$ 60.1 million were destined for Metropolitan Lima; US\$ 7.8 million were actually disbursed in 1985 and US\$ 16.3 million in 1986 (Pease and Jibaja 1989, 367; Portocarrero 1991, 187). Together with somewhat higher matching funds from the municipality of Metropolitan Lima (Municipalidad de Lima n.d., 55-56), most of which stemmed precisely from the new tax revenues created by Ley 24030, the funds provided by the World Bank were instrumental for a substantial increase of the capital basis of the municipal Fondo de Inversiones Metropolitanas (INVERMET).

Thanks to this boost of its resource base under the Barrantes administration,

the INVERMET, which had been created in 1979, took on increasing importance as the principal venue for municipal investment in the capital region. INVERMET funded investments in fields as diverse as culture, education, and sports, but most of its resources went into urban infrastructure projects, particularly new roads linking popular districts with other parts of Lima, the so-called *troncales*, and the refurbishing of existing roads in the city centre (Allou 1989, 152-155). At the same time, the investment priorities of INVERMET were changed. While the more affluent districts continued to receive a sizable share of overall investments, a much higher portion than under the previous AP administration now went to the popular districts (Allou 1989, 152-155). As a result of its efforts to channel most of the new municipal resources directly into investments, while at the same time holding the line on operational expenses and salary increases,¹⁷ the Barrantes administration managed to significantly alter the traditional distribution of municipal expenses during the last two years of its tenure. While operational expenses had taken up the lion's share of municipal budgets from 1980 to 1983, leaving only slightly more than 20% for capital investments, this percentage rose to 43% in 1986 (Pease 1988, 51-52, 55; Allou 1989, 136-137).

However, in spite of the relative amelioration of local government financing brought about by Ley No. 24030 and the World Bank loan, Peruvian municipalities in general continued to operate with extremely limited resources that left them far from being able to actually live up to their role as true local

organs of government. In most cases, municipal resources were still barely sufficient to cover operational expenses as well as the most basic public services. Likewise, most Peruvian municipalities remained unable to hire qualified personnel in sufficient numbers to actually perform the tasks assigned to them by Ley No. 23853 (de Althaus 1986, 22-26). Even in the case of Metropolitan Lima, which had always attracted a disproportionate share of municipal resources and where the financial crisis was less severe, about 45 % of all public investment in 1987 continued to be undertaken by the central government and its agencies (Mejía 1990, 171). Furthermore, the very fact that local government finances since 1984 depended more directly on taxes and fees and no longer relied on direct transfer payments from the central government presented a novel problem. For one thing, tax evasion was of course a widespread problem, which persists to this day. Even more importantly, however, about half of the population were simply too poor to pay any taxes at all (Pease and Jibaja 1989, 368). This situation persisted throughout most of the 1980s due to the economic crisis and severely limited the capacity of the municipalities to raise sufficient revenue. Consequently, any fundamental change in the financial situation of the municipalities hinged on a redistribution of public sector spending as a whole. In this respect, change was slow in coming, and the share of Peruvian local governments in overall public spending continued to stay below 4 % for most of the 1980s (Mejía 1990, 167).

Popular Participation under Barrantes: Implementing the Radical-Democratic Agenda

Openings and Barriers to Popular Participation

The flaws of Ley No. 23853 and the resource shortages on the part of local governments were bound to have an impact on the capacity of local governments to widen the scope of popular participation. The failure of Ley No. 23853 to bring about a sufficient degree of political decentralization, particularly in the sense of clear legal guarantees for the autonomy of local governments from central government interference, made it difficult for the municipalities to assert their authority in fields that were formally under local jurisdiction. This obviously hampered their ability to implement new policies of popular participation in these fields. Not only that, it also meant that urban popular movements were often faced with at least two different interlocutors: the municipalities themselves as well as the central government. Given that the central government in the past had shown little respect for the autonomy of urban popular movements, its presence at the local level heightened the risk for their cooptation.

The precarious financial situation of most local governments, including the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima, constituted an additional obstacle to any enlargement of popular participation at the local level. Most certainly, the Barrantes administration was in no position to "throw money at problems", that is, it could not expand popular participation in municipal affairs simply by creating new programmes that would address the needs of the popular sector and

at the same time function according to a participatory logic. Instead, the municipal administration had to try not only to increase popular participation in the administration of those local services that were in fact performed by the municipality, but more importantly, it had to rely as much as it could on the organizational capacities of urban popular movements themselves and to delegate as many functions as possible to them.

Seen from a different angle, therefore, a shortage of resources on the part of local governments could actually be seen as a blessing in disguise for urban popular movements. For one thing, local governments that are strapped for resources are unlikely to adopt the customary approach in their dealings with the popular sector, that is, they are in no position to create a new administrative apparatus that would address the needs of this sector in a bureaucratic and clientelist way. Such an approach, which is often called *asistencialismo* ("assistentialism"), is marked by a very low degree of popular participation and self-reliance, since aid recipients have come to passively depend on support from state institutions or other donors. By the same token, local governments that lack resources are less likely to coopt urban popular movements. Cooptation is usually more frequent in cases where political allegiance can be exchanged for material benefits; conversely, in the absence of such benefits, it is less feasible. Finally, the transfer of certain functions from the municipal administration to urban popular movements, which is necessitated by the scarcity of municipal resources, is bound to strengthen the organizational structures of these movements

as well as to increase their administrative capacities. Urban popular movements are likely to become more relevant to the population at large and to attract new members, and they will learn how to better manage policies designed to address the needs of the popular sector.

Aside from the difficulties outlined above, there existed several other legal, political, and institutional barriers to an enlargement of popular participation at the local level. In the following, I will first examine these barriers in more detail, in order to then go on and analyze some of the concrete policies that were implemented by the Barrantes administration.

With respect to legal obstacles to popular participation, the most important difficulty lay in the fact that Ley No. 23853 did not go much beyond the restrictive framework provided by D.L. No. 051.¹⁸ More specifically, Ley No. 23853 failed to stipulate clear and binding mechanisms for popular participation, and it did not recognize existing urban popular movements as its legitimate agents. Instead, Ley No. 23853 reiterated the provisions contained in D.L. No. 051, which prescribed the creation of new organizations for this purpose by the municipality, the so-called *juntas de vecinos*. As was explained in Chapter 4, these organisms were rejected by the population and never acquired much significance, since they lacked autonomy and were almost completely dependent on the municipality. In a sense, therefore, Ley No. 23853 attempted to continue a long-standing tradition in Peruvian politics, in which the elevation of status and the potential material benefits popular participation entailed were coupled with a

loss of autonomy for the organizations involved and the creation of clientelist links to the political authorities.

In order to break with these traditions and to guarantee the autonomy of urban popular movements participating in municipal politics, Izquierda Unida had promised during the electoral campaign that it would recognize existing urban popular movements as the legitimate interlocutors of the municipality.¹⁴ To obtain some kind of legal recognition, which was a precondition for putting their participation on a more permanent and stable basis, had also been a long-standing demand on the part of urban popular movements (Chirinos 1991), and the new municipal government needed to keep its campaign promise if it wanted to retain the support of the popular sector. However, given the limits of existing laws, especially the newly-passed Ley No. 23853, the granting of full legal recognition, or *personería jurídica*, to all urban popular movements was impossible. Instead, the Barrantes administration decided to confer legal recognition only to neighbourhood movements, and only with respect to their dealings with the municipality of Metropolitan Lima. This was achieved by way of passing the municipal Ordenanza (municipal by-law) No. 192 on 6 June 1984, which was based on a novel legal category somewhat at the margins of the law, the so-called *personería municipal*. However, since Ordenanza No. 192 was not binding for other political actors, particularly the central government and its agencies, these actors could continue to challenge the legitimacy of the urban popular movements they were dealing with, or set up competing organizations that they could hope

to coopt and control.

Despite its obvious limitations, Ordenanza 192 was greeted with a barrage of criticism in the conservative media. In several editorials in the conservative press, the municipal government was attacked for flaunting existing laws (Ordenanza Objetable 1984; ¿Ordenanza con Contrabando? 1984); *El Comercio* in its edition of 27 June 1984 even accused it of creating a network of "soviets." The vehemence of this critique can serve as an indication for the degree of suspicion with which conservative political actors regarded even small increases of popular participation. It also explains why plans to extend legal recognition to functional organizations, particularly women's and survival organizations, were later shelved (Chirinos 1992).

Another potential problem of Ordenanza No. 192 was contained in its provision that in order to be recognized by the municipality, neighbourhood organizations had to meet certain organizational criteria (Rojas Julca 1989, 81-101). Given the problems plaguing many neighbourhood organizations, for example, internal conflicts pitting one part of the membership against another, or unrepresentative and unaccountable leaders, many of these criteria were reasonable. By and large, they were designed to ensure that the respective neighbourhood organization was not defunct, that it was democratically organized, and that its leaders actually represented the membership. Consequently, as Chirinos stresses repeatedly, the organizational standards imposed on neighbourhood organizations were in fact intended to "strengthen" them (Chirinos

1991, *passim*). Obviously, though, the fact that the municipality could interfere with the internal structures of popular organizations and withhold recognition if its criteria were not met, provided it with a tool that it could have used to exercise political influence. By and large, however, this appears not to have happened, and the organizational guidelines were used mainly to solve conflicts between popular organizations, such as over which one actually represented a particular settlement or neighbourhood (Chirinos 1991, 112).

With respect to institutional barriers to increased popular participation in municipal politics, the highly centralist and hierarchical structure of the local government apparatus itself constituted one of the most significant obstacles. Again, Ley No. 23853, at least in its basic outline, did not differ much from D.L. No. 051, which, as we saw in the previous chapter, severely restricted the influence of the municipal council on the executive and placed most decision making power in the hands of the mayor. According to Ley No. 23853, the execution of municipal policies was the exclusive responsibility of the *alcalde*, who usually would be assisted by the *director municipal*, the highest functionary within the municipal bureaucracy. The role of the municipal council, on the other hand, was to determine the general direction of municipal policy and to approve the municipal budget; at the same time, councillors were prevented from exerting any effective control over the municipal bureaucracy or from playing an active role in the execution of municipal policies.

The lack of democratic control over the municipal bureaucracy and the

concentration of decision making powers in the hands of the *alcalde* fostered authoritarian tendencies within local governments and lessened their administrative efficiency. Both of these conditions were hardly conducive for an expansion of popular participation.²⁰ On the one hand, the provision that at least in theory, all important decisions had to be approved by the mayor himself, worked against a delegation of decision making powers even only within the municipal administration itself, let alone to urban popular movements. Apart from being undemocratic, this was also detrimental to administrative efficiency. Not only was it highly improbable that the mayor would possess all the relevant information in every single case and therefore, his decisions were not necessarily wise. More importantly, the concentration of decision making power at the top made municipal employees less receptive to the demands of the population. Instead of taking initiatives themselves, they were more likely to wait for directions from above. On the other hand, in the absence of effective control mechanisms, it was improbable that municipal bureaucrats would abandon their habitual authoritarian behaviour in their dealings with the population. Instead of making the municipal administration more accessible to the population and to effectively share decision making power with urban popular movements in the joint administration of municipal programmes, municipal officials were more likely to shield themselves from popular input altogether and to exploit their offices for personal gain.

The Barrantes administration tried to tackle these problems in two

innovative ways, by way of administrative reform, and via the creation of a new administrative sub-unit to promote popular participation, the Oficina General de Participación Vecinal. To restructure the municipal administration, Izquierda Unida made use of a novel provision in Ley No. 23853, which allowed the mayor to delegate some of his decision making powers to seven newly created administrative sub-units, the so-called *secretarías municipales*, or municipal secretariats (Mejía 1990, 130-136; Villarán 1991). The secretariats were headed by city councillors and put in charge of the management of local services. As opposed to the model described above, in which the municipal council and the bureaucracy are completely separate and executive control rests entirely with the *alcalde* and his *director municipal*, the new structure favoured political criteria over narrowly technical-administrative ones.²¹ Decision making powers were now more broadly shared and the rigid line separating the municipal legislature from the executive became blurred. As was mentioned before, the Barrantes administration went even further than that: to improve the cooperation with other political parties represented on the municipal council and to augment overall administrative efficiency, it offered qualified councillors from the opposition to chair a number of secretariats.

The Oficina General de Participación Vecinal, for its part, was created in 1984 with the specific purpose of promoting popular participation and popular organizations at the neighbourhood level, as well as to coordinate the activities of the different branches of the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima in this regard

(Chirinos 1991, 109; Rojas Julca 1989, 18-23). As one of its first tasks, the Oficina General de Participación Vecinal helped to set up corresponding participation offices at the district level and to train municipal officials there, since the districts were considered to be a "privileged space for the development of participatory policies" (Chirinos 1991, 109). Subsequently, the Office assisted in the registration of neighbourhood organizations according to Ordenanza No. 192 and in the resolution of conflicts that arose during this process. The Oficina General de Participación Vecinal then turned its attention to the organization of communal work projects and finally, it concentrated its efforts on the establishment of the *agencias municipales* in the downtown district of El Cercado.

Experiences with Popular Participation 1984-1986

In the following section, I will concentrate on three specific policies that were implemented by the Barrantes administration in order to increase popular participation. First, I will examine the distribution of land titles to urban squatters, as well as the municipal land development schemes (*Programas Municipales de Habitación Urbana*) designed to improve the housing situation of the popular sector. While these policies included elements of joint programme management, they will mainly serve as examples for the delegation of functions from the provincial municipality to the districts and to urban popular movements themselves, as well as for the implementation of improved mechanisms for the information and consultation of the population. Their significance derives from

the fact that the housing problem has traditionally been one of the focal points of popular movement activity. As was explained in Chapters 1 and 3, neighbourhood movements constituted the first wave of urban popular movements, and policies designed to increase their participation are therefore of central importance. Second, I will focus on the *vaso de leche* programme, which without any doubt was the most significant example of shared programme management between the municipality and urban popular movements. The *vaso de leche* programme was aimed at women's and survival movements, which had sprung up in the early 1980s and acquired increasing importance throughout the decade due to the persistence of the economic crisis. Finally, I will present the cases of the *agencias municipales* in the downtown district of El Cercado. The municipal agencies are important not because they were aimed at relevant urban popular movements, but because they had the potential to carry popular participation further than the other programmes, in the sense that they stressed the *direct* participation of urban popular movements in the municipal decision making process.

Distribution of Land Titles and Municipal Land Development Schemes

The distribution of land titles to urban squatters and the municipal land development schemes have to be seen in the larger context of urban development policies (Driant 1991; Sánchez and Calderón 1980). Ley No. 23853 had strengthened the powers of local governments in this regard, by making them

responsible for the control of land use in urban areas, the elaboration of urban development plans, and the restructuring of existing as well as the planning of new *asentamientos humanos*, or popular settlements. As a result of this transfer of powers from the central government, the municipalities found themselves faced with an extremely difficult situation that had repeatedly defied solutions in the past, and that the central government itself had not been able to control. Especially in the case of Lima, the city had followed a chaotic pattern of urban development since the onset of massive migrations to the capital in the 1940s, a pattern that was driven more by uncontrolled invasions and real estate speculation than by coordinated urban planning. All attempts in the past, be it by forced evictions or by the force of law, to put a stop to invasions and to establish a more controlled pattern of urban development had failed. Successive laws, beginning with Ley No. 13517 in 1961, had done little more than to legalize existing settlements, without, however, being able to stem the tide of new invasions. The resulting problems for the urban area were massive, not only with respect to the popular settlements themselves, which were often established in locations that were unfit for human habitation, making living conditions extremely precarious and complicating the eventual provision of urban services. In addition, due to the concurrence of uncontrolled invasions, often unclear property relations, and real estate speculation, any attempt at controlling land usage in the metropolitan area appeared doomed to fail, while the pressure to convert the remaining agricultural land into human settlements led to grave environmental problems.

To address the crisis of urban development in Metropolitan Lima, the primary concern on the part of the municipal government had to be to put some order into the existing chaotic settlement pattern. One principal way of achieving this objective was to restructure and to consolidate settlements that had sprung up as the result of invasions and to issue land titles to the invaders.²² Under the previous municipal administration headed by Eduardo Orrego, as well as under the central government, which had been in charge of the distribution of land titles before 1980, this policy was implemented and controlled from above. As a result, the process often appeared heavy-handed and, since municipal officials were usually unaware of the local context, it frequently created more problems than it solved. The Barrantes administration, on the contrary, delegated most of its respective functions to the district administrations (Castro-Pozo, Iturregui, and Zolezzi 1991, 302-303). Some of these district administrations, particularly those that were also controlled by the left and had established links to urban popular movements in the past, cooperated in turn with neighbourhood movements and/or NGOs. Consequently, the procedure not only became more efficient,²³ but also more democratic. For example, in the case of the settlement Rafael Belaúnde in the district of Carabayllo (Serrano 1987),²⁴ close cooperation between the district administration, neighbourhood movements, and an outside NGO made it possible to solve two crucial problems often associated with the restructuring of popular settlements. For one thing, the active participation of the *pobladores* in the restructuring process made it easier to separate those settlers that were actually

living on their lot from those that were not. In this way, it became possible to determine who actually needed a place to live and was therefore allowed to stay from those who did not, and had presumably participated in the invasion for the simple purpose of selling his or her plot at a later date for a profit. Lots belonging to absentee occupants were reappropriated and redistributed to settlers in need. Furthermore, by participating directly in the restructuring process, the membership of existing neighbourhood associations could exert greater control over their leaders, many of whom had exploited their position of power to become involved in land trafficking themselves.

Obviously, the ex-post-facto recognition of popular settlements that had resulted from invasions in and of itself was not enough to break the pattern of chaotic urban development; for that, the municipal government needed to prevent invasions from happening in the first place and to provide alternative housing for the popular sector. The five urban land development programmes that were initiated under the Barrantes administration (Huaycán, Laderas del Chillón, Frente Unico de Chillón, Pampas de San Juan, and Arenal de Canto Grande [Castro-Pozo, Iturregui, and Zolezzi 1991, 299-301]), were a step in this direction. All of them followed a basic pattern: the municipality provided the necessary land,²⁹ as well as organizational and technical support, while the actual development of the plots as well as the construction of the homes was performed in self-help by the settlers. While it was clear that the five projects, which in 1986 accommodated a mere 20,000 families (Castro-Pozo, Iturregui, and Zolezzi 1991,

300), would not be sufficient to put a stop to invasions and therefore could not be considered a substitute for a coherent urban development policy, they did constitute a new approach to the problem in the sense that they stressed the participation of the organized population in the process. For this purpose, various mechanisms were set up to maintain close links between the *pobladores*, the technical support staff, and the municipal administration, so that the projects would be jointly managed by all parties involved.

In terms of its social organization and the extent of popular participation in the project, the settlement of Huaycán went a step further than the other schemes. It was based not on the individual family unit, as most other popular settlements, but on the so-called *unidad comunal de vivienda* (UCV) (Calderón and Olivera 1989, 27-66; Pease 1988, 87-89). The UCVs, each of which comprised 60 families that owned a plot of land collectively, were intended by the urban planners of the Barrantes administration to evolve into the centre pieces of the communal life of the new settlement. According to this design, the UCVs would collectively oversee the development of the settlement, they would organize the construction of communal facilities as well as build homes for the settlers themselves, and they would manage communal programmes. To lend the UCVs organizational support and to ensure the coordination between the municipality and the settlers, a *comité de gestión* (management committee) was set up, which was composed of representatives of the organized population and of the municipal administration.

Despite some initial successes, the design of the project soon proved to be too ambitious for the reality that it faced. For one thing, the relationship between the *técnicos*, or technical advisers, of the municipality and the settlers proved to be more problematic than expected. In particular, the settlers were slow to accept the collectivist approach centred around the UCVs that the municipal advisers proposed to them. For example, the *técnicos* generally advocated collective solutions to the provision of communal services, such as communal toilets or water wells, whereas the *pobladores*, for cultural and other reasons, often favoured individual solutions centred around the family dwelling, even if those were less efficient (Calderón and Olivera 1989, 63-64). Furthermore, the process of *co-gestión* (joint programme management) suffered from some serious deficiencies and never got off the ground. Partly, this can be attributed to the weakness of the neighbourhood movements themselves, which, as Olivera and Cárdenas have noted, often lacked the organizational capacity necessary to participate fully in the process (Calderón and Olivera 1989, 61-62). In addition, the *comité de gestión* itself was poorly institutionalized, which not only limited its effectiveness, but also made it susceptible to be influenced by politically motivated struggles between different neighbourhood movements. This became particularly noticeable in July 1986, when neighbourhood leaders sympathetic to the APRA party established a new district-wide neighbourhood association, the Asociación de Pobladores. "The new leadership looked towards the APRA-controlled central government as an alternative source of institutional support.

Its objective was to achieve *obras*, more so on the basis of clientelism than on the basis of joint management" (Calderón and Olivera 1989, 65).²⁶ As a consequence, the *comité de gestión* for all intents and purposes ceased to exist, and it remained defunct even after neighbourhood leaders sympathetic to the left had finally regained control of the Asociación de Pobladores.

In the case of Laderas del Chillón, which is similar to the remaining three housing programmes, the project did not even reach the stage of joint programme management (Calderón and Olivera 1989, 67-99). Here, the relationship between the settlers on the one hand, and the technical advisers and the municipal administration on the other hand, remained at the level of what can be characterized as an improved consultation process. In other words, Laderas del Chillón in most respects resembled a settlement that was the product of an invasion, with the important difference that it received technical assistance from the municipality and was therefore more organized and structured. As a result, Laderas del Chillón, as well as the other three projects, could be characterized as a *barriadas ordenadas*, or organized settlements. In other words, while they differed from ordinary popular settlements, or *barriadas*, by being somewhat more orderly and organized, they never became alternative public housing projects in the sense envisaged in Huaycán.

In sum, the efforts of the Barrantes administration to expand popular participation in the field of urban development proved to be a mixed success. On the positive side, the Barrantes administration achieved its objective of improving

the information and consultation of the population about municipal policy in this regard, and popular participation made the implementation of some of these policies more efficient. However, with respect to a stronger involvement of popular organizations in the joint management of such policies, success was limited. While problems in the relationship between technical advisers and settlers played a certain role, most of this lack of success was due to the weakness of neighbourhood movements themselves. A fundamental problem in this context, which was discussed in more detail in Chapters 1 and 3, was the periodic nature of popular participation at the neighbourhood level and the fact that such participation was often narrowly oriented towards the achievement of fairly limited goals. As Mario Zolezzi, the director of the municipal urban development secretariat under Barrantes, remarked in a personal interview with the author (Zolezzi 1991), participation at the neighbourhood level was strongest when specific benefits, particularly land titles, could be obtained, but it rarely extended to more complex issues where benefits were less clearly defined and less certain.

The Vaso de Leche (Glass of Milk) Programme

The second example for popular participation under the Barrantes administration, the *vaso de leche* programme, has to be seen against the background of the critical economic situation in Peru in the early 1980s. As a result of the economic crisis, which had persisted more or less without

interruption since the mid-1970s, as well as the adjustment policies of the early 1980s, the living standards of the popular classes had fallen steadily, and particularly in the shantytowns around Lima, nutritional and health standards were becoming dangerously low (Haak 1987, 58-59). To address this dramatic situation, Izquierda Unida had developed a social emergency programme, the *Programa Popular de Emergencia*, which was a central part of its electoral platform (Izquierda Unida 1983, 15-24; Ugarte and Haak 1991), and began implementing it after winning the municipal elections in Lima in 1983. As the cornerstone of the social emergency programme, the *vaso de leche* scheme was designed to improve the diet of the most vulnerable of the poor, by delivering a protein supplement in the form of one glass of milk daily to all children under six years of age, as well as breast-feeding mothers and pregnant women.

The *vaso de leche* programme, which marked the first time that a Peruvian local government made a major foray into the field of social policy, differed in several ways from previous social assistance programmes. Traditionally, social assistance had always been the domain of the central government and had usually been administered from above in a clientelist and cooptive way, exchanging material benefits for political support. The *vaso de leche* programme, on the contrary, adopted a different approach, which was centred around the principle of *co-gestión*, or joint programme management. This approach was characterized by the delegation of responsibilities from the provincial to the district administrations as well as the active participation of independent urban popular

movements in the administration of the project. While this programme design was consistent with the political and ideological outlook of the Barrantes administration, it was also the result of the severe material constraints put on the municipal administration. Most importantly, the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima was in no position to set up the bureaucratic apparatus that would have been necessary to control the daily milk distribution to hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries. In fact, throughout its entire term in office, the Barrantes administration was never able to assign more than 29 municipal employees to the administration of the *vaso de leche* programme (Barrantes 1991; Pease 1992). Consequently, if it wanted to implement the programme in all popular districts and reach all potential beneficiaries, the provincial administration had no choice but to share control of the programme with the municipal administrations of the popular districts, and, more importantly, with the existing network of neighbourhood organizations and survival movements. By the same token, the possibilities of exploiting the programme for political gain and of exchanging material benefits for political support were reduced.

In more specific terms, the *vaso de leche* programme was organized in the following way (Barrig 1990, 183-185; Ugarte and Haak 1991, 247-248). The overall policy guidelines, setting out the organizational framework of the programme and determining who would benefit from it, were established by the municipal administration of Metropolitan Lima. The Municipality of Metropolitan Lima was also responsible for providing the milk, most of which it

received in the form of powdered milk from foreign donations, and to assure its transport to the districts in which the programme was implemented. The district municipalities, for their part, distributed the milk among the various settlements and cooperated with their neighbourhood associations in the elaboration of a list of beneficiaries. The neighbourhood associations, finally, took on the task of preparing the milk and of handing it out to the recipients. All these arrangements were backed by formal agreements signed between the parties.

The final stage of the distribution process in the settlements themselves presented the greatest difficulties. In most cases, the task of preparing and distributing the milk was not assumed by the neighbourhood association as such, but immediately delegated to its secretary of social affairs, a position which was "invariably held by a woman" (Barrig 1990, 184). The secretary of social affairs, in turn, cooperated with the *vaso de leche* committees, which were specifically created for this purpose at the street or *manzana* (block) level, and made up of the beneficiaries themselves. The main problem facing these committees, who were to plan and oversee the distribution process autonomously, was that they had virtually no resources for this purpose. In more practical terms, there existed no storage sites for the milk, there were no cooking facilities and no money to buy cooking fuel for the preparation of up to 100 rations of milk daily, and there were no suitable localities where the milk could be distributed to the recipients.

These were considerable difficulties, and they would have been impossible

to overcome without the prior existence of mutual networks of solidarity in the form of urban popular movements. As we have seen in Chapters 1 and 3, so-called survival and other women's movements, such as *comedores populares* (communal soup kitchens), had sprung up all over the popular districts of the capital as a response to the economic crisis. Towards the mid-1980s, these movements not only became more numerous, but they also displayed increasing organizational coherence and dynamism, setting them apart from most neighbourhood movements, which had entered a period of slow decline. The previous experience of the *comedores populares*, in particular, greatly helped to solidify the fledgling *vaso de leche* committees. During their participation in the *comedores populares*, many of the women who later became involved in the *vaso de leche* programme could acquire crucial organizational skills. Likewise, the *comedores populares* had gathered experience of how to raise and manage funds locally, which could be put to use by the *vaso de leche* committees. Most of these committees resorted to charging a small contribution from the recipients, a practice which proved necessary, even if it ran counter to the official programme guidelines. The committees also raised funds from other activities, such as the sale of the cartons that had contained the plastic pouches of powdered milk.

The *vaso de leche* programme became one of the big success stories of the Barrantes administration: towards the end of its term in office in 1986, about 100,000 women participated in 7,500 *vaso de leche* committees, and the

programme reached up to one million recipients daily in 33 districts of Lima (Municipalidad de Lima n.d., 44-45; Barrig 1990, 186-187). To a large extent, this success can be attributed to the organizational skills and the considerable sacrifices in terms of time, work, and money, made by the women involved in the *vaso de leche* committees at the base level. Without their efforts, it would almost certainly have been impossible to get the programme off the ground. At the very least, it would have been unlikely to make the *vaso de leche* committees operational quickly, and as a consequence, much of the milk would probably have been misappropriated and would never have reached its recipients. In other words, the participation of urban popular movements in the management of the *vaso de leche* programme not only made its implementation more efficient, it made the programme possible to begin with.

Aside from its material success, the *vaso de leche* programme also helped strengthen the urban popular movements that participated in it. This sets it apart from "assistentialist" programmes mentioned earlier and also from those self-help schemes that see in urban popular movements merely a source of cheap labour, which were discussed in Chapter 2. The original *vaso de leche* committees were encouraged by the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima to establish higher instances of coordination, which resulted in the creation of a multi-tiered structure with coordinating committees, so-called *coordinadoras*, at various levels. In October of 1986, a meeting of the district-level *coordinadoras* elected a coordinating committee for all of Metropolitan Lima, the *coordinadora metropolitana*, which

was then formally recognized by the municipal administration as a partner in the management of the *vaso de leche* programme. Aside from assuming an increasingly important role in the administration of the *vaso de leche* programme, as well as in the management of other aspects of the social emergency programme, the *coordinadoras* also organized several marches to demand resources for the programme from the central government.²⁷

According to the available information, this process took place without infringements on the independence of the *vaso de leche* committees by the municipal administration. From the base level committees to the *coordinadoras* higher up, the organizational structure of the *vaso de leche* programme remained open to all women, and at least in theory, also to all men, independently of their political orientation. Likewise, programme participants did not have to be sympathizers of Izquierda Unida or take part in political activities in support of the municipal administration in order to qualify for programme benefits (Barrantes 1991; Pease 1992).²⁸ At the same time, it is obvious that the *vaso de leche* committees, and the administration of social policy in a more general sense, constituted a means for Izquierda Unida to win the support of urban popular movements and to establish popular support bases. Not surprisingly, many participants of the *vaso de leche* programme, and especially its leadership, were in fact IU sympathizers or militants (Barrig 1990, 1995). Moreover, some of the most significant activities of the *vaso de leche* committees, particularly the mobilizations against the central government mentioned above, were coordinated

with the municipal government. Nonetheless, it appears that the municipal administration respected the autonomy of the *vaso de leche* committees and did not resort to cooptive tactics in order to win their support.

Despite these achievements, the *vaso de leche* programme was also limited in a number of ways. An obvious limitation was the programme's initial concentration on survival needs, which was later somewhat remedied when the *vaso de leche* committees became the basis for other initiatives, such as in the field of public health (Pease 1988, 86). More importantly, the degree of participation in the programme differed greatly between programme organizers, or *dirigentas*, and programme beneficiaries. Participation was clearly strongest on the part of the *dirigentas*, most of whom did not belong to the poorest strata within the popular sector and could therefore afford not to work and instead invest their time into organizational activities. For many of these women, becoming involved in the *vaso de leche* programme constituted an important step on the way to their own personal and political empowerment. Their participation in the *vaso de leche* scheme allowed them to first shake off the limitations of their traditional female role that had tied them to their children and the household, to acquire managerial experience, and often to assume increasingly important positions in the administration of the programme. For some *dirigentas*, this experience even served as a stepping stone into the realm of politics, at the local level and above, which before had been an almost exclusively male domain.²⁹

The same cannot be said about the majority of simple programme

beneficiaries, many of whom continued to view the *vaso de leche* programme in terms of a traditional "assistentialist" logic. Many beneficiaries participated in the *vaso de leche* committees only as much as was necessary to keep them operational, since the benefits that the programme provided were often crucial for the survival of their families. With the exacerbation of the economic crisis, the difficulties to make the participatory logic of the programme take root became all the more acute. Many beneficiaries simply could not afford to spend much time on unpaid volunteer work, since they had been forced to take up employment, usually in the informal sector, in order to be able to support their families. From 1985 onwards, clientelist schemes, such as the APRA-sponsored PAIT programme which offered a small remuneration to its participants, acted as an additional drain on the level of participation in the *vaso de leche* scheme.

In sum, mainly as a result of the economic crisis and the competition from clientelist schemes sponsored by the APRA-led central government, the existing distance between the leadership and the bases of the *vaso de leche* programme became more pronounced, and only a minority of *dirigentas* participated fully in the management of the programme. While this posed at least a potential threat to the democratic character of the programme and limited its overall efficiency, the municipal administration of Metropolitan Lima could do little to remedy these problems. Obviously, it was beyond its power to end the economic crisis or to eradicate the roots of political cooptation; therefore, it had to limit itself to supporting ongoing efforts to strengthen the organizational structures of the *vaso*

de leche committees, and of urban popular movements as a whole.

The Municipal Agencies in the District of El Cercado

The third example of popular participation under the Barrantes administration, the *agencias municipales* in the downtown district of El Cercado (Barrantes 1986, 94-96; Pease 1988, 89-90; Pease 1990, 71-72; Pease and Jibaja 1989, 371; Rojas Julca 1989, 22-23), differed in important respects from the two cases discussed previously. Whereas in those cases, the emphasis was put on improved consultation and information about municipal policy, as well as on joint programme management, the purpose of the *agencias municipales* was to increase the direct participation of the population in the municipal decision making process and the democratization of the municipal administration itself. As such, the *agencias municipales* can be considered the potentially most far-reaching forms of popular participation implemented by the Barrantes administration.

The *agencias municipales* have to be seen against the backdrop of the specific *problematique* of the district of El Cercado. Comprising a population of approximately 600,000 inhabitants, the district was structurally very heterogenous, encompassing the historic city core, but also residential and industrial zones, as well as popular neighbourhoods. Consequently, the concerns of its inhabitants varied greatly. As opposed to the other districts in the province of Lima, El Cercado did not have a separate municipal administration at the district level, but had traditionally been administered directly by the provincial

municipality, that is, by the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima. As a result, the distance between the inhabitants of the district and the administration was greater than usually, and their specific concerns risked to be swamped by the more important interests of the metropolitan area as a whole.

To remedy this problem, El Cercado was subdivided into six separate municipal agencies, with the purpose of decentralizing the municipal administration and to better address the specific problems of the district. The *agencias municipales* were conceived as joint decision making organs, in which functionaries of the municipality together with representatives of the population would decide upon municipal policy. It was planned to successively delegate all those functions to the *agencias municipales* that were usually performed by the district administrations. In the long run, it was hoped the municipal agencies would become permanent interlocutors of the provincial administration as well as assume increasingly important decision making powers.

When the *agencias municipales* were formally created in April of 1985 via the Edicto No. 021, they were not set up simply by way of administrative deconcentration, that is, by delegating functionaries from the provincial administration to the newly created municipal agencies. On the contrary, the Barrantes administration decided to construct them from the ground up, starting with neighbourhood committees at the block or street level. A fundamental problem in this context was the lack of a strong tradition of urban popular movements in the district and the fact that only very few neighbourhood

committees existed. Consequently, the first task of the *promotores* (promoters) from the Oficina General de Participación Vecinal, which had been put in charge of the implementation of the project, was to raise the level of popular organization. By the end of 1986, these efforts had been quite successful: about 350 neighbourhood committees had been registered by the municipality, and in each of the six agencies, neighbourhood assemblies, so-called *asambleas vecinales*, had been held, which were to serve as permanent instances of coordination for the individual committees (Pease and Jibaja 1989, 371). Among other things, the *asambleas vecinales* discussed and approved the Plan de Obras 1986 (plan of public works).

Despite these partial advances, however, the overall impact of the *agencias municipales* remained marginal. Neither the individual neighbourhood committees nor the neighbourhood assemblies acquired much organizational cohesion, and as a consequence, the *agencias municipales* never fully consolidated. Furthermore, the transfer of decision making powers from the provincial administration was slow, partially due to resistance on the part of the municipal bureaucracy (Pease 1988, 90), and the *agencias municipales* never lived up to their potential as interlocutors of the municipal administration and as true decision making organs. To some extent, these shortcomings were due to the fact that the *agencias municipales* were extremely short-lived: after APRA's victory in the municipal elections of November of 1986, the project was ended and subsequently, the neighbourhood committees disintegrated.³⁰ Nevertheless, the experience of the

agencias municipales can serve as proof at least for the willingness of Izquierda Unida to open up the municipal administration to democratic participation from below, up to and including popular participation in decision making at the municipal level.

Conclusions

There can be no doubt that the Barrantes administration of Metropolitan Lima substantially widened the room for popular participation in local politics during its tenure from 1984 to 1986. Despite the lack of sufficient powers and resources on the part of the local administration, as well as the existence of considerable legal obstacles to any enlargement of popular participation in local affairs, the Barrantes administration succeeded in improving the information and consultation of the population about municipal policies, it transferred almost the entire management of some crucial municipal policies, particularly the *vaso de leche* programme, to urban popular movements, and it demonstrated its willingness to devolve decision making powers over the running of the municipal administration to urban popular movements. At the same time, the Barrantes administration encouraged and promoted the development of the popular organizations that participated in municipal politics, by lending organizational and technical support and by encouraging the development of higher levels of organization. These efforts had some remarkable successes, particularly in the case of the *vaso de leche* committees.

Apparently, these efforts were not accompanied by parallel attempts to coopt urban popular movements. According to my own research, which confirms the results of other studies, urban popular movements did not have to be IU sympathizers to participate in municipal programmes or to receive benefits from the municipal administration. Of course, this is not to deny that the municipal government regarded its participatory programmes as a means to strengthen popular support for Izquierda Unida: in fact, some urban popular movements, and especially their leadership, were strong supporters of the United Left. Nevertheless, it deserves to be pointed out that the municipal government seems to have refrained from violating the autonomy of urban popular movements. In fact, the alliance between the United Left and urban popular movements during the Barrantes administration appears to have been one of the rare cases mentioned in Chapter 2 in which a leftist political supported urban popular movements without at the same time infringing on their autonomy.

Despite these relative successes, popular participation in municipal affairs during the Barrantes years remained limited in a number of ways. A first and obvious limitation resulted from the institutional weakness of local governments themselves. While local governments in theory had considerable powers and responsibilities thanks to Ley No. 23853, in practice, they often had to compete with the central government and its agencies over the jurisdiction for urban public services, urban transport, and the like. This lack of real political clout, together with a shortage of economic resources, considerably lessened the attraction of

participating in municipal affairs and made it more likely that urban popular movements would seek to establish direct links with the central government. As we have seen, this is precisely what happened in the case of the municipal land development scheme of Huaycán, where the APRA-dominated settlers association tried to obtain improvements of urban services directly from the APRA-led central government.

Second, and more importantly, popular participation under the Barrantes administration failed to evolve beyond the stage of collaborative participation into fully democratic participation (Chirinos 1991, 92-94, 134). Most importantly, the transfer of real decision making powers to urban popular movements remained incipient, which considerably lessened their influence on the running of the municipal administration as such. In part, this can be attributed to the short-lived nature of the Barrantes administration, which limited its ability to establish the appropriate institutional framework for the delegation of decision making powers to urban popular movements. The political will to do was there, as the experience with the municipal agencies in the district of El Cercado clearly shows.

At the same time, the deficiencies of urban popular movements themselves limited their ability to take part in the local decision making process. As was explained, during the Barrantes years, some common weaknesses of urban popular movements, such as institutional fragility and fluctuating levels of participation, were exacerbated by the economic crisis. Among other things, this

heightened the propensity on the part of some to seek individual solutions to the problem of survival, and it reduced the time available for unpaid organizational activities. As a result, the ability of urban popular movements to participate in the decision making process at the local level, or even only in the joint management of municipal policies, was often quite limited. With the notable exception of some survival movements, particularly the *vaso de leche* committees and the *comedores populares*, urban popular movements did not become the driving force behind the democratization of the local administration, as the radical-democratic project had assumed.

Finally, a number of legal and political barriers formed a third important obstacle to any substantial enlargement of popular participation in local politics. Ley No. 23853 severely restricted the space for popular participation, and as a consequence, most initiatives that the Barrantes administration undertook in this area remained at the margins of the law. Furthermore, as we have seen in the case of the Ordenanza No. 192, there was often intense political resistance on the part of the conservative elites to any further expansion of popular participation. As a result of these legal and political barriers, the inroads for popular participation that were created during the Barrantes administration were never formally institutionalized and always remained precarious. In the absence of clear and binding mechanisms, the participation of urban popular movements in local affairs continued to depend on the political will and support of their benevolent ally, namely, the IU administration of Metropolitan Lima.

The existence of these obstacles should not be taken as proof that the Barrantes administration was doomed from the start. On the contrary, a victory in the 1986 municipal elections would have given Izquierda Unida a chance to build on its prior achievements, to consolidate its alliance with urban popular movements, and to continue its struggle for more powers and resources for local governments, as well as increased possibilities for popular participation. An electoral victory at the national level, which did not seem impossible at the time, would have put the left in an even better position to implement its radical-democratic agenda. However, as is well known, what happened was precisely the opposite: Izquierda Unida lost the municipal elections of 1986 and subsequently entered a long period of decline. As a result, most forms of popular participation at the local level were cut and replaced by a more conventional clientelist approach on the part of the new municipal government led by APRA.

The reasons for IU's electoral loss in 1986 and its subsequent decline obviously cannot be treated in detail here, however, some should at least be named. Most observers agreed that IU's defeat in 1986 could not be attributed to its previous performance as the local government of Metropolitan Lima. On the contrary, most of these observers concurred that IU's performance had been good, given the adverse conditions and the short time frame to implement any substantial changes (Allou 1988, 28). Rather, what seems to have tilted the balance in favour of APRA in a closely contested vote was the personal intervention of then-still-charismatic President Alan García on behalf of APRA

candidate del Castillo, resulting in accusations of vote-rigging and fraud. What IU's loss in the municipal elections of 1986 did expose, however, were some more basic weaknesses in its strategy. For one thing, IU obviously remained unable to clearly monopolize the popular sector vote and to keep APRA from making major inroads into what it had to consider its principal electoral base. At the same time, IU's relatively good performance in the municipal administration of Lima, as well as its insistence on democratic government, moderation, and consensus had failed so far to bring in the expected middle class votes, much of which likewise went to APRA. Finally, attempts to form alliances with other political parties, especially Alfonso Barrantes' project of a popular front with APRA, had proven equally fruitless.

In short, Izquierda Unida's defeat in 1986 cast some doubt on whether its institutional strategy to obtain power at the national level would be able to deliver the expected results. As a consequence, the old ideological and strategic differences between revolutionary, radical-democratic, and reformist factions within the leftist alliance, which had barely been papered over in the past, again came to the fore. The resulting infighting all but immobilized the alliance, leading to frustration and withdrawal on the part of many militants and popular sector voters, until the alliance finally broke up in 1989. All these developments found their reflection on the local scene, as will become clear in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

THE PERUVIAN LEFT AND POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN THE LATE 1980S AND EARLY 1990s: REVOLUTIONARY AND RADICAL-DEMOCRATIC APPROACHES IN CONFLICT

In the second half of the 1980s, the political and institutional environment for popular participation in municipal affairs underwent some fundamental changes in the Peruvian capital. Following the victory of APRA in the municipal elections of November 1986, most of the policies that had been implemented by the Barrantes administration with the goal of promoting popular participation came to an end. The new APRA administration decided to abandon these policies, given that they were associated with the previous IU government and were therefore considered to be support mechanisms for the United Left in the municipal realm. Moreover, instead of developing its own policies with regard to popular participation at the local level, the new municipal administration preferred to take part in existing programmes on the part of the APRA-led central government, such as the PAD or the PAIT programmes (Graham 1991). The decision of the new administration to establish close links to the central government and to support its efforts to win political support among the urban popular sector not only undermined the autonomy of the municipal government vis-à-vis the central government. Given that the respective programmes usually functioned according to a clientelist logic, exchanging certain benefits for political support, they also increased the pressure on the autonomy of urban popular

movements and fostered a return to clientelist practices at the local level.

In addition to these changes at the metropolitan level, the conditions for popular participation in the individual districts of Lima likewise deteriorated. Most importantly, the new municipal administration of Metropolitan Lima proved to be much less willing than the Barrantes administration previously to devolve decision making power to the districts, particularly if the districts in question were administered by Izquierda Unida. As a consequence, the district governments were no longer able to share decision making powers with urban popular movements and thereby promote popular participation in local affairs, as they had done in the case of the distribution of land titles to urban squatters under the Barrantes administration. Furthermore, financial support from the metropolitan government for the district municipalities, such as in the form of INVERMET funds to carry out public works, had virtually dried up. Since the persistent economic crisis prevented the district administrations from raising additional revenue on their own, they were often no longer able to provide sufficient resources for existing participatory programmes or for new ones that they might wish to implement.

The breakup of the United Left at the end of the 1980s likewise contributed to the deterioration of the conditions for popular participation at the local level. As was mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, Izquierda Unida began to show signs of strain after its loss in the municipal elections of 1986, and finally split up two and a half years later. As a result of this breakup and the coinciding

struggles between various leftist political parties and factions, cooptive pressures on urban popular movements mounted and existing forms of popular participation at the local level became increasingly politicized. In addition to the policies advocated by other political actors, urban popular movements were now often confronted with two competing projects of popular participation at the local level by the political left. The first of these projects basically resurrected what I have earlier called the revolutionary approach to popular participation, insisting on the need to "construct" urban popular movements from above and assigning a crucial role to the party in the process. The second project, on the other hand, attempted to continue the radical-democratic tradition of the Barrantes administration, accepting the pluralist nature of civil society, as well as stressing the need to protect the autonomy of urban popular movements and to further their potential to democratize political parties and institutions.

The present chapter will study the impact of these developments in the context of El Agustino, a low-income district of the Peruvian capital.¹ More specifically, I will examine the consequences of resource scarcity and the lack of support from higher levels of government for the genesis, the development, and the demise of a particular policy designed to increase popular participation in the district, the so-called *Micro-Areas de Desarrollo* (Micro-Areas of Development), or MIADES. Furthermore, I will analyze how the politically motivated struggles between the various leftist groups that were present in El Agustino affected popular participation at the local level, and especially the MIADES scheme.

Finally, I will examine the repercussions these struggles had on the autonomy of urban popular movements. Using the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2, I will argue that urban popular movements were successful in counteracting cooptive pressures and in maintaining their autonomy, by striking multiple alliances with a variety of other actors.

For several reasons, the district of El Agustino is a particularly suitable case to study these questions. First, due to a long history of popular mobilization and organization, urban popular movements in El Agustino are fairly developed and diversified. As a consequence, popular demands for more participation in local politics have traditionally been quite strong. Furthermore, leftist political parties have maintained a steady presence in the district and established strong links with urban popular movements. Under these conditions, it is no surprise that the leftist-controlled municipal government implemented various forms of popular participation in local affairs during the 1980s, which the MIADES project tried to combine in one comprehensive programme. Finally, since the struggles between the leftist groups and parties of the district obviously reflected more profound ideological and strategic divisions within the Peruvian left, I believe that the case of El Agustino and the conflicts surrounding the MIADES project can furnish important insights into the development of the Peruvian left's stance towards popular participation in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

One could of course argue that these characteristics apply not only to El Agustino, but also to other popular districts of Lima, particularly the well-known

and highly publicized case of Villa El Salvador (Peattie 1990; Blondet 1991). Undoubtedly, Villa El Salvador occupies a special place among the popular districts of the Peruvian capital. A model case for the Velasco regime to demonstrate its support for the urban popular sector, Villa El Salvador was the only popular district to be organized around a common development plan and to receive massive state support. As a result, it became much more homogeneous in terms of its urban development and social structure, which greatly facilitated the unification of urban popular movements under the roof of one organization, the CUAVES, and the establishment of privileged links between the CUAVES and the local administration. By contrast, due to a fairly chaotic settlement pattern and the absence of state support, El Agustino resembles a patchwork of different popular settlements in various stages of development, which has its reflection in the social heterogeneity of the district. Urban popular movements under these conditions are more dispersed and fragmented than in Villa El Salvador and popular participation in local government typically does not achieve the same advanced level. At the same time, however, these conditions are more representative for the reality of other popular districts in Lima. In other words, while Villa El Salvador is undoubtedly the most advanced example of popular participation in local government in Peru, and maybe even in Latin America, the conditions that made its relative success possible are not easily replicated in other popular districts in the Peruvian capital, or in other Latin American cities. Consequently, the conclusions that can be drawn from a case such as El Agustino

can more easily be generalized and are relevant in a larger context than those derived from the more successful, but also more exceptional, case of Villa El Salvador.

This chapter has been divided into five sections. First, I will provide some basic information on the history and the socioeconomic makeup of the district of El Agustino, as well as further explain my choice of case study. In the second section, I will analyze the design and implementation of the MIADES scheme, as well as explain some of the limits it ran up against. Third, I will turn to the politicization of the MIADES project, and fourth, I will examine a different organism that developed into an alternative to the MIADES, namely, the *Comité de Gestión Distrital* (District Management Committee). Finally, I will examine the reaction of urban popular movements to these developments, paying particular attention to the effects of increasing cooptive pressures on their autonomy, as well as the presence of a multitude of actors on the local scene all vying for their support.

El Agustino - Portrait of a "Typical" Popular District

El Agustino is one of the oldest and at the same time one of the poorest of Lima's popular districts. Bordering on the Rímac river in the north, the districts of Santa Anita in the east, Ate-Vitarte in the south, and La Victoria and El Cercado in the west, El Agustino is situated only a few kilometres east of the Plaza de Armas in what is known as the *Cono Este*, or Eastern Cone, of

Metropolitan Lima. While the district was formally constituted only in 1965, settlement of the area started as early as the 1940s. In fact, the invasion of the Cerro El Agustino in 1947, together with several other hills in the area, can be seen as a harbinger for the coming wave of land occupations by migrants from the Andean highlands in and around the Peruvian capital.² Since then, the district has continued to grow in geographic as well as demographic terms and is beginning to run out of space for further expansion. In 1989, the population of El Agustino was estimated at 235,000, distributed among 46 popular settlements (*asentamientos humanos* or *pueblos jóvenes*), 39 housing associations or cooperatives, 11 private urban developments, and 4 municipal housing projects (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 142; CENCA and SEA n.d., 18).³

According to figures provided by the Banco Central de la Reserva (BCR), which are confirmed in a separate study by Tuesta (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 142; CENCA and SEA n.d., 20; Tuesta 1989, 16-17), El Agustino is one of the three poorest districts of Lima. The *Plan Integral de Desarrollo de El Agustino* (CTIC n.d.) states that only 4% of the labour force of the district is adequately employed, that is, the respective workers receive at least minimum wage and enjoy the protection of valid labour laws, while 80% are underemployed and 16% unemployed. Employment is overwhelmingly in services, with about a third of the labour force working as self-employed workers in the informal sector. The provision of homes with urban services is largely deficient: 53.3% of the dwellings in the district lack access to drinking water and

sewers, whereas 21.6% are not connected to the electricity grid (CTIC n.d., 2). The poverty of the district is also reflected in the state of its municipal finances: For much of the 1980s, the budget of the municipal administration was minimal, with between US\$ 2 and 5 to spend per year and person (Allou 1989, 139-140).

Another fundamental characteristic of the district of El Agustino is its structural heterogeneity, which can be attributed to several factors. For one thing, as a result of a somewhat chaotic settlement pattern and the almost complete absence of urban planning, the respective zones of the district are very unevenly developed. Generally speaking, the development of the district followed a logic that was influenced by shifting state policies that tried to put a stop to land occupations and to limit the constant increase in the number of illegal settlements around Lima, as well as the interests of the landowners in the area and the demands and relative strength of emerging neighbourhood movements (Ruiz de Somocurcio et al. 1986, 19). During an initial phase from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s, land occupations, mainly on the slopes of the *cerros* or hills in the area, were the most frequent form of settlement. In the following years, land occupations remained common, despite the passing of Ley No. 13157 in 1961. At the same time, however, formally illegal land purchases from the tenants of agricultural land, the so-called *yanaconas*, became more prominent, with the resulting settlements forming the basis of what now constitutes the central *zona plana* of El Agustino. During the 1970s, finally, urban housing cooperatives took on increasing importance, purchasing land from the owners of the remaining large

estates who feared being expropriated by the military regime in order to resettle the inhabitants of overcrowded slums and shantytowns in and around the capital (Calderón 1980b; Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 142; Ruiz Somocurcio et al. 1986, 19-21).

As a result of these different modes of urban development and following the complete *remodelación* or restructuring of most existing settlements, accompanied by the relocation of the overflow to previously uninhabited areas of the district, El Agustino today resembles a disparate patchwork of very unevenly developed sectors (Ruiz de Somocurcio et al. 1987, 13-24). While some neighbourhoods in the district, especially in the *zona plana*, are fully consolidated, boasting paved roads, sidewalks, parks, and brick houses equipped with drinking water, sewers, and electricity, large expanses of the district consist of desolate shantytowns perched precariously on the hillsides, which often lack even the most basic amenities. Frequently, the level of urban development of the respective zones mirrors the social composition of their inhabitants, which can range from middle class in some parts of the *zona plana* to absolute poverty in the *cerros*. Usually, the most recently erected shantytowns are also the most desolate, but many of the older settlements in the *cerros* are also in a critical state. Often severely overcrowded, their location on the slopes of steep hills defies conventional attempts at restructuring and makes the provision with urban services extremely difficult and expensive, if not outright impossible. These are also the settlements in which armed groups like Sendero Luminoso and the MRTA have maintained

a steady presence, which in some cases goes back to the early 1980s. However, compared to other low-income district in the Peruvian capital such as San Juan de Lurigancho, Ate-Vitarte or Villa El Salvador, armed groups in El Agustino have kept a relatively low profile and appear to consider the district a retreat zone, rather than a principal focus of their activity.

In addition to the effects of an uneven and largely chaotic development pattern, geographical conditions and a deficient infrastructure add to the structural disarticulation of the district. Only 40% of the territory of El Agustino is fit for human habitation, while 30% are occupied by hills and another 30% by outside entities that have little to do with the social and economic life of the district, such as the water processing plant *La Atarjea* and two military barracks (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 143). The settled areas are not always contiguous, in fact, the presence of steep hills in the very centre of the district considerably complicates the communication between the different sectors. Road links to outlying areas are often poor or inexistent; in addition, several highways and a railway line cut across the district, further isolating certain sectors from others. The connections between the district of El Agustino and surrounding districts, as well as the centre of Lima, are likewise inadequate.

As far as its history and basic socioeconomic characteristics are concerned, El Agustino shares many similarities with other low-income districts in the Peruvian capital. While many of these districts are of more recent origin, they nevertheless developed in much the same way, and they resemble El Agustino in

their demographic and socioeconomic composition. However, what distinguishes El Agustino from many other popular districts and at the same time makes it a particularly interesting case in the context of this dissertation, is its long tradition of urban popular movement activity and the continuing presence of leftist political parties in the district. Without being developed to the same extent as in exceptional cases such as Villa El Salvador, as was pointed out previously, these two factors served as an impetus for the development of participatory policies by the local government of the district.

Urban popular movements in El Agustino can indeed look back on a long history of struggle, a history which began in the late 1940s with the formation of the first neighbourhood organizations that spearheaded the occupation of the *cerros*, and which continued throughout the 1950s and 1960s, when new land occupations led to renewed and often violent confrontations with land owners and police (Calderón 1980b; Fernández and Núñez 1986). In the 1970s, the committees that emerged in connection with the restructuring of the *zona plana*, a project that was sponsored by SINAMOS, the central government agency in charge of popular settlements or *pueblos jóvenes*, added a new element to this dynamic. Some of these committees, especially in the 6th zone of the *zona plana*, went beyond traditional demands for land titles, urban services, and the like, and challenged the traditional clientelist relationship between *pobladores* and state agencies like SINAMOS itself. In particular, SINAMOS was attacked for backing the old undemocratic leadership of the neighbourhood committee and the

privileged sector of the population it represented, as well as for trying to undermine the new leadership, which it did not control (Ruiz de Somocurcio 1983, 262; Sánchez-León 1983, 61).

Throughout the 1970s, El Agustino also witnessed a number of important examples for the formation of alliances of neighbourhood movements, such as the Frente de Defensa de El Agustino (FUDA), the Frente de Instituciones Juveniles (FIJA), and the Frente Unico de los Cerros (FUCA). The most noteworthy of these alliances was the Federación Distrital de Pueblos Jovenes y Urbanizaciones Populares de El Agustino, which emerged towards the end of the decade and constituted one of the few successful attempts in Lima to establish a federation of neighbourhood movements at the district level. This tradition was carried on into the 1980s, for example, with the formation of the Unión de Pueblos de la Margen Izquierda del Río Rímac (UPMIRR) (Calderón 1980b, 95-110; Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 143; CENCA and SEA n.d., 20).

Women's movements likewise have a long tradition in El Agustino. This tradition can be traced back to the *clubes de madres* or mothers' clubs of the 1960s, which are not to be mistaken for the *clubes de madres* that were established under the APRA regime in the 1980s. With the onset of the crisis years in the late 1970s, new forms of women's movements in the shape of the so-called survival movements emerged, which broke with the clientelist tradition represented by the earlier *clubes de madres* and put more emphasis on organizational autonomy as well as democratic forms of participation (CELATS

1983; Montes 1987). El Agustino was at the forefront of these developments: arguably, the soup kitchen *Sembrando la Alegría*, which was established in the 2nd zone of the *zona plana* in 1979, was the first *comedor popular* in all of Lima (Cuadros 1992). The explosive growth of the *comedores populares* during the crisis years of the 1980s, followed by the establishment and subsequent consolidation of the *vaso de leche* committees in the district, mirrored the overall development of urban popular movements in Peru. As elsewhere, neighbourhood movements in El Agustino ceded their status as the most dynamic form of popular organization to the new women's movements (Barrig and Fort 1987). Both the *comedores populares* and the *vaso de leche* committees have achieved an impressive degree of centralization, uniting in federations at the district level and forging links with other districts that embrace all of Metropolitan Lima.

The rise of urban popular movements in El Agustino was paralleled by the growing strength of leftist political parties in the district, particularly those belonging to the new left that emerged during the 1970s under the reformist military regime. Throughout the 1970s, the left was actively involved in the struggles at the neighbourhood level in El Agustino, which was reflected in a share of 50.3% for leftist political parties in the 1978 elections for the Constituent Assembly (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 143). After the return to democratic rule, Izquierda Unida received 33.45% in the municipal elections of 1981 to form the first democratically elected local government under Alberto Gamarra. The three subsequent municipal elections were also won by Izquierda

Unida, whose mayoral candidate Jorge Quintanilla received 53.12% in 1983, 47.27% in 1986 and, following the breakup of Izquierda Unida, only 26.52 % in 1989 (Allou 1989, 88-91; Roncagliolo 1989/1990, 16).⁴ The precipitous decline of IU's share of the popular vote in 1989 augured badly for the municipal elections of February 1993, when IU was beaten for the first time since 1981 at the hands of the independent Obras movement, which won twenty districts in the capital and whose leader Ricardo Belmont was triumphantly reelected to the mayorship of Metropolitan Lima (Nuevos alcaldes 1993, 3).

In sum, the sustained presence of leftist political parties in the district, together with a long tradition of urban popular movement activity, make El Agustino a particularly relevant example for popular participation in local politics. On the one hand, given the relative strength of urban popular movements in the district, and notwithstanding the various deficiencies of these movements that were discussed in previous chapters, it is not surprising to find a relatively strong demand for more participation in local affairs emanating from the grassroots. Significantly, this demand was coupled with fairly highly developed organizational capacities, not least due to previous experiences of urban popular movement alliances at the district level. On the other hand, considering that many leftist militants were or had previously been members of urban popular movements, there existed strong ideological and strategic affinities between the two, which should facilitate their cooperation in local government.

By the same token, the consecutive leftist administrations of the district

could be expected to be fairly responsive to demands for more popular participation. In fact, as we have seen in the preceding chapters, the municipal government of El Agustino was one of the five leftist local governments that experimented with new forms of popular participation between 1981 and 1983, such as the *asambleas populares* and the *comisiones mixtas*. The subsequent administration supported the provincial government of Metropolitan Lima in its efforts to increase popular participation, for instance, by setting up the Comisión de Saneamiento Físico-Legal (COSFIL) in 1985. It is precisely this legacy of cooperation between urban popular movements and local governments that the MIADES project tried to continue, while putting it on a new and different footing. Instead of relatively sporadic and unconnected instances of popular participation, the MIADES adopted an integrative approach by providing a forum in which urban popular movements could cooperate with one another, as well as with the municipal administration on a variety of issues. In the following section, I will examine the genesis and initial development of the MIADES project in more detail.

Constitution and Partial Consolidation of the *Micro-Areas de Desarrollo* (MIADES) in El Agustino

The project of the *Micro-Areas de Desarrollo* (MIADES) in El Agustino had its origin in two prior studies on the feasibility of urban development in the district, both of which were commissioned by the municipal government. The two studies started from the shared premise that the structural heterogeneity of the

district, which was evidenced by its uneven settlement pattern, the highly unequal distribution of urban services and basic urban infrastructure, different degrees of economic development, and the like, constituted one of the principal obstacles to its overall development. To overcome this obstacle, the studies recommended the district be subdivided into several sub-zones sharing a number of common characteristics, which could then become the object of specialized policies to meet their specific development needs.

Following this line of argument, the *Plan Urbano de Emergencia*, which was elaborated by the architect Diodoro Acosta (Acosta 1986) towards the end of the first Quintanilla administration in 1986, proposed to subdivide the district into three separate zones, whose borders would run along the lines of the main roads crossing the district. The second study, which was prepared by the economist Hugo Domenack at the beginning of the second Quintanilla administration in 1987, refined the *Plan Urbano de Emergencia* by proposing a total of ten instead of three zones, which were now called *micro-areas de desarrollo* (Domenack 1987). Domenack also attempted to provide a legal foundation for the MIADES, basing his argument on the Ley de Bases de Regionalización, as well as the Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades, Ley No. 23853. Domenack's ten zone-scheme subsequently became the basis for the original proposal for the creation of the MIADES, which was adopted unanimously in a public session of the municipal council on 25 June 1987 (Plan Urbano de Emergencia 1987) and later presented to the population for further discussion and refinement.

The original MIADES proposal stipulated four basic objectives for the project: the MIADES were to serve as instruments for the integral development of the district, to advance the unification of popular organizations operating at the neighbourhood level, to further the establishment of municipal agencies in each MIADE, and to facilitate the elaboration of an integral development plan in collaboration with the organized population (Plan Urbano de Emergencia 1987, 5-6). While it was embracing most of the technical considerations contained in Acosta's and Domenack's studies, the proposal also added an unmistakably political bent to the project. According to mayor Jorge Quintanilla, who was the initiator and principal driving force behind the MIADES project together with his party, the Partido Unificado Mariateguista (PUM), the main objective of the MIADES was to enable the organized population to participate not only in the development of their *pueblo* or MIADE, but in the central decisions concerning the future of the district (Quintanilla 1988, 6; Quintanilla 1989a, 8; Quintanilla 1991b, 27).

In order to achieve this objective, it was hoped that the MIADES would act as a catalyst for the organizational consolidation and unification of the district's urban popular movements, which were considered to be relatively weak and dispersed, despite their long history of struggle (Quintanilla 1987, 4; Quintanilla 1991c). In a second step, it was planned to unite the individual MIADES in a federation of MIADES at the district level, which could then assume increasingly important decision making powers, up to and including the deliberation of the

municipal budget. Not unlike the CUAVES in Villa El Salvador, this district-wide federation of MIADES would act as a sort of "popular parliament" somewhat at the margin of the law, whose decisions would nevertheless be enacted by the municipal administration. In the long term, Quintanilla and his party had decidedly more ambitious plans for the MIADES project. They hoped that the MIADES experience would spread to other districts, making it possible to establish regional alliances and federations of MIADES, which would then form the base for an *Asamblea Nacional Popular* (National Popular Assembly) at the national level (Atúncar 1991, 6). Seen from this angle, it could indeed be said that the purpose of the MIADES was to "gestar las bases de poder popular" (Quintanilla 1988, 6; Quintanilla 1989a, 8), or in other words, to lay the groundwork for popular self-government outside of the established institutions of representative democracy (Quintanilla 1991c).

In the initial phases of the MIADES, however, the radical political goals of the project and its hoped-for future role as the nucleus of an alternative political system were little more than theoretical pronouncements. They were clearly overshadowed by more immediate and pragmatic concerns for the organizational consolidation of the MIADES, and when municipal *promotores* explained the project to the population, they put the emphasis on the public works or *obras* that it was supposed to make possible. More specifically, the implementation of the MIADES project proceeded in three distinct phases.³ First, the municipal administration itself had to be restructured in order to create

the instruments needed for the dissemination and promotion of the MIADES project among urban popular movement leaders and the population at large. For this purpose, the Comisión de Desarrollo Urbano (CEPUR) and the Comisión de la Promoción de la Mujer (CEPROM) were created, replacing the earlier Comisión de Saneamiento Físico-Legal (COSFIL), which had been defunct for some time. Both commissions answered directly to the mayor and were staffed by *promotores*, or community workers, who shared the political views of the *alcalde* and his party.

With the beginning of the second phase of the project in December 1987, the municipal *promotores* fanned out to the individual settlements of the district and held a series of meetings, principally with the leaders of neighbourhood organizations, in order to explain and promote the MIADES project. Parallel to that, and without any active involvement or manipulation on the part of the municipality, the so-called *talleres de autodiagnóstico* ("self-diagnosis workshops") took place in the proposed MIADES, which were essentially general assemblies attended by urban popular movement leaders as well as the population at large. The purpose of these *talleres* was to delineate the borders of the proposed MIADES and to decide which settlements should be included, to deliberate the common concerns of the respective settlements and to draft a list of public works that were accorded priority, and finally, to elect a *junta directiva provisional* or provisional leadership of the MIADE. At the end of this process, approximately in November 1988, eight MIADES had been constituted. Four

MIADES remained basically unchanged from the original proposal, namely, Túpac Amaru with 23 settlements, Zona Plana with 18, UPMIRR with 13 and Carretera Central with 6. Two others, Primero de Mayo with 13 settlements and Andrés Avelino Cáceres with 14, resulted from the fusion of four initially proposed MIADES. Finally, the MIADES José Carlos Mariátegui with 9 settlements and Cerros Unidos with 5, were carved out of one initially proposed MIADE, in order to better adapt them to the geographical environment of the *cerros*.⁹

The third phase of the development of the MIADES project was marked by the integration of women's or survival organization into the project, the creation of the Fondo de Desarrollo Comunal (FODECO) to finance infrastructural and other projects, as well as the greater involvement of non-governmental organizations in the elaboration of an integrated development plan for the district. After not having participated in the early stages of the project, women's or survival organizations were now integrated into the MIADES. While these organizations had not been purposefully excluded, the municipality did initially favour the participation of neighbourhood movements, partially because it lacked sufficient personnel to deal with all urban popular movements simultaneously, but mainly because it was believed that the focus of neighbourhood movements on infrastructural works would lead to higher levels of participation overall. After the integration of neighbourhood movements had been achieved, the attention of the municipal *promotores* shifted to women's and survival organizations, and the

CEPROM initiated a number *talleres* or workshops in order to explain and promote the MIADES project. These workshops, which were organized independently by the participants themselves, resulted in the integration of women's organizations into the MIADES, a process which was completed when first the *comedores populares* in March 1988, and a year later, in 1989, the *vaso de leche* committees adapted their district-level organizations to the MIADES structure (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 158). Following the integration of women's or survival organizations, a number of other organizations also began to participate more actively in the MIADES, such as youth groups and associations of micro-entrepreneurs (CENCA and SEA n.d., 27).

The integration of women's or survival organizations had an important programmatic impact on the MIADES, whose almost exclusive focus on infrastructural works slowly gave way to a broader orientation that also embraced issues related to nutrition and public health. Women's movements themselves were also affected, in the sense that they began to break out of their relative isolation and became more receptive to the idea of cooperating with other popular organizations. Furthermore, the often rather narrow preoccupation with survival issues on the part of women's movements was tempered by a more political outlook, which led to the formulation of alternative policy proposals with regard to public health and the generation of employment (SEA 1989, 2-3).

A second important datum in the third phase of the MIADES project was the creation of the Fondo de Desarrollo Comunal (FODECO), which served as

the main source of funding for the public works that had previously been identified in the *talleres de autodiagnóstico* by the individual MIADES. Given the importance that the municipal administration accorded to public works, which were considered the principal factor motivating the population to participate in the MIADES, it is no exaggeration to see the FODECO as the centrepiece of the project. Essentially, the FODECO consisted of funds taken from the municipal budget, which were deposited in separate bank accounts and put at the disposal of the individual MIADES. In 1988, the FODECO amounted to 8% of the municipal budget, rising to 9% in 1989 (CENCA and SEA n.d., 26; Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 154). The fact that the MIADES could decide autonomously over the use of these funds, without interference from the municipal authorities, is particularly significant, since it meant that the devolution of decision making powers from the municipal administration that the MIADES project implied, was backed by a parallel devolution of resources. Nevertheless, since the legal status of the MIADES was doubtful and in order to avoid accusations of financial mismanagement against the municipality, each payment still had to be approved by the municipal council as well as the municipal administration. In 1988, payments were made in instalments of US\$ 800, which could be renewed after the funds had been used up (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 154).

Furthermore, given the scarcity of resources on the part of the municipal administration, a fundamental problem which became more acute due to the

worsening economic crisis and increased inflationary pressures at the end of the 1980s, the size of the FODECO remained relatively small.⁷ Consequently, the FODECO could only fund projects of relatively minor magnitude, even after a meeting of the eight MIADES in El Agustino in February 1989 had decided that all FODECO funds were to be matched by an equal amount of resources provided by the population in the form of labour or tools (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 157). Among the projects financed by the FODECO between 1988 and 1990 were the construction of a road running parallel to the railway tracks in the MIADE Túpac Amaru, a project which was later stopped due to a lack of funds, the parcelling of lots and the elaboration of a plan of the settlement 7 de Octubre in the MIADE José Carlos Mariátegui, and the provision of safe water supply and sewer connections for a *comedor popular* in the MIADE Andrés A. Cáceres (CENCA and SEA n.d., 38-43; Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 155-156).

A third factor in the development of the MIADES during this period was the stronger involvement of non-governmental organizations in the project. The NGOs, or *centros*, as they were often called, helped organize the *talleres de autodiagnóstico* and provided crucial technical support for the realization of some of the works that the assemblies had agreed upon. More importantly, however, the NGOs elaborated an integrated development plan for the district on behalf of the municipality, the *Plan Integral de Desarrollo* (CTIC 1990; CTIC n.d.). While stressing the importance of increased popular participation in urban development and building on the efforts undertaken by individual popular

organizations and MIADES, the main purpose of this plan was to coordinate these activities, to infuse them with professional urbanist criteria, and to relate them to the urban, social, and economic development of the district as a whole. At the same time, the *Plan Integral de Desarrollo* emphasized the necessity for increased political decentralization, that is, the transfer of powers and resources from the central to local governments, and linked the development of El Agustino with that of the *Cono Este* (Eastern Cone) of Lima, as well as the entire metropolitan region.

Since the municipality had neither sufficient funds nor enough qualified personnel to embark on a project of this magnitude, it had little choice but to resort to non-governmental organizations for assistance, which were staffed by qualified professionals and could also contribute financial resources. The most important NGOs present in El Agustino at the time were the Servicio Educativo de El Agustino (SEA), which was closely linked to the Catholic parish *Virgen de Nazareth*, the Centro de Capacitación y Asesoría (CENCA), and the Centro de Investigación y Promoción Popular (CENDIPP). While these NGOs had been active in the district for quite some time, they usually had not worked together previously. On the contrary, they had mostly restricted their activities to specific organizations and areas within the district in order to avoid turf battles with one another.* The request by the municipality for help in the elaboration of the *Plan Integral de Desarrollo* prompted the NGOs to cooperate more closely, which in July of 1988 resulted in the establishment of the Comité Coordinador Técnico

Intercentros (CTIC).

In mid-1989, two years after the official announcement of the project, the MIADES in El Agustino had achieved a certain degree of consolidation. Eight *micro-áreas* had been formally constituted in all parts of the district, following a lengthy process in which the population had reshaped their physical outline, established their organizational structure, as well as defined the goals they were hoped to reach. The majority of neighbourhood organizations were represented in the MIADES, women's and survival organizations had been included, and other popular organizations likewise had begun to participate in the project. Moreover, the functioning of the FODECO had been formalized, and the fund had financed a number of projects in various MIADES. Finally, the three main NGOs that were active in El Agustino had agreed to work together on an integrated development plan for the district, while continuing to lend organizational and technical support to the individual urban popular movements they had been working with all along.

Despite these achievements, the project was also plagued by some critical shortcomings, and as time wore on, some cracks in the unity of the participants were clearly beginning to show. Most importantly, the ostensibly high levels of participation in the project concealed the fact that it was primarily *dirigentes*, or urban popular movement leaders, that participated. The population at large, on the other hand, was mostly ignorant of the project or participated only in limited ways, for example, by contributing their labour to communal projects. To make

matters worse, even urban popular movement leaders generally restricted their participation to those meetings in which important decisions were made, for example, about which *obras* or public works were accorded priority, as well as how funds would be allocated between them. Outside of such meetings, most MIADES had little organic life, with the possible exception of the smaller MIADES, particularly UPMIRR and Cerros Carretera Central, where urban popular movements had united around certain issues even before the creation of the micro-areas (Estrada 1992; Ortíz 1991; Romero 1992). Obviously, what all this meant was that the political aspects of the MIADES project, such as its emphasis on joint planning and decision making, as well as the increased devolution of decision making powers from the municipal authorities to urban popular movements, were threatened to be eclipsed by a more immediate focus on the material benefits of the project on the part of urban popular movement leaders.

Such "pragmatic" attitudes are of course not untypical for urban popular movements, given that these movements commonly emerge around material demands for the betterment of urban living conditions. In the present case, however, the development of a "pragmatic" stance towards the MIADES was further encouraged by the way the municipality explained and promoted the project to the population. As was mentioned before, the municipal *promotores* at least initially downplayed the political nature of the MIADES and instead put the emphasis squarely on the public works that the project was said to make

possible. Not surprisingly, this approach frequently produced exaggerated expectations on the part of the population (Mendoza 1992). However, while the municipal administration knew that it did not dispose of sufficient resources to satisfy all the expectations it created, which was implicitly acknowledged by Mayor Quintanilla on several occasions (Quintanilla 1989b, 6; Quintanilla 1991a, 4), this was not considered to be a major problem. On the contrary, the municipal administration apparently believed that it would be possible to redirect the expectations created around the MIADES project towards the APRA-controlled provincial and central governments, and to use them as part of a confrontational strategy in order to demand increased financial resources for the district. In the long run, as was explained above, it was hoped that the unification and organizational consolidation of urban popular movements occasioned by the MIADES would produce a qualitative leap from material concerns to a more political perspective and thus turn the MIADES into the seeds of *autogobierno*, or popular self-government.

If this was the strategy adopted by the municipal government, then it clearly backfired. When it became obvious that the funds provided by the FODECO, which had been limited to begin with, were decreasing and were often insufficient to realize even minor projects, a certain disenchantment with the MIADES began to set in, and the level of participation in the project slowly began to decline. In this context, it proved to be a costly error that the MIADES project had not put sufficient emphasis on the cooperation with outside actors, and that it did not

contemplate pragmatic alternatives if such cooperation was not forthcoming. As a consequence of this omission, some projects folded. For example, the Tayacaja project, which had been designed to provide safe water supply for the *pueblos* of the MIADE Túpac Amaru, came to a standstill when the central government agency SEDAPAL failed to provide the resources it had promised earlier (CENCA and SEA n.d., 38-39). As I will explain in more detail later on, the municipality proved to be incapable of harnessing the resulting disenchantment for its struggle with the provincial and central governments; on the contrary, the disillusionment with the MIADES project contributed to the loss of popular support for the municipal government itself, which became evident in the municipal elections of November 1989. In sum, in an interesting parallel to the five leftist local governments in Lima at the beginning of the 1980s, which were examined in Chapter 4, the municipal administration in El Agustino proved to be incapable of reconciling its official role as the local government responsible for the resolution of practical problems with an ideological orientation that tried to exploit the inadequacies of the existing system and ultimately wanted to overcome it.⁹

While these setbacks did not alter the conviction on the part of the main actors that the MIADES were essentially a political project,¹⁰ they did contribute to intensifying the debates over what exactly this meant in practice. At the same time, the debates around this issue were fuelled by political struggles within the Peruvian left at the national level, which began to make their effects felt in the

district. At the heart of these debates lay the question of how the relations between the respective actors involved in the MIADES project should be structured, and particularly, who was to be its main protagonist. Put more precisely, there was disagreement over the question of whether the MIADES and the urban popular movements composing them indeed needed to be constructed from above, as advocated by the municipal government and most notably by mayor Jorge Quintanilla, or whether urban popular movements themselves should be the main driving force behind the project, with only minimal interference from other actors and full respect for their autonomy. As will become clear in the following, the disagreements over this question radically altered the character of the MIADES project and furthered the emergence of a counter-proposal, the *Comité de Gestión Distrital*, while ultimately destroying the unity of the actors involved.

Politicization and Decline of the *Micro-Areas de Desarrollo* (MIADES)

It would be impossible to understand the politicization and ultimate decline of the MIADES project in El Agustino without at least making reference to the political and ideological struggles that ravaged the Peruvian left at the end of the 1980s (Rojas Samanez 1991, 403-456). As was mentioned previously, after a period of relative calm and unity during the Barrantes years from 1983 to 1986, the internal tensions and contradictions within the Izquierda Unida alliance again came to the fore after its defeat in the municipal elections of 1986, only to

intensify in the following years. The first national congress of Izquierda Unida in January 1989 in Huampaní failed to patch up these differences, and subsequently, the United Left broke up into two competing alliances in July of the same year upon the presentation of two different candidates for the presidential elections of 1990, which were won by the independent candidate Alberto Fujimori. The poor showing of Alfonso Barrantes and Henry Pease in these elections, who before had jointly acted as mayor and vice-mayor of Metropolitan Lima but now ran for Izquierda Socialista and Izquierda Unida, respectively, marked the loss of IU's position as the second-strongest electoral force in the country, a position which it never recovered. After this point, the Peruvian left went through various alignments and realignments, and finally disintegrated into a number of competing factions and parties, which coalesced more or less along the lines of the three main ideological orientations delineated in Chapter 4.

In the case of El Agustino, three specific developments related to the struggles within the Peruvian left at the national level had a particularly strong impact, and therefore deserve special attention. First, in November 1988, a group of dissidents broke away from the Partido Unificado Mariateguista (PUM) and later formed the Partido Mariateguista Revolucionario (PMR). As a result of this split, the PUM, which had previously been the leftist party with the deepest roots and the strongest organizational structure in the district," was seriously weakened, losing most of its cadres as well as much of its support among urban popular movement leaders (Abregú 1992; Romero 1992). The PMR

in El Agustino, on the other hand, became the main intra-left opposition to mayor Jorge Quintanilla and the municipal government, which continued to be in the hands of the PUM.

The divisions between the PUM and the PMR intensified in the months leading up to the internal elections within Izquierda Unida in June 1989, which were held in order to determine the candidates of the alliance for the 1989 municipal elections. While the purpose of these elections was undoubtedly democratic, namely, to make the selection process more transparent by taking it out of the hands of party leaders and putting it into those of the membership, the principal effect of the internal elections was to heighten the tensions between the respective leftist parties. In El Agustino, two competing lists of candidates were presented, one supported by the PUM and two smaller parties, UNIR and FOCEP, as well as some independents, and an alternative list backed by the PMR, the PCP and a number of unaffiliated supporters. In a very close vote, the list presented by the PUM and its allies carried the day by only 30-50 votes (Mendoza 1992), amidst accusations of vote-rigging and fraud. In particular, Mayor Quintanilla and the PUM were accused by their adversaries of having used the municipal apparatus in a clientelist fashion, handing out material benefits such as food and building materials in exchange for political support, and ferrying their supporters in buses to the election sites (Mendoza 1992). Izquierda Unida with Jorge Quintanilla as mayoral candidate later went on to win the municipal elections for the third time in a row, albeit with only 26.52 % of the popular

vote, which was less than the votes for the several independent candidates combined (Roncagliolo 1989/1990, 16). However, this victory came at a high price, since the preceding clashes during the internal elections had left deep wounds and made the rupture of the left in El Agustino almost irreversible.

A third factor that contributed to the escalation of conflict within the left in El Agustino was the withdrawal of the PUM from the national coordinating committee of Izquierda Unida, the *Comité Directivo Nacional*, in July 1990. The decision of the PUM to suspend its membership in the *Comité Directivo Nacional*, which followed Izquierda Unida's defeat in the presidential elections of 1990, was presented as a response to the ineffectiveness of this organism and the growing distance between the electoral alliance and its popular base. However, it can also be interpreted as an indication for the ongoing radicalization of the PUM and its refusal to continue the cooperation with other leftist forces representing more moderate positions. In the case of El Agustino, this tendency was evidenced by Mayor Quintanilla's increasingly autocratic leadership style (Romero 1992), as well as the attempts on the part of the municipal administration and the PUM to push aside other leftist forces and to dominate the urban popular movements of the district. As a result, the PUM in El Agustino became further isolated within the left of the district, while the PMR, the remaining leftist parties, as well as the considerable number of unaffiliated leftist militants were brought closer together by their joint opposition to the PUM-led municipal government.

It is hardly surprising that the intra-leftist struggles in El Agustino would

profoundly affect the relations between the left and urban popular movements. Most importantly, by destroying the previous relative unity of the different leftist parties and groups present in the district, these struggles accentuated their competition over the capture of popular support bases. Frequently, such increased political competition was accompanied by the emergence of a different attitude towards urban popular movements, in which the previous respect for the autonomy of these movements and the absence of manipulation were replaced by a desire to dominate and to use them as vehicles to gather political mass support. While this new attitude towards urban popular movements was not restricted to any one actor in particular,¹² it manifested itself most strongly on the part of the new municipal government that was controlled by the PUM. After the municipal elections of November 1989, the PUM gave some clear indications that it was willing to use the means at its disposal, that is, the municipal administration and the resources it commanded, as well as the MIADES scheme, in order to impose its political hegemony on the other leftist parties and on the urban popular movements of the district.

The success of this new strategy hinged on two crucial preconditions, first, the reconstruction of a sector within the municipal bureaucracy that would be loyal to the mayor and his party and could at the same time be used as an effective administrative instrument to implement new policies, and second, the reestablishment of the links between the municipal government and urban popular movements, which had badly suffered during the previous period. As a first step

to meet these preconditions, the new local government thoroughly restructured the municipal bureaucracy, abolishing the previous special units for the promotion of neighbourhood and women's movements, the CEPUR and the CEPROM, and consolidating them in a single new organism, the Oficina de Promoción y Desarrollo (PRODES). Unlike the CEPUR, the CEPROM, and the COSFIL before that, the PRODES was staffed entirely by PUM supporters, most of which had to be brought in from the outside, given the weakness of the PUM in El Agustino and the lack of politically loyal cadres.

The influx of these activists had a profound impact on the political dynamic of the district and fundamentally changed the way in which the municipality conducted its relations with the population. Most of the new *promotores*, who numbered between 55-70 at the outset (Mendoza 1992), had a long track record as PUM militants and often a university education, but relatively few of them were qualified professionals. As a consequence, they brought a much more hardline ideological approach to the promotional work of the municipality, which they understood essentially to be political work in support of the party. In the words of a prominent adversary of the municipal administration, the *promotores* acted not as municipal officials, but as party activists of a different kind, which often led to a considerable degree of confusion on the part of the population (Abregú 1992).¹³

Soon after its formation, the PRODES developed into the principal link between the municipal administration and the population. The PRODES

subdivided the district into three different zones, each comprising several MIADES, whose heads reported directly to the mayor's office. Apart from giving technical and sometimes legal advice, the PRODES assigned several *promotores* specifically to each MIADE to work with neighbourhood, women's and youth organizations, respectively (Mendoza 1992). The *promotores* were usually the only local officials who would actually visit the individual settlements, informing the population about services and resources that could be obtained from the municipality, but also collecting information on behalf of the municipal administration, such as about the level of public support for specific urban popular movement leaders. According to some accounts, some *promotores* also spread rumours about certain *dirigentes*, trying to discredit them in the eyes of the population: "Lo que hacen los promotores en los pueblos más que todo es malinformar" (Maraví 1992).¹⁴

After the establishment of the PRODES, and with the help of its *promotores*, the municipal government proceeded to install tighter political controls over the MIADES programme and to rein in the leaderships of those MIADES that in the past had expressed opposition to the municipal government. This was done in several ways. In at least two cases, namely, the José Carlos Mariátegui MIADE and the UPMIRR MIADE, the municipal administration cut off its financial support in order to discredit the MIADES leadership in the eyes of the population (Abregú 1992; Cancho 1992).¹⁵ In addition, municipal *promotores* attempted to manipulate the general assemblies of these MIADES into

replacing the existing *juntas directivas* with new ones that would be more sympathetic to the municipal government. When this was not enough, the municipality went a step further and set up alternative organisms in opposition to the MIADES, which were called *coordinadoras de pueblos* or *coordinadoras de base*. Financial support from the municipality was channelled via these new organisms, in the hope that this would erode the remaining legitimacy of the existing MIADES leaderships. In several other cases, such as in the MIADE Zona Plana (Abregú 1992; Estrada 1992), the municipal administration circumvented the MIADES structure altogether to work directly with individual *pueblos*.

A number of factors considerably facilitated these tactics on the part of the municipality. First, as was mentioned before, most MIADES were weakly structured and not fully representative of their constituencies, which made it less likely that their disintegration would provoke a strong reaction on the part of the population. Furthermore, especially in the later stages of the project, many MIADES were debilitated by internal frictions, which could be rooted in the personal ambitions of some urban popular movement leaders, but were more typically due to political differences or prior cleavages between different urban popular movements, which were sometimes extremely long-standing and went back to the very foundation of the respective settlements. Obviously, such dissension made it easier to divide a particular MIADE by pitting one part of the population against another. Likewise, they could very well make a MIADE

inoperative and therefore serve as a pretext to replace it with an alternative organism. While certainly not unique, the case of the MIADE José Carlos Mariátegui can serve as an illustration.¹⁶

The MIADE José Carlos Mariátegui is one of the smaller MIADES in El Agustino, counting about 2,600 lots which house approximately 18,000 residents. It is located on the southeastern slopes of the Cerro San Pedro and comprises four *pueblos*, namely, 7 de Octubre, El Amauta, Marginal San Pedro, and San Alejandro. Of these four settlements, 7 de Octubre is by far the largest and most important one, comprising six subdivisions or zones. The relations between the different zones of 7 de Octubre have always been conflictive, which has its origins in the way they were inhabited. In a first wave, starting in 1962, the first, second, and parts of the third zone were occupied, following a conflictive process of repeated land occupations, evictions, and often violent confrontations with police and militia from the large agricultural estates that still existed in the area (Fernández and Núñez 1986). The squatters were mainly workers from the *mercado mayorista* (wholesale market), who worked and lived in the neighbouring district of La Victoria. In a second wave, agricultural workers from the surrounding *haciendas* were allowed to occupy what became the fourth, fifth, and sixth zones of 7 de Octubre, after the landowners had realized that they would not be able to prevent land occupations in the future. The neighbourhood organizations that emerged in the respective zones reflected the different modes of settlement as well as the often divergent interests of their inhabitants.

The latent conflicts between the six zones boiled over when the borders of the individual plots in the first, second, and third zone were redrawn, a process which is commonly known as *lotización*. The redrawing of borders had become pressing since the plots in these zones were often minuscule and severely overcrowded, a result of the disorder surrounding the initial land occupations. In the remaining three zones, however, whose settlement had been more orderly, the *lotización* process met with strong resistance, especially since the residents of these zones refused to accept the overflow of the first three ones. Likewise, there existed opposition on the part of some settlers from the first three zones, notably those who had ended up with larger or better situated plots after the occupation and feared that their plots would be relocated or reduced to accommodate others. The conflicts surrounding the *lotización* issue, which escalated into a series of physical confrontations and brawls, had serious repercussions for the future of 7 de Octubre.

In particular, the lingering conflicts between the different zones of the settlement had a decisive impact on the development of the MIALES proposal in this sector of El Agustino. When the MIADE José Carlos Mariátegui was created, its leadership was drawn mostly from the fifth and sixth zones of the settlement of 7 de Octubre. The *dirigentes* of the other zones, on the contrary, initially did not want to get involved, possibly because they expected the project to fail and preferred someone else to be saddled with the blame (Romero 1992). The distance between the respective zones was accentuated by the split between

the PUM and the PMR in 1989, when most of the acting MIADES leadership sided with the PMR. As a result of these developments, the MIADE fell out of favour with the municipality and subsequently lost its funding from the FODECO.

In this context, the *junta directiva* of the MIADE organized a general meeting in order to criticize the municipality for not providing the funds it had promised. The municipal administration, for its part, decided not to attend the meeting and to meet the accusations head-on; instead, it used its *promotores* to mobilize its supporters from the first and second zones of 7 de Octubre. The result of this strategy was a confrontation that ostensibly looked like a clash between leadership and bases, but which in reality was rather a confrontation between the fifth and the sixth zone on the one hand, and the first and the second zone on the other. In the end, the majority of the meeting called for the MIADE to be eliminated and demanded that the leadership resign, which it refused to do. Following the general meeting, the municipality moved to completely disown the MIADE, claiming that it had been destroyed and that the leadership no longer represented the will of the general assembly (Quintanilla 1991c). Instead, the municipal administration set up the *coordinadora de pueblos*, which comprised exactly the same pueblos as the MIADE it replaced. The *coordinadora de pueblos* received no legal or political recognition, not even in the form of a resolution of the municipal council as the MIADES before; however, it was promised funding in the amount of 20,000 new soles.¹⁷

The example of the MIADE José Carlos Mariátegui is indicative of the way

in which the attitude of the municipal administration towards the MIADES project changed over time. After the municipal elections of November 1989, the municipality clearly abandoned its earlier policy of non-interference, which had been particularly pronounced in the initial stages of the project. Instead, the municipality and the PUM as the main political force behind it adopted a much more heavy-handed strategy, quite openly using the MIADES scheme in order to garner political support and to strengthen their own position in the intra-leftist struggles that were taking place in the district. The municipality did not hesitate to employ clientelist tactics in order to achieve these objectives, trying to coopt the leaderships of certain MIADES, as well as the urban popular movements that supported them. If these tactics were unsuccessful, particularly in cases where the MIADES leadership opposed the municipality on political grounds, the municipality had no qualms about undermining the respective MIADES, by cutting off their funding or by other means, and to replace them with alternative organizations that it could hope to control. It is therefore fair to say that at least to a certain extent, the municipal administration undermined its own project for reasons of political expedience. However, it also must be noted that the MIADES scheme was never officially abandoned. In fact, Mayor Quintanilla repeatedly called for the project to be re-launched, stressing its political character as a revolutionary project that would eventually lead to popular self-government and blaming "assistentialist" and "reformist" groups for the conflicts surrounding it (Quintanilla 1991a, 4; Quintanilla 1991c).

Apart from further deepening the divisions between the various leftist factions of the district, the politicization of the MIADES greatly debilitated the project itself, for at least two reasons. For one thing, many popular organizations did not want to be drawn into the political struggles taking place in many MIADES and either abandoned the project altogether or reduced their participation to a minimum. Thus, the political struggles surrounding the MIADES further diminished the level of popular participation in the project, which had already tapered off due to the economic problems that were plaguing it. As was mentioned previously, the serious decline in the municipal budget, which became even more acute due to the worsening economic crisis and the hyper-inflation of the late 1980s, virtually wiped out the FODECO and left the MIADES almost without resources. Second, as I will explain in more detail in the following, the political conflicts surrounding the MIADES, and especially the confrontational and manipulative approach of the PUM and the municipal administration in dealing with them, accentuated latent conflicts between the municipality and other actors involved in the project. This is particularly true in the case of the NGOs, the so-called *centros*, which now began to turn against the municipality, notwithstanding their continued collaboration on projects such as the *Plan Integral de Desarrollo*.

The Emergence of a Counter-Proposal to the MIADES: The *Comité de Gestión Distrital*

In August 1990, against a background of intense political infighting and

growing economic penury, a new organism emerged in El Agustino, the *Comité de Gestión Distrital* (CG), or District Management Committee. As in other municipalities, the formation of the CG in El Agustino followed the announcement of a social emergency programme, the *Programa de Emergencia Social* (PES), by the new president, Alberto Fujimori, which was to be part of his overall economic adjustment package (Carbajo 1990). The CG was to organize and to oversee the distribution of the emergency relief funds that were expected from this programme, and as such, it attempted to unite the broadest possible range of actors that could assist in this task. These were, on the one hand, the local government and other organizations that had traditionally entertained relations with urban popular movements and could therefore help with the distribution of resources, particularly the NGOs and the Church. Second, urban popular movements were represented on the CG via their respective district-level organizations, the MIADES in the case of the neighbourhood organizations, the coordinating committees of the *vaso de leche* programme, the *comedores populares*, and the *clubes de madres*, as well as organizations representing street vendors (FEDITAS), micro-entrepreneurs (AIDESA), and youth. Finally, a number of institutions from outside the district were invited to participate, so that their activities could be coordinated with those of the CG at the district level. These institutions were the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health, which participated via their local affiliates, the COOPOP, the central government agency in charge of relations with urban popular movements,

and the SUTEP, the union of school teachers.

Not surprisingly, the CG in El Agustino soon began to be drawn into the political conflicts that dominated the district. Shortly after its constitution, a confrontation began to shape up over who would be the chair of the new organism, pitting the municipality against the other organizations represented on the committee. The issue was highly significant, since whoever presided over the CG and controlled the distribution of its resources was likely to receive most of the political credit in the eyes of the public. The municipality insisted on its role as the local government of the district and on these grounds refused to share authority over the CG with the other organizations. The other members of the committee, on the contrary, were wary of past instances of political manipulation on the part of the municipality and feared that the CG would be dominated and used for partisan ends (Chamberlain 1992). Consequently, they argued that the presidency of the committee should be shared and rotate each month between all the organizations involved.

At a general meeting in September 1990, a rotating presidency was finally agreed upon. Mayor Quintanilla assumed the presidency of the CG for the first one-month term; however, after his term had ended, the municipality sent only minor-ranking functionaries to participate in the committee meetings. A number of conflicts in the following months over the distribution of certain resources (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 172) reconfirmed the feeling of the municipality that it was being marginalized within the CG and ultimately

prompted its departure from the committee. Subsequently, Mayor Quintanilla accused the CG and the organizations supporting it, particularly the Church, of promoting "assistentialist" attitudes among the population, that is, of increasing its dependence on donations of food and other goods, and of fostering political opposition to the municipal government by building a "reformist" alternative to the MIADES project (Quintanilla 1991c). The municipality, for its part, contributed to the growing rift between the two organisms by encouraging the establishment of the *junta de gobierno* in January 1991, a coordinating committee made up of representatives from the individual MIADES. The creation of such a district-wide representation of the MIADES, which in March 1991 changed its name to *Central Autónoma de MIADES*, had been part of the original proposal, but had never been realized. By strengthening the MIADES structure, it was hoped that the *junta de gobierno* would enhance the legitimacy of the MIADES as the true representative of urban popular movements in El Agustino.

While it might have been appropriate initially to qualify the CG as "assistentialist," given its narrow preoccupation with the provision of material assistance to the district's poor in order to alleviate the effects of the economic stabilization programme, the focus of the committee soon widened considerably. Shortly after the constitution of the CG, three separate commissions were formed with the purpose of coordinating the activities of the respective member organizations in the fields of nutrition, health, and the generation of employment, as well as to develop concrete policy proposals at the level of local government.

Ultimately, it was hoped that these proposals would result in a *plan de trabajo* (work plan) that would address the problems related to the urban development of the district in a comprehensive and integrated manner. The fact that the CG in El Agustino was able to make this transformation is significant, since it probably explains why the committee continued to exist, instead of quickly losing its *raison d'être* like so many other CGs elsewhere when the promised resources from the central government failed to arrive (Carbajo 1990, 12; Abregú 1992).

Aside from furthering the elaboration of policy proposals and functioning as a coordinating body for its participants, the CG disposed of limited resources to fund concrete projects directly. These resources were provided by the Church and were used to establish two separate funds in the amount of US\$ 14,000 each, one to assist street vendors and another one to support the economic activities of the district's micro-entrepreneurs. Similar funds to support the *vaso de leche* committees, the *comedores populares*, and the *clubes de madres* were in the planning stage. The money was lent on a rotating basis, that is, after having been used and repayed by the original recipient, it could then be loaned to a different organization. Aside from these *fondos rotatorios*, another US\$ 5,000 were provided by the Ministry of Health for an anti-cholera campaign (Estrada 1992).

At the same time that the CG moved away from its earlier focus on the distribution of emergency relief funds and began to embrace broader issues related to urban development, its participants also began to put more emphasis on the relations between actors from within the district and those from the outside.

Increasingly, the CG began to be conceived not so much as a *mesa de encuentro*, that is, as a meeting place for urban popular movements and other actors involved in the distribution of resources, but more generally as a *mesa de trabajo*, in other words, as a coordinating body for urban popular movements, other organizations working at the level of civil society, as well as various state institutions from within and without the district (Romero 1992). Apart from reaching a number of popular organizations that had not participated in the MIADES previously, the fact that the CG at least addressed the question of how to cooperate with actors from outside the district is maybe its most important difference with respect to the MIADES scheme. As was explained before, the failure of the MIADES to confront this crucial issue was one of its main flaws, given that the contribution of outside actors was often decisive for the successful realization of certain projects.

Despite these differences, it would be hard to deny that the CG and the MIADES shared several similarities and that they tried to attract support from the same clientele. Undoubtedly, the CG replicated several crucial elements of the MIADES scheme. Similarly to the MIADES, the CG provided a forum for urban popular movements to unite and to address their common concerns in a concerted manner. Furthermore, both the MIADES and the CG served as links between urban popular movements and several other actors, while at the same time providing access to their resources. Finally, the CG developed a number of concrete policy proposals and planned to unite them in a *plan de trabajo*, while

a comprehensive *plan integral de desarrollo* was elaborated in connection with the MIADES project, albeit with a stronger emphasis on urban planning. In other words, the backers of the MIADES had a point when they charged that the CG constituted a parallel organism, or a *paralelismo*, to the MIADES and that it threatened to undermine the support for the project among the urban popular movements of the district (Quintanilla 1991c; Casanova 1991). At the same time, it is indicative that this charge was levelled by the MIADES supporters against the CG, but not vice versa. While the supporters of the MIADES scheme insisted on the role of the MIADES as the exclusive representation of urban popular movements in the district, the backers of the CG usually saw no problem in sharing this role between different organisms.

The emergence of an alternative to the MIADES also accentuated some latent divisions between neighbourhood movements and other urban popular movements of the district, which had already become apparent in the initial phases of the MIADES project. While it is true that popular organizations were generally represented in the MIADES and on the CG simultaneously, they usually participated more actively in only one of the two organisms. Since the CG had a somewhat different focus than the MIADES and continued to emphasize survival issues in the broadest sense of the term, such as nutrition, health, and the creation of employment, survival organizations were more strongly represented on the Committee. For one thing, survival organizations led by women, but also other popular organizations representing street vendors and micro-entrepreneurs,

could profit from the specific resources that the CG made available to attend to their needs. Moreover, there often existed strong links between survival organizations and NGOs that predated the constitution of the CG.¹⁸

The participation of neighbourhood organizations, on the other hand, remained strongest in the MIADES. The interests of these organizations revolved chiefly around improvements of the urban infrastructure of the district, for instance, the construction of roads and sidewalks or the provision of safe water supply, sewers, and electricity. These issues were not a priority of the CG and resources continued to be provided chiefly by the local government, as well as other public institutions and central government agencies. Many neighbourhood organizations had also cooperated closely with the municipality in the past, for example, in various *comisiones mixtas* such as the COSFIL. It is therefore not unwarranted to state that the foundation of the CG exacerbated the rift between survival organization and neighbourhood organizations in El Agustino. However, one could also argue that the CG helped promote the concerns of survival organizations, which had previously been somewhat marginalized in the MIADES. Seen from this angle, the CG and the MIADES appear not as competing, but in fact as complementary proposals, with the CG concentrating more on survival needs, and the MIADES focusing more on infrastructural development.

If it is true that the MIADES and the CG, despite certain differences, were essentially similar proposals that appealed to the same popular bases for support,

the obvious question to ask is what motivated the rivalry between the two. The equally obvious answer to this question would be to attribute this rivalry to the political divergences between the respective supporters of the two projects. This interpretation was in fact offered by many of those interviewed, who usually blamed the respective other side for fanning the flames, depending on their own point of view. It is also an interpretation that has some basis in fact, since political support for the two projects did indeed come from opposite sides. As we have seen, while no political force in the district distanced itself completely from the MIADES scheme, it was promoted principally by the municipal administration, which was largely dominated by the Partido Unificado Mariateguista (PUM). The CG, on the other hand, was supported by the main political opponents of the municipality, particularly by the Partido Mariateguista Revolucionario (PMR) and the newly-founded Movimiento de Afirmación Socialista (MAS).

Nevertheless, it would be too facile to reduce the conflict between the supporters of the MIADES and the CG to a dispute between political opponents over the capture of popular bases, and to see the two projects simply as tools in this struggle. This seems to be the view taken by Calderón and Valdeavellano, who at the same time contend that the ideological discrepancies between the two adversaries are negligible, since they see eye to eye on fundamental questions such as democracy and popular self-government. Rather, their differences boil down to divergent "political styles," one more radical and uncompromising, the

other less aggressive, while all the same trying to marginalize the municipality (Calderón and Valdeavellano 1991, 180-181). This view is flawed, because it adopts an entirely instrumentalist perspective of the MIADES and the CG and thereby obscures some fundamental differences between the two opponents.

To say the least, an instrumentalist view of the conflicts involving the MIADES and the CG would be incomplete. While there can be little doubt that the PUM-controlled municipal administration did in fact try to use the MIADES project to build its own political support bases among the urban popular movements of the district, the issue seems to be somewhat more complicated in the case of the backers of the CG. To be sure, the PMR and the MAS advocated the construction of a *frente amplio* (broad front), based on the CG as well as on the MIADES and urban popular movements in general, that would unite the leftist opposition to the municipal administration with the urban popular movements of the district (Confluencia Socialista 1991). However, this does not mean that the other supporters of the CG, most of which considered themselves to be politically independent, and particularly the NGOs, necessarily shared these views. While several of those interviewed alleged that the NGOs were controlled by the political opposition, and that some of their leading members secretly harboured the ambition of succeeding Jorge Quintanilla as mayor of El Agustino (Atúncar 1992; Casanova 1991; de la Cruz 1992), these accusations appear to be exaggerated. Apart from the fact that the NGOs as such did not take sides in the political struggles in the district, the political orientations of their members

appeared to vary, ranging from independent sympathizers of the left to supporters of the PMR, the MAS, and even the PUM. This is not to say that the NGOs abstained from mobilizing the population against the municipal administration, or in the words of Francisco Chamberlain, the parish priest of the parish *Virgen de Nazareth* and at the same time director of SEA, to "bajar un poco el protagonismo del municipio" (Chamberlain 1992).¹⁰ Nevertheless, the supporters of the CG as a whole did not seem to dispose of a clearly defined political strategy, and, more importantly, they did not appear to be united around a clear protagonist that could evolve into a serious challenger for Mayor Quintanilla. At least as long as this was not the case, it would make little sense to view the CG merely as a tool in a struggle to win power in the district.

Rather than the prospect of dislodging the PUM-controlled local government, what appeared to unite the supporters of the CG was their joint antagonism to the municipal administration, which was seen as authoritarian and manipulative, as well as some shared principles about how the relations between urban popular movements and other actors should be structured. These principles they saw expressed in the CG, but no longer in the MIADES scheme. If this assessment is correct, it follows that the disagreements between the supporters of the MIADES and of the CG were rooted chiefly in the respective political projects that underlay the two proposals, rather than in the fact that they could both be integrated in a tactical way into competing political strategies. The way these two political projects evolved can briefly be summarized as follows.

As we have seen, the MIADES started out as a pragmatic policy proposal whose main objective was to further the participation of urban popular movements in the planning and execution of public works, thereby making urban planning more responsive to the needs of the popular sector, as well as more effective and efficient. These goals proved hard to attain, due to the institutional and economic weakness of the municipal administration, as well as external causes, such as lack of support from the local government of Metropolitan Lima and the economic crisis. As a result of these difficulties, as well as the increasing divisions within the left of the district, the underlying political rationale of the project, which had previously been largely downplayed, became much more prominent. Increasingly, the MIADES were touted not as an instrument to increase the influence of urban popular movements on the workings of political institutions as before, but as an alternative to the existing political system altogether. As was explained in more detail previously, the municipal administration and the PUM, and even some of their political opponents, now emphasized the character of the MIADES as the nucleus of a new system of popular self-government. It was hoped that the MIADES experience would spread from El Agustino to other localities, and that eventually, popular assemblies moulded on the example of the MIADES would be formed at the regional and national level, thereby replacing the existing system of representative democracy.

The PUM-led municipal administration as the principal champion of the thus-redefined MIADES scheme saw its role as two-fold. On the one hand, it

considered it crucial to strengthen the urban popular movements of the district, often in the sense of "constructing" these movements from above. More importantly, urban popular movements had to be convinced to accept the MIADES proposal as their own, instead of pursuing other forms of centralization or uniting around alternative proposals such as the CG. To achieve this goal, the municipal administration proceeded to tighten its control over the MIADES project. For one thing, the municipality insisted on the primacy of the MIADES over other forms of popular organization and tried to persuade all urban popular movements in the district to adapt their organizational structures to the MIADES scheme. Furthermore, in order to bind urban popular movements closer to the MIADES, the municipality attempted to convert them into the exclusive link between urban popular movements and other actors, such as other state institutions, NGOs, and the like, discouraging urban popular movements from establishing such links directly or via other organizations. If successful, these tactics would have substantially enhanced the status of the MIADES, because urban popular movements could hardly forego the resources that these actors made available to them. At the same time, urban popular movements would have been made more dependent on the local government, since the MIADES had no legal status and depended largely on its goodwill. Not surprisingly, however, many urban popular movements balked at these tactics, interpreting them as an infringement on their autonomy.

In sum, the MIADES project began to show some stark similarities to what

I have called in Chapter 4 the Peruvian left's revolutionary approach to local politics. As in the early 1980s, when the left regarded local governments essentially as bridgeheads within the capitalist system, the MIADES came to be seen as the embryo of a new form of popular self-government. Relations with other state institutions were likewise conducted in an increasingly confrontational manner, largely abandoning the search for pragmatic solutions from within the institutional framework, which, admittedly, had become more and more difficult. Finally, and most importantly, the municipal administration of El Agustino displayed a decidedly vanguardist bent in its relations with urban popular movements, most notably, by imposing its political strategies on the urban popular movements of the district and interfering with their autonomy, while not hesitating to use openly clientelist methods in order to win their support.

The CG, on the other hand, had a decidedly different emphasis than the MIADES. Instead of trying to lay the foundations for an alternative political project led by a revolutionary municipal administration and drawing its mass base from the urban popular movements of the district, its principal function was to serve as a *convocatoria* within the existing political system.²⁹ In other words, the main purpose of the CG was that of a coordinating body between various organizations of civil society and state institutions at different levels, uniting all relevant actors in order to find pragmatic solutions for the pressing needs of the popular sector. By involving actors from outside the district, the CG implicitly acknowledged the economic and institutional limitations of local governments in

addressing these needs, without, however, abandoning the search for system-immanent solutions altogether. The leadership of the CG was to lie in the hands of urban popular movements, thereby considerably increasing their influence on the decision making process not only of the committee itself, but also of the respective organizations and institutions involved in it.

Consequently, the relations between urban popular movements and the other participants on the CG were decidedly more open than those between the municipal administration and the MIADES. Most importantly, the NGOs, which had established the closest links to urban popular movements of all actors involved in the CG, generally abstained from political manipulation and clientelist tactics, while at the same time providing organizational and material support.²¹ Furthermore, the CG accepted the existence of parallel forms of centralization on the part of urban popular movements, as well as the establishment of direct links between them and other actors. This was particularly relevant for survival organizations like the *vaso de leche* committees or the *comedores populares*, which had built their own organizational networks prior to the creation of the CG as well as established direct contacts with public and private institutions, foreign aid donors, and others. Likewise, some neighbourhood organizations had united around certain issues, such as the provision of safe water supply and sewers for their settlements, and had independently established relations with central government agencies such as SEDAPAL.

In sum, as opposed to the revolutionary perspective on local politics that

was evident in the MIADES project, the CG drew its inspiration from the radical-democratic approach taken by the Barrantes administration of Metropolitan Lima, which I have examined more closely in the previous chapter. While this approach by no means ruled out radical changes to the institutional framework, it did stop short of calling for an outright change of the political system as a whole or at least postponed it to the distant future. As its principal emphasis, which is captured in the term *protagonismo popular* and which was expressed in the practice of the CG, the radical-democratic approach insisted on renovating the institutional system from below by opening it up to popular participation, thereby expanding the influence of urban popular movements on institutional decision making processes at different levels. The fact that urban popular movements often needed to be supported by others did not necessarily conflict with their preeminent role in this scheme, if this support was given in a non-manipulative way and without encroaching on their autonomy.

Conclusion

The present chapter examined the participation of urban popular movements in the municipal government of El Agustino, a low-income district of Lima. More specifically, the chapter focused on a concrete policy proposal that was intended to promote popular participation in the district, the *Micro-Areas de Desarrollo* or MIADES. As was explained, the MIADES proposal was based on the idea of giving urban popular movements a considerable margin of autonomy

in administering their respective zone or micro-area, as well as the corresponding resources. The policy yielded some initial successes: most notably, it allowed the realization of a number of public works in various parts of El Agustino, it improved the communication and cooperation between different urban popular movements and increased their influence on municipal decision making, and it led to the elaboration of a comprehensive urban development plan for the district with the professional help of NGOs. However, the project soon reached its limits, due mainly to the worsening economic situation of the municipal government, which was a reflection of the economic crisis of the country as a whole, as well as the increasingly conflictive relations between the leftist political parties of the district, following the breakup of Izquierda Unida. As a consequence of the dwindling municipal budget, the resource base of the MIADES project deteriorated and the level of participation in the project declined. Subsequently, the MIADES project became drawn into the intensifying intra-leftist confrontations in the district, leading to the polarization of many MIADES and a further drop in the level of participation. As we have seen, these conflicts eventually destroyed the unity of the actors involved in the project and furthered the emergence of a counter-proposal to the MIADES, the *Comité de Gestión Distrital*.

The question of how urban popular movements reacted to these developments is of course crucial. Most urban popular movement leaders interviewed by the author welcomed the new openings for popular participation created by the MIADES and the CG, without, however, committing themselves

to either side in the political struggles surrounding them. Their principal concerns seemed to be more immediate, namely, to obtain as many resources as they could from whoever was willing to provide them, while making sure that the autonomy of their particular movement or organization would not be compromised. Consequently, most urban popular movement leaders in El Agustino had no qualms about participating in the MIADES and in the CG simultaneously, if they could thereby maximize the resources available to their movements. As we have seen, several movements went even further and established direct relations with outside actors, such as central government agencies or the provincial government, in order to obtain additional resources.

While such behaviour undoubtedly indicated the existence of "pragmatic" attitudes on the part of urban popular movements, this pragmatism had clearly defined limits. As a rule, urban popular movements refused to let themselves be coopted by any party in exchange for the provision of resources; on the contrary, the autonomy of the movements and the identities of their participants were jealously defended. Urban popular movements in El Agustino had every reason to see their autonomy threatened, particularly since the political infighting within the left had produced a return to clientelist and authoritarian practices. Such practices were further encouraged by the legal framework, which vested most power in local government in the position of mayor, making the municipal executive largely impervious to democratic control. As was explained previously, the *alcalde* in El Agustino was able not only to maintain control over the

municipal administration after losing most of his support in the municipal council, but also to use the municipal bureaucracy to further the political interests of his own party. A further threat to the autonomy of urban popular movements can be seen in the almost complete absence of legal guarantees and the weak institutionalization of existing mechanism for popular participation. As was explained before, both the MIADES and the CG lacked such legal status, which at least potentially made them vulnerable to cooptive pressures from those actors that provided the bulk of their resources, namely, the municipal administration in the case of the MIADES and the NGOs with respect to the CG.

If urban popular movements nevertheless succeeded in preserving their autonomy, this success can be attributed mainly to the presence of several actors on the local scene, who all vied for the support of urban popular movements, albeit for different reasons. Up to a certain degree, urban popular movements were in a position to exploit the competition between these actors; they could pick and choose, as it were, accepting support from several actors, without committing themselves exclusively to any one of them. Of course, this is not to argue that the autonomy of urban popular movements was absolute, in the sense of a complete absence of mutual links with others. Such links existed, and they could be exceptionally strong. This was the case particularly with respect to some survival movements, where long-time cooperation with specific NGOs had created almost symbiotic links between NGO workers and urban popular movement leaders, some of which became *promotores* themselves (Escalante 1992). However, at

least in the cases studies here, despite the strength of these links, they did not indicate a relationship of dependency.²²

Defending their autonomy could also have drawbacks for urban popular movements, most notably because it sometimes induced a certain isolationism on their part. Despite the fact that both the MIADES and the CG succeeded in breaking down some existing barriers between urban popular movements, not only between neighbourhood and survival movements, but also between the *clubes de madres* and other women's organizations,²³ some urban popular movements reacted to cooptive pressures by retreating into themselves and by reducing their relations with others to a minimum. As Olivera, del Carmen, and Vergara have remarked, such an "excess of autonomy" can actually be harmful, since it hinders the cooperation between different urban popular movements and therefore keeps them from acquiring higher levels of centralization and a greater influence on others (Olivera, del Carmen, and Vergara 1991, 93-97).

Partially as a result of this failure to unite, the influence of urban popular movements on the institutional makeup and the political practices of public institutions, political parties, and other actors in El Agustino remained fairly limited. To be sure, the fact that policies such as the MIADES and the CG were created to begin with is significant, since it highlights the relevance of urban popular movements in the district. Nevertheless, both were proposals conceived by others according to their objectives, even if urban popular movements had some impact in shaping them. In order to maximize their own influence, as well

as strengthen their ability to resist political cooptation, urban popular movements would have to achieve higher levels of centralization independently. Likewise, existing mechanisms for popular participation would have to be better institutionalized and given stronger legal guarantees, in order to make less liable to fall victim to the vagaries of political competition.

CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation began with the elaboration of a theoretical framework for the analysis of popular participation in local government. It was argued that the collective identities and practices of urban popular movements, the main agents of popular participation in the urban realm, contain a democratic potential that under certain conditions could serve to democratize other political actors and to make local political institutions more democratic and more efficient. This theoretical framework was then applied to an analysis of popular participation under several leftist-led municipal governments in Lima, Peru, during the period from 1980 to the early 1990s. From this analysis, it is now possible to draw up a balance sheet of these experiences and relate them back to the main research questions that were developed at the beginning of this dissertation.

To begin, there can be little doubt that the expansion of various forms of popular participation at the local level had a significant impact on the leftist-controlled local governments that were examined in this dissertation. For one thing, as a result of increased popular participation in local affairs, these local governments became more open and more responsive to popular concerns and demands. For example, the Barrantes administration implemented an open-door policy to render the municipal bureaucracy more transparent. Moreover, various leftist local governments convened popular assemblies and so-called *cabildos abiertos*, in order to consult the population about their needs and to receive popular input on municipal policy. In addition, the fact that popular demands,

which had previously been made chiefly from outside the political system were now backed up by local political institutions, gave them greater clout and invested them with greater legitimacy.

Second, popular participation at the local level contributed to making local governments more efficient and more accountable, essentially as the result of a transferral of functions to urban popular movements and the joint management of municipal programmes. At the same time, this expansion of popular participation permitted the respective leftist-led local governments to take on a number of tasks that they would not have been able to fulfil otherwise, due to a lack of resources and qualified personnel. For instance, members of urban popular movements performed control functions in fields such as public hygiene or the administration of public markets, either as substitutes for municipal inspectors or to control municipal officials themselves. Furthermore, so-called *comisiones mixtas*, or joint committees, were established in several instances, bringing together representatives of urban popular movements and the municipal administration, in order to devise strategies vis-à-vis the central government, to develop proposals for municipal policies, or to oversee their implementation. Finally, in a number of cases, leftist-controlled local governments shared the administration of municipal programmes with urban popular movements, who often exerted a considerable influence on their planning, execution, and evaluation. The most notable example in this regard was the *vaso de leche* (glass of milk) scheme that was put in place by the Barrantes administration of Metropolitan Lima.

Third, the participation of urban popular movements in local politics made local governments more democratic, in the sense that over and above the transferral of certain functions from the municipal administration or the joint management of municipal programmes, decision making powers in certain fields of the municipal administration were put in the hands of urban popular movements. Most notable in this regard were the *agencias municipales*, or municipal agencies, in Metropolitan Lima and the *Micro-Areas de Desarrollo* (MIADES), or micro-areas of development, in El Agustino. As we have seen in the previous chapters, these programmes enabled the inhabitants of certain neighbourhoods of the Peruvian capital to determine the specific needs and the development priorities of their constituencies autonomously, as well as to assign limited funds for their realization.

Nevertheless, these relative achievements cannot obscure the fact that for a number of reasons, popular participation played a relatively minor role in the cases studied and that the impact of urban popular movements on the institutional makeup of local governments as well as on the strategies and political practices of other political actors remained fairly limited. Most importantly, popular participation at the local level was hindered by a number of legal, institutional and economic barriers, the inherent weaknesses of urban popular movements, as well as politically motivated interference by other actors.

As was explained in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, the legal norms regulating popular participation at the local level, particularly Decree Law D.L.

No. 051 and Ley No. 23853, severely restricted the extent of direct popular participation in local government. According to these legal norms, popular participation was effectively reduced to a consultative role and above all, to the participation of the population in municipal programmes as a source of cheap labour, with little or no possibility for popular participation in decision making at the local level. Furthermore, the legal framework did not provide clear guarantees for the autonomy of urban popular movements. On the contrary, it permitted or even encouraged infringements on their independence, most notably by failing to recognize existing urban popular movements as the legitimate interlocutors of the municipal administration, and instead, providing for the creation of new neighbourhood councils, or *juntas de vecinos*, that would be completely dependent on the municipal authorities. As we have seen, the attempts by the Barrantes administration of Metropolitan Lima to overcome these difficulties, by granting legal recognition to urban popular movements in the municipal realm by way of the Ordenanza No. 192, ran into stiff political resistance and had only limited success. As a consequence of these legal barriers, many of the mechanisms for popular participation that were developed by leftist-led local governments in Lima during the period under study, had a semi- or extra-legal status and remained poorly institutionalized. Since the continued existence of these mechanisms remained contingent on the political backing by the municipal authorities, it is no surprise that most of them were short-lived and easily reversed. With the notable exception of the *vaso de leche* programme,

which was institutionalized nation-wide by means of a special law, virtually all existing forms of popular participation were abandoned when the left lost power at the municipal level.

Popular participation at the local level was further hampered by a number of institutional and economic barriers, which had their roots in a pervasive tradition of political centralism and contributed to undermining the institutional stature of local governments. As we have seen, attempts at political decentralization and the reform of local government following the implementation of the Constitution of 1979 did not succeed in reversing the traditional subordination of local governments to the central government. On the contrary, the responsibilities and prerogatives of local governments remained fairly narrow, even if Ley No. 23853 contained certain advances in this respect, such as a shift away from a conception of local governments as service enterprises and their recognition as local organs of government that were made responsible, among other things, for the development of their constituencies.

Moreover, the economic and financial resource base of local governments remained extremely precarious throughout the period studied. As was explained, despite certain improvements under the Barrantes administration, local governments never disposed of enough resources to fulfil their responsibilities adequately. This was especially true in the case of the leftist-controlled district governments, which could barely ensure the functioning of their administrative bureaucracies and consequently had to rely on the provincial government of

Metropolitan Lima for most other expenses, such as investments in municipal infrastructure, service improvements, and the like. As we have seen, such support from the provincial municipality was not particularly forthcoming under the AP government preceding the Barrantes administration, and it diminished again when IU lost the provincial mayorship to APRA in 1986. Almost by definition, this lack of powers and resources on the part of local governments narrowed the range of possibilities for popular participation at the municipal level. However, as we saw in the context of the *vaso de leche* programme, a lack of economic resources can in exceptional cases compel municipal governments to rely more strongly on the organizational capacities of urban popular movements, thereby promoting their organizational development and lessening the likelihood for their cooptation.

In addition to the fact that the powers and responsibilities of local governments were relatively limited, they were also often ill-defined and not clearly separated from those of other levels of government. This led to repeated interferences by the central government in municipal affairs, and it produced a constant source of friction in the relations between leftist-controlled municipalities and other levels of government. As we have seen, these frictions became particularly evident during the efforts of the Barrantes administration to wrest control over the management of certain urban services, such as water supply or electricity, from central government agencies and to subject them to municipal control. Obviously, these conflicts were not just motivated by institutional

rivalries, that is, they were not simply pitting different levels of government against one another in a struggle over the appropriation of powers and resources. What was really at stake in these conflicts was the political capital that could be gained from exercising certain powers and assigning the respective resources, along with the possibility of thereby establishing links to the popular sector.

Aside from these legal, institutional, and economic barriers, popular participation at the local level was also constrained by the inherent weaknesses of its main agents, namely, of urban popular movements. Due to these weaknesses, urban popular movements were often unable to make full use of the existing openings to participate in local politics, much less push for their further enlargement. The basic causes for the inability of urban popular movements to do so were identified in this dissertation and can briefly be summarized as follows.

First, urban popular movements were adversely affected by highly fluctuating levels of participation and by the relative fragility of the collective identities of their participants. As we have seen, participation in urban popular movements is often conjunctural and follows the ebb and flow of mass mobilizations around specific demands, such as land titles or the provision of certain urban services. Consequently, it is often only a core group of highly motivated leaders that participate on a continual basis and keep the respective movement alive. By the same token, the formation of collective identities within urban popular movements often lacks continuity, and as a rule, these identities

tend to be relatively fragile and fragmented. Collective identities can of course develop very rapidly and spread to large parts of the popular sector during popular mass mobilizations; however, these processes are often stunted when the respective mass movements lose force and taper off.

Moreover, as was explained in more detail in Chapters 1 and 3, the new collective identities and the corresponding political, social, and cultural practices that emerge within urban popular movements often have to compete with conventional forms of collective identities, particularly clientelism, which from a "pragmatic" standpoint can seem more conducive for the satisfaction of certain demands. These pressures on the level of participation in urban popular movements and on the collective identities of their participants were further amplified by the chronic economic crisis in Peru, which increased the search for individualist solutions to economic hardship, and by the violent attacks of the Shining Path guerrilla movement, which dramatically heightened the risk of participating in urban popular movements.

Second, urban popular movements were handicapped by their weak programmatic and organizational capacities. For one thing, the activities of many urban popular movements remained centred around protests and demand-making, which lessened their ability to develop further-going and more universal proposals and to thereby influence the formulation of public policy. This was particularly true of many neighbourhood movements. Moreover, many urban popular movements were unable to take full advantage of opportunities to participate in

existing programmes, due to their limited organizational skills and experience. As was explained in Chapter 6, such limitations constituted a strain on the effectiveness of the MIADES programme and the *Comité de Gestión* in the district of El Agustino, and they go some way in explaining why urban popular movements could not have more influence on the design and the implementation of these programmes. On the other hand, there were also some noteworthy examples in which urban popular movements displayed an astonishing ability not only to make use of existing openings for popular participation, but also to shape the respective programmes. Two such examples were the *vaso de leche* committees and the *comedores populares*, both of which received significant organizational support (*capacitación*) from other actors, such as NGOs and the Church.

A third factor that contributed to the relative weakness of urban popular movements was their limited ability to unite a set of common concerns, or in Latin American parlance, to attain a higher level of *centralización*. To be sure, there were cases in which urban popular movements joined forces with others, such as the federations of neighbourhood movements at the beginning of the 1980s or the so-called survival movements that emerged towards the mid-1980s. Overall, however, such successes remained relatively rare. As was explained in the sixth chapter of this dissertation with respect to the MIADES programme and the *Comité de Gestión* in El Agustino, it proved to be particularly difficult to strengthen the bonds between *different kinds* of urban popular movements. Aside

from giving urban popular movements more power to push for the fulfilment of their demands, to do so would have achieved several other objectives. Most importantly, it would have enabled urban popular movements to transcend the limited demands that arise in specific contexts and to move towards the definition of some more universal popular concerns. Undoubtedly, the elaboration of such a popular agenda would have given urban popular movements greater unity and enabled them to take a common stance on some more wide-ranging issues that were of interest to the popular sector. By the same token, a popular agenda would have enhanced the political standing of urban popular movements, allowing them to take more influence on other actors, as well as to have a greater impact on political decision making at the local level and possibly beyond.

In addition to legal, institutional, and economic barriers to popular participation and the inherent weaknesses of urban popular movements, popular participation at the local level suffered from the fact that other actors often tried to use the respective programmes to their advantage. This was particularly evident with respect to political parties, which frequently attempted to exploit such programmes for the establishment or the consolidation of popular support bases at the local level. In the cases studied, such political interference had two related consequences.

On the one hand, it undermined the democratic character of existing participatory programmes and thereby debilitated them. Frequently, political interference took the shape of limiting access to a particular programme, and

especially to the resources associated with it, to those urban popular movements that expressed support for the political party or the local government that had initiated it. For example, in the case of the MIADES programme in El Agustino, the municipal government cut off support to those micro-areas that did not agree with it politically, following the breakup of the leftist alliance in the district. In addition, municipal *promotores* attempted to manipulate the assemblies of several MIADES into electing directive committees that would be sympathetic to the municipal government. When these attempts were unsuccessful, the municipal government tried to divide the respective MIADE by setting up competing organisms, which received all future assistance from the municipality. As we have seen, these actions on the part of the municipal government contributed greatly to debilitating the MIADES programme. Not only did the municipal government have limited success in winning over popular leaders and in shoring up its political support bases, but it alienated most urban popular movements from the MIADES programme. As a result, the programme fell into disrepair and subsequently became almost defunct.

Aside from undermining the democratic character of the respective programmes, political interference by other actors posed a direct threat to the autonomy of urban popular movements. Obviously, by trying to influence the elections for the directive committees of some MIADES in El Agustino, the municipal government interfered directly with the internal structures of the respective urban popular movements. Moreover, the fact that access to the

MIADES programme was made conditional on expressing support for the municipal government, implied that urban popular movements had to compromise their independence in order to participate. As was explained in Chapter 4, this approach on the part of the municipal government of El Agustino was not exceptional. Rather, it reflected a more wide-spread attitude within parts of the Peruvian left, according to which urban popular movements had to be directed or even "constructed," in order to become part of a revolutionary alliance.

In the cases studied, the attempts to make urban popular movements dependent on political parties had limited success; however, they were not without consequences. Many urban popular movements retreated into themselves and refused to participate in programmes that had been politicized, rather than giving up their autonomy and accepting to be turned into dependent support bases of a particular political party. Inevitably, however, this would diminish their influence, since it would isolate them from others and deprive them of allies that could help them project their concerns into the political arena. Alternatively, as in the case of El Agustino, urban popular movements would continue to participate, but they would counter the cooptive pressures that they were exposed to by establishing multiple alliances with other actors that were present on the local scene. In this case, too, the defense of their autonomy came at a cost. Given the largely defensive character of these alliances, they did little to broaden the limited influence urban popular movements had on other actors.

Of course, all this is not to say that cooptation was universal and that urban

popular movements had no influence at all over other actors, or that they were completely incapable of influencing public policy. First, popular movements can at least take partial credit for the shift of the Peruvian left away from its vanguardist stance of the 1970s towards a partial embracement of political pluralism and the so-called new forms of making politics. As we have seen in the previous two chapters, this programmatic shift became particularly relevant under the Barrantes administration of Metropolitan Lima, which abstained from trying to coopt urban popular movements, and it also influenced the policies of the district governments of El Agustino in earlier years. Furthermore, the strength of regional popular movements towards end of the 1970s and the crucial role they played in the mass mobilizations to end military rule, led to the inclusion of decentralist reforms in the Constitution of 1979 and the democratization of local governments. More often, however, rather than influencing other actors, urban popular movements were themselves under pressure and had to defend their independence against various forms of cooptation.

By and large, the conclusions that can be drawn from this balance sheet of popular participation under leftist-led local governments in Lima confirm the arguments that were developed in the theoretical framework at the beginning of this dissertation. In the first chapter, it was argued that the collective identities and the social, cultural, and political practices of urban popular movements contain a democratic potential, which under certain conditions can serve to

democratize other political actors and to render local political institutions more democratic and more efficient. As was explained, in some of the cases studied, urban popular movements did in fact have such an impact on other actors and on political institutions, while their influence in other cases was quite limited.

The second chapter went on to examine some of the conditions for the realization of this democratic potential, for example, political decentralization and the creation of institutional openings for popular participation at the local level, as well as the formation of alliances between urban popular movements and other actors, particularly political parties. Again, it became clear that these factors played a crucial role in the cases studied. For example, due to the absence of effective political decentralization and the weak institutional stature of local governments, openings for popular participation at the local level remained fairly restrictive, severely underfunded, and poorly institutionalized. Moreover, while alliances with leftist-controlled local governments provided urban popular movements with institutional inroads and helped them to overcome some of their own limitations, they also exposed these movements to various forms of political cooptation, thereby endangering their innovative potential. The case of El Agustino, where urban popular movements countered these pressures by forming multiple alliances with a variety of other actors, likewise confirmed the arguments set out in Chapter 2.

In sum, it can be concluded from the cases studied that the democratic potential of urban popular movements is genuine enough; however, its realization

is often impeded by a number of important obstacles. Consequently, before these obstacles can be overcome, the democratic potential of urban popular movements is likely to remain largely incipient, if it can materialize at all. By extension, it can be said that the project of linking civil society and the state via popular participation, which was evoked notably by some of the authors that were discussed in Chapter 2, has so far remained an elusive goal and that the chances of establishing a new social contract at the grassroots level appear to be slim, at least for the time being.

Two principal questions follow from these general conclusions. The first one is relatively straightforward: what can be done to allow urban popular movements to maximize their democratic potential, or more specifically, how could the obstacles blocking an enlargement of popular participation be removed? The answer to this question seems simple enough. For one thing, new opportunities for popular participation at the local level would have to be created, and existing ones widened and better institutionalized. Among other things, this would mean that political decentralization would have to be at the same time more wide-spread and more far-reaching, leading to a real devolution of powers and resources to lower levels of government. Furthermore, concrete mechanisms for popular participation would have to be created, backed up by institutional provisions and legal guarantees. Second, urban popular movements themselves would have to be strengthened. In more concrete terms, urban popular movements would need to become more representative, and their programmatic

and organizational capacities would have to be improved, possibly with help from other actors, such as NGOs. More importantly, urban popular movements would have to show a greater ability to unite. For this to happen, they would have to define a number of issues which could bring diverse urban popular movements closer together, or better even, they would have to link these issues into a comprehensive programme, which could be termed a popular agenda. Such a popular agenda would enable urban popular movements to have more influence on public debates and to increase their influence on other actors and on public policy. Third, other actors, and especially political parties, would have to show a greater willingness to form alliances with urban popular movements on the basis of mutual respect, taking up and promoting the concerns of these movements, instead of trying to coopt them and exploiting them for their own purposes. For this to happen, these actors would have to interpret such a non-cooptive strategy to be in their own best interest, which is of course not a given.

The second question flowing from the above conclusions is equally straightforward, although somewhat more difficult to answer: under existing political conditions, what is the likelihood that such a favourable environment for popular participation can actually take shape? On this count, some scepticism is probably in order. In fact, while the outlook for popular participation in the 1980s was certainly less than auspicious, it actually seems to have worsened since the beginning of the 1990s, at least in the Peruvian context. For one thing, the presidential elections of 1990 clearly marked a reconcentration of the policy

process at the national level and the end of the decentralist experiments of the previous decade. The centralist bias of the new government under President Alberto Fujimori manifested itself in its economic stabilization policies, in its approach to the struggle against the Shining Path guerrilla movement, and in a number of measures that undermined the status of local and regional governments,¹ but it became most noticeable in the new Constitution of 1993, which greatly strengthened the role of the national executive in the political process. In addition, urban popular movements seem to have lost some of their momentum since the 1990s. Not only are they still reeling from the effects of the economic crisis and the attacks on their leaders by the Shining Path, which prevents them from broadening their membership base and becoming more representative, but they appear to have the same difficulties as before in joining forces with others and in uniting around a common cause. Last but not least, due to the further decomposition of the political left in recent years, urban popular movements have lost their most logical ally in the political arena, and it is unclear which other actor could take its place. What makes this problem even more acute is the fact that the institutional structures and the popular base of most other parties are equally weak, due at least in part to widespread popular dissatisfaction with the political process in general, as well as Alberto Fujimori's populist and anti-institutional policies.

The fact that an expansion of popular participation will probably always be an uphill battle and that truly ideal conditions for such an endeavour are unlikely

to materialize, does not mean that the project itself is hopeless and should therefore be abandoned. Rather, the difficulties of enlarging the scope for popular participation at the local level should be seen against the backdrop of a more general and even more complex problem, namely, the political and economic integration of the popular majorities, or what was previously referred to as the creation of a link between civil society and the state. Despite some momentous changes that occurred in Latin America over the last two decades, this problem still awaits a satisfactory solution.

In particular, the return to civilian rule has done little to change the exclusionary character of the political systems of most Latin American countries. On the contrary, despite the resurgence of democracy, the ruling elites in these countries have so far refused to face up to the pressing social and economic needs of the popular majorities, while most existing political parties have proved incapable or unwilling to represent popular concerns in the political arena. In addition, the inefficiency of most state bureaucracies and the persistence of clientelist and populist traditions has led to a grave legitimacy crisis, which was further deepened by the fact that the return to democracy often went hand in hand with neoliberal stabilization programmes that entailed high social costs. Against this backdrop, it is hardly surprising that many Latin American countries have faced periodic outbursts of social unrest and that several of them have been threatened by authoritarian coup attempts, which has cast a shadow on the prospects for democratic stability and consolidation in the region.²

As long as these problems persist, and as long as no other approach promises more feasible solutions, a strategy that aims at the democratization of political institutions and of political parties via an increase of popular participation at the grassroots still has its place. This dissertation has left no doubt about the difficulties such a strategy faces; in fact, one of its principal contributions is to have highlighted the numerous obstacles that commonly prevent popular participation from living up to its full potential. However, it would be a mistake to interpret these results in a defeatist way and to take them simply as an indication of the infeasibility of popular participation under current political conditions. Rather, they should be taken as a challenge by social scientists, participants of popular movements, and others, to intensify their efforts to identify the conditions that would make popular participation viable. In this context, this dissertation has opened a number of avenues for future research.

First, attention was drawn to political decentralization as a precondition for the creation of institutional openings for popular participation at the grassroots level. Along the lines proposed in this dissertation, research should be continued and intensified, in order to better identify such "windows of opportunity". In particular, researchers need to become more aware of the political context in which decentralization programmes evolve.

Second, the dissertation has furnished some theoretical lenses and tools to orient future research on urban popular movements, calling attention to the collective identities and practices of these movements, as well as to their relations

with other actors. Using these theoretical instruments as a base, more empirical research should be conducted, in order to place localized experiences into a wider context and to better assess the potential of urban popular movements for social and political change.

Third, a theoretical framework was developed to study the strategies that political parties and other actors adopt vis-à-vis urban popular movements. In the future, this framework could be used in different contexts to ascertain the feasibility of alliances between urban popular movements and other actors, to determine the likely influence urban popular movements would have within these alliances, as well as to gauge possible cooptive pressures. Obviously, a better grasp of these issues would permit urban popular movements to find potential allies, by identifying common interests and areas of mutual concern, and it would allow them to form multiple alliances and to better protect their autonomy.

While concentrating their attention on the conditions that can make popular participation at the local level more viable, researchers should not forget to place these issues in a wider context. A particularly interesting question would be to examine the impact of social and political change at the grassroots, or that of its absence, on overall democratic stability and consolidation. This would add an essential new element to ongoing debates on these issues, which to date have focused almost exclusively on the role of the political elites, without paying sufficient attention to the crucial question of how the popular majorities can be integrated into the new democratic regimes in Latin America. While certainly not

pretending to provide all the answers to this question, it is in this sense that this dissertation hopes to make a contribution.

Appendix

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Interviews in the Districts of El Agustino and Santa Anita

Abregú, Victor. Neighbourhood leader and member of the central committee of PMR. 21 January 1992, Lima.

Angulo, Neda. Community worker for SEA. 11 February 1992, Lima.

Atúncar, Jorge. PUM district councillor and head of the Oficina de Participación Vecinal (Neighbourhood Participation Office) of El Agustino. 14 January 1992, Lima.

Barnet, Carmen and Amanda Collazos. Neighbourhood leaders in El Agustino. 21 January 1992, Lima.

Bazán, Pedro. Editor of the newsletter *Agenda Distrital* in Santa Anita. 19 February 1992, Lima.

Cáceres, Irene. Member of a *comedor popular* in El Agustino. 15 January 1992, Lima.

Cancho, Erasmo. Independent district councillor in El Agustino. 23 January 1992, Lima.

Casanova, Julio. Neighbourhood leader and president of the federation of MIADES in El Agustino. 26 November 1991, Lima.

Castillo, Rosa. Member of the *clubes de madres* in El Agustino. 13 January 1992, Lima.

Chamberlain, Francisco. Catholic priest of the parish *Virgen de Nazareth* in El Agustino, head of SEA. 13 February 1992, Lima.

Cuadros, Carmen. Community worker for SEA. 8 January 1992, Lima.

de la Cruz, Jhon. APRA district councillor in El Agustino. 20 January 1992, Lima.

Durand Ríos, Elías. Neighbourhood leader in Santa Anita. 19 February 1992, Lima.

Escalante, Carlos. Urban Planner working for CENCA. 9 January 1992, Lima.

Estrada, Lorenzo. Neighbourhood leader and executive secretary of the Comité de Gestión in El Agustino. 27 February 1992, Lima.

Giraldo Flores, Yolanda and Josefina Berna. Independent district councillor responsible for the *vaso de leche* programme and district coordinator of the *vaso de leche* programme in El Agustino, respectively. 8 January 1992, Lima.

Huarcaya de la Cruz, Valentín. Neighbourhood leader in El Agustino. 11 February 1992, Lima.

Libia, Gloria. District coordinator of the *comedores populares* in El Agustino. 22 January 1992, Lima.

Lizarga, Carlos. Urban Planner working for SEA. 6 February 1992, Lima.

Maraví, Yolanda. Member of a *vaso de leche* committee in El Agustino. 27 February 1992, Lima.

Martínez, Ana. President of the *clubes de madres* in Santa Anita. 26 February 1992, Lima.

Mendoza, Enrique. MAS district councillor in El Agustino. 22 February 1992, Lima.

Núñez, Celinda and Maritza Jiménez. Head of the División de Bienestar Social y Participación Vecinal (Division of Social Welfare and Neighbourhood Participation) and social assistant in the Oficina de Participación Vecinal (Neighbourhood Participation Office) in Santa Anita, respectively. 20 January 1992, Lima.

Ortíz, Humberto. Community worker for SEA. 2 December 1991, Lima.

Palomino, Adelina. Member of the *vaso de leche* committee in Santa Anita. 21 and 25 February 1992, Lima.

Quesada, Carlos. Mayor of Santa Anita for Acción Popular. 7 January 1992, Lima.

Quintanilla, Jorge. Mayor of El Agustino for Izquierda Unida. 6 November 1991, Lima.

Romero, Rosario. Researcher for CENDIPP and CTIC in El Agustino. 15 January 1992, Lima.

Valencia, Gladys. Member of the district coordinating committee of the *vaso de leche* committees of El Agustino. 19 February 1992, Lima.

Véliz, Gustavo. Adviser to Mayor Jorge Quintanilla of El Agustino. 29 October 1991, Lima.

Zúñiga, Zenaida. Neighbourhood leader and member of a *comedor popular* in El Agustino. 11 February 1992, Lima.

Interviews at the level of Metropolitan Lima

Barrantes Lingán, Alfonso. Former Mayor of Lima for Izquierda Unida. 16 November 1991, Lima.

Barrera, Soledad. Director-General of the Oficina General de Participación Vecinal (General Office for Neighbourhood Participation) of the municipality of Metropolitan Lima. 20 April 1994, Lima.

Chirinos, Luis. Former member of the Oficina General de Participación Vecinal (General Office for Neighbourhood Participation) of the municipality of Metropolitan Lima under Mayor Barrantes. 21 April 1992, Lima.

Guerrero, Elsi. Director in the Oficina General de Participación Vecinal (General Office for Neighbourhood Participation) of the municipality of Metropolitan Lima. 23 October 1991, Lima.

Pease García, Henry. Former Vice-Mayor of Metropolitan Lima for Izquierda Unida. 16 April 1992, Lima.

Orrego, Eduardo. Former Mayor of Metropolitan Lima for Acción Popular. 11 November 1991, Lima.

Zolezzi Chocano, Mario. Former director of the urban development secretariat of the municipality of Metropolitan Lima under Mayor Barrantes. 24 October 1991, Lima.

Other Interviews

Adrianzén, Alberto. Researcher at DESCO. 30 October 1991, Lima.

Ballón, Eduardo. Researcher at DESCO. 12 March 1992, Lima.

Bedoya, Susana. Researcher at IPADEL. 4 October 1991, Lima.

Calderón, Julio. Researcher at CENCA. 11 November 1991, Lima.

Dirmoser, Dietmar. Head of the Lima office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.
15 October 1991, Lima.

Joseph, Jaime. Researcher at Alternativa. 8 November 1991, Lima.

Olivera Cárdenas, Luis. Researcher at DESCO. 30 October 1991, Lima.

NOTES

Notes to Introduction

1. The return to democracy in Latin America and in Eastern Europe has provoked renewed interest in the notion of civil society (Keane 1988a, 1988b; Stepan 1985; Lewis 1992). The term has been used with quite different meanings in the literature (Bobbio 1989, 22-43; Gellner 1991; Gramsci 1971; Shils 1991; C. Taylor 1990). Following Charles Taylor, civil society is defined in this dissertation as the realm of associations that organize society free of state control with the potential of influencing politics.

2. For further details on the rationale for selecting Peru, and more particularly Lima, as a case study, as well as a discussion of the criteria used to analyze the empirical material, see the separate Introduction to Part II.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. For a discussion of these concepts, see, for example, Mainwaring (1987); Portes (1985); Galín, Carrión, and Castillo (1986); Palma (1988); Oxhorn (1991); and Adrianzén and Ballón (1992). The term popular sector is used in this dissertation in an analytical fashion, denoting a number of characteristics that distinguish this part of society from others. It is not meant to deny the existence of links between different "sectors."

2. Robert Michels labelled these tendencies the "iron law of oligarchy" in his famous study on political parties in modern democracies (Michels 1957).

3. It is worth noting, however, that even a new social movement theorist like Alain Touraine reserves the term social movement only for those movements that are involved in the transformation of society as such, or what he calls the struggle to redefine "historicity" (Touraine 1984, 141-164).

4. Provided one conceives of social classes in the same way as the authors just mentioned, all of which follow Marx in regarding the position of individuals in the production process as fundamental for the formation of class interest and of classes themselves. Obviously, however, this is but one of several competing definitions of class. Building on Katznelson, Oxhorn for instance proposes a break with the Marxist tradition, arguing that "economic structure, particularly sudden and/or dramatic changes in that structure, ways of life, shared dispositions and collective action should be seen as mutually interdependent with important feedback between all four levels so that none is theoretically prior to the others" (Oxhorn 1991, 12). Oxhorn's "political" view of class bears clear resemblances to post-Marxist approaches such as Laclau and Mouffe's (1985, 1987). See also Portes, who proposes another way of redefining the concept of class, referring

especially to those sectors of the population that are excluded from the capitalist production process (Portes 1985).

5. Riofrío and Rodríguez (1976) have coined the phrase *De invasores a invadidos* (From being invaders to being invaded) to describe such outside influences in the case of the shantytowns of Lima during the early 1970s.

6. As Judith Adler Hellman has pointed out, researchers who espouse such a dichotomous view often juxtapose their own ideal of a completely autonomous social movement with existing movements that they see as having been coopted, deploring the fact that so often "something pure and wonderful (a popularly based, grass-roots movement) is replaced by something less desirable (Hellman 1992, 56)." These researchers generally blur the crucial distinction between cooptation in the true sense of the word and other forms of relations between social movements and other actors, such as "adherence to a charismatic, populist figure based on personal loyalty, and the kind of political learning and growth of consciousness that may occur when a neighborhood group articulating narrow, limited goals is drawn into a broader struggle" (Hellman 1992, 56).

7. See, for many others, Mainwaring (1987, 1989), R. Cardoso (1983, 1992), and Ballón (1990). Of course, other authors do make sweeping claims as to the potential of urban popular movements to reform political parties and institutions. See, for example, Fals Borda (1992).

8. Given the diversity of these approaches, it might seem problematic to subsume all of them under one label. However, to a certain extent, there is agreement on the "newness" of the new social movements. See Offe (1987, 68ff.) and Dalton, Kuechler, and Bürklin (1990, 4ff.).

9. The notion of the "life world" has its origins in phenomenological sociology and was popularized by Habermas.

10. As the case of the German Greens demonstrates, these strategies can be very different, ranging from the fundamental system opposition of the *Fundis* (fundamentalists) to the pragmatic coalition building of the *Realos* (realists).

11. Attempts to resolve the problem by postulating that social movement participants are motivated to participate by selective benefits only available to them, have not found much support in the literature (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1988, 707).

12. Calhoun (1991) finds in his analysis of the Chinese student uprising on Tiananmen Square that the students acted in defense of their honour, which constituted a vital part of their identity. In this way, Calhoun explains the students' almost suicidal behaviour that would otherwise seem irrational.

13. Klandermans (1991) and McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1988) provide useful reviews of these approaches.

14. See Kay (1989) and Perlman (1976) for useful overviews of the debates on marginality theory. Perlman's emphasis lies on the modernization variant while Kay concentrates more on later Marxist approaches and their critics.

15. Interestingly, these follower-debates have been marred by some of the same problems bedeviling marginality theory and have not contributed much to the understanding of the urban popular sector as social and political actor. Informal sector conceptions, particularly early ones (Hart 1973; International Labour Office 1972), have been criticized for their dualist assumptions. Marxist approaches to the informal sector, and particularly to modes of production, suffered from a penchant for rather vacuous theoretical discussions (Blomström and Hettne 1987, 179ff.). For a more detailed discussion of these issues, see Schönwälder (1991).

16. For an excellent review of Manuel Castells thought, see Lowe (1986). For critiques of the urban social movement school, see Saunders (1981) and Pickvance (1976).

17. It would go to far at this point to describe these intellectual developments in more detail. See, for example, Gorz (1980) and Laclau and Mouffe (1985, 1987).

18. I will give a more detailed account of these processes in the third chapter of this dissertation.

19. Basic texts on the notion of citizenship include Marshall (1977). For more radical interpretations, see Mouffe (1992).

20. It should be noted, though, that these identities can also be seen as alternative models of overarching identity structures. An overarching women's identity, for example, could potentially unite middle class and popular sector women, even if this has proved to be difficult in practice (Vargas 1990; Barrig 1989; Jaquette 1989b). A widely shared ethnic identity could perform a similar role, an issue which has been explored by the so-called *indigenista* school (Matos Mar 1988; see also Franco 1991).

21. There are of course critics who dispute this. See Chapter 3.

22. Obviously, this contention needs to be backed up empirically and can only be discussed against the background of a specific case. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the literature dealing with this issue in the Peruvian context.

23. The cases studied are Santiago de Chile, Lima, Monterrey, and Mexico City. See the references to Part 4 of Castells' *The City and the Grassroots* (Castells 1983, 410ff.).

24. In other words, Castells breaks with the idea that urban-based social movements can be independent partners of leftist political parties in broad-based political alliances, an idea which had been central for previous formulations of urban social movements theory (Castells 1978; Evers, Müller-Plantenberg, and Spessart 1979). Instead, Castells now contends that political parties, just like the state, almost inevitably dominate such alliances and instrumentalize them for their own ends. Consequently, urban social movements can only preserve their potential for social and political change if they remain independent from both political parties and the state (Castells 1983, 322).

25. However, even in such cases as the highly mobilized "model" settlement of Nueva La Habana, which was controlled by the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), there existed a pronounced rift between the politicized leadership and the majority of the squatters. The leadership's goal of forging a militant, revolutionary *campamento* jarred with the more modest aspirations of the settlers, who dreamed of becoming "a peaceful, quiet, well-equipped neighbourhood," in other words, "an average working class *población*" (Castells 1983, 203-204). Consequently, some initiatives of the leadership, such as the substitution of the official curriculum in local schools with a Marxist one, or the planned closure of the mothers' centres established by the Frei government, met with resistance from the settlers. While not disagreeing in principle with the views of the leadership, many settlers apparently saw political mobilization as a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. An indication for the novelty of these issues is the fact that most of the relevant literature is relatively recent. For bibliographical information on literature regarding popular participation in local government, see Herzer and Pirez (1991) and Wallis (1991). Stöhr (1972) provided an early analysis of decentralization processes in Latin America, whereas the volume edited by Morris (1992) furnishes more recent perspectives. A good comprehensive bibliography on decentralization in Latin America can be found in Nohlen (1991a).

2. Some more recent indications for this can be found in a discussion paper published by the World Bank, particularly Carroll's contribution (Carroll 1992, 120), as well as the 1993 Human Development Report (UNDP 1993).

3. Commonly, decentralization with respect to the political sphere is subdivided into administrative decentralization, or *deconcentration*, and political decentralization, or *devolution*. Deconcentration or administrative decentralization denotes the redistribution of responsibilities within the central administration. Typically, this means that administrative responsibilities and/or decision making powers are shifted from the highest level of the central government to other, lower levels of the same bureaucracy that are located elsewhere. The degree to which real powers to make and implement decisions are transferred can vary; in any case, overall control of the process remains with the highest level of the central administration. In a related fashion, which is particularly important in the Latin American context, administrative responsibilities and/or decision making powers can be transferred to semi-autonomous or parastatal agencies (Harris 1983). In this case, one would speak of *delegation*.

4. For a more detailed discussion of this concept, see Pearse and Stiefel (1980), Midgley (1986), and Fadda (1988).

5. Samoff has called the same approach the liberal-interventionist school (Samoff 1990, 515).

6. See Conyers (1983; 1984) for a bibliography of some of this material.

7. For further discussion of these issues, see Smith (1985, chapter 10).

8. I would not go as far as Slater (Slater 1989; 1990), who accuses Rondinelli and others of wilfully conspiring with undemocratic regimes and international capital by developing an "official discourse" of decentralization designed to weaken the resistance of third world nation states to capitalist penetration and dependency and to cement existing social injustices. Slater provides no real proof for his accusations, and I see no reason to doubt the reformist aspirations Rondinelli claims he has (Rondinelli 1990, 496, 499). On the other hand, it is hard to see how these aspirations could be realized within Rondinelli's own framework.

9. In some form or other, the same problem crops up in much of the literature on decentralization and popular participation. Esman and Uphoff, for example, argue that "supporting, or at least accepting rural local organizations is in the self-interest of most governments" (Esman and Uphoff 1984, 38), since these organizations can increase government efficiency by mobilizing resources, promoting social order, providing political support, etc. At the same time, however, these authors acknowledge that rural local organizations can contribute relatively little to the goals of greater equity of opportunity and benefits and the empowerment of rural people, given existing political resistance against the realization of these goals. Uphoff and Esman hope that even "if local

organizations contribute only to the first [goal] at present, they may nevertheless further the others over time" (Esman and Uphoff 1984, 28), which, in the long run, could "cumulatively shift the balance of socioeconomic and political power" (Esman and Uphoff 1984, 56).

Illy, Kaiser, and Schmitzek echo this view in their analyses of local government and self-help measures in developing countries (Illy, Kaiser, and Schmitzek 1988; Illy and Schmitzek 1986; all translations in this paragraph are mine). The authors regard decentralization as pivotal for rural development and see growing support for this position "in many capital cities of the third world" (Illy, Kaiser, and Schmitzek 1988, 18), yet, they also acknowledge the existence of multiple obstacles to its realization, relating mainly to a pervasive tradition of centralism and an inflexible bureaucracy, as well as existing power relations at the local level (Illy, Kaiser, and Schmitzek 1988, 2). When referring to the participation of local self-help organizations, these obstacles are referred to, somewhat euphemistically, as the conflict between "the understandable desire for autonomy" of these organizations and the *Gestaltungsanspruch* (i.e., the desire to form, to set guidelines) on the part of the state (Illy, Kaiser, and Schmitzek 1988, 4). While successful decentralization almost amounts to a "utopia," given its challenge to existing power structures (Illy 1986, 10), the authors are nevertheless optimistic that decentralization can be achieved through learning processes supported from the outside. These processes would serve to pinpoint openings in the administrative structure, to identify positively inclined decision makers, and to educate and win over others. After all, the authors claim, decentralization is "also and chiefly a psychological process" (Illy, Kaiser, and Schmitzek 1988, 3).

10. For an excellent review of 19th century liberal thought on local government, see Smith (1985, chapter 2).

11. Which, incidentally, are the same reasons that made decentralization popular. See Nohlen (1991b).

12. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the left in many Latin American countries has proved to be more willing to respect the autonomy of popular movements in political alliances. This shift, which is often referred to as "new ways of making politics," will be examined in further detail in Chapter 4 with respect to the Peruvian context.

13. A contrary belief which was popular among theorists of new social movements, namely, that popular movements would somehow be capable of single-handedly changing or even replacing political parties as well as state institutions from the grassroots, has generally been abandoned. Fals Borda (1992) is one of the last hold-outs of this belief.

Notes to Introduction to Part II

1. Of course, this is not to say that experiences with popular participation in the provinces are irrelevant. For a discussion of the case of Ilo, see Díaz Palacios (1991), for other municipalities, see Iturregui and Zavaleta (1988).

Notes to Chapter 3

1. The literature on the reformist military regime in Peru is immense. See, for example, Lowenthal (1975), McClintock and Lowenthal (1983), Stepan (1978), and Pease (1977, 1979). With respect to the previous oligarchic regime, some of the best analyses are still Astiz (1969), Bourricaud (1970) and Cotler (1978).

2. After the Pamplona land invasion, SINAMOS assumed a particularly active role in the new settlement of Villa El Salvador. President Velasco and his wife took a personal interest in the development of the settlement, which became a showcase project for the military regime to demonstrate its support for the urban popular sector (Collier 1976, 104-106, 111-112; Dietz 1980, 27, 151-152).

3. One of the principal protagonists of this view is Teresa Tovar, who argues that the reforms carried out by the Velasco government gave an important impetus to the creation and invigoration of popular movements, thereby creating a propitious terrain for their organizational consolidation (Tovar 1985, 72-75; Tovar 1982c, 70). Tovar's view that the organizational consolidation of popular movements laid the groundwork for the emergence of a critical consciousness and the transformation of the popular classes into historical subjects, was borne out by historical events, notably the participation of urban popular movements in the opposition movement against the military regime at the end of the 1970s. Previously, Etienne Henry had concluded from his account of the Velasco period between 1968 and 1975 that the regime had been largely successful in "imposing a social and urban order that was contrary to the interests of the settlers" (Henry 1978, 183). According to this view, urban popular movements did not evolve beyond basic demands making - they essentially remained *movimientos reivindicativos* -, and failed to link up with the more universal struggles waged at the same time by the workers movement. Consequently, for Henry, an urban social movement in Manuel Castells' sense of the term did not materialize (I have discussed the urban social movement approach in Chapter 1).

4. For a discussion of the economic policies of the military regime, see FitzGerald (1983) and Schydrowski and Wicht (1983).

5. According to Cynthia McClintock, the fact that General Velasco moved away from the progressive group and closer to the rightist "La Misión" in 1974 and 1975 explains the alienation of the progressives and their decision to support Morales Bermúdez in the 1975 coup (McClintock 1983, 281).

6. On 23 April 1975, around 20,000 settlers from Villa El Salvador staged a march to the Governmental Palace in downtown Lima demanding solutions to problems related to the provision of safe water, urban transportation, etc. The marchers were stopped by security forces and only 3,000 reached the Plaza de Armas (Valdeavellano 1981, 22).

7. The transition phase began on 28 July 1977 with General Morales Bermúdez' announcement of a timetable for the return of the armed forces to the barracks, and it ended with the general elections in May 1980. For more details on the transition process, see Cotler (1986) and Pease (1979).

8. Strictly speaking, the municipalities had been responsible for the urban shantytowns or *pueblos jóvenes* that fell within their jurisdiction since the enactment of D.L. No. 22250 in July 1978 (Zolezzi and Sánchez 1979). D.L. No. 22612 merely continued this process by stripping urban shantytowns of their special status as *pueblos jóvenes*. Incidentally, the fact that the municipalities were assigned responsibilities without at the same time being given the appropriate resources, foreshadowed a practice typical of later decentralization policies. I will come back to this point in the following chapter.

9. It should be pointed out that this process was propelled by the politicized leadership of certain neighbourhood movements, while the mass base of these and other movements was largely left untouched. In Teresa Tovar's terms, which are typical for the language used during the period, the centralization process was restricted to the "most enlightened sectors" of "the" neighbourhood movement (Tovar 1982b, 29).

10. The Constitution of 1979 had extended the suffrage to illiterates for the first time in Peruvian history, which considerably increased the electoral weight of the popular sector.

11. Luis Chirinos provides a "typology" of these organizations (Chirinos 1984). See also Tovar (1986a, 146-147).

12. Women came to play a more important role in urban popular movements due to the emergence of so-called survival movements towards the mid-1980s. I will come back to this crucial point below.

13. I have dealt with these issues more thoroughly in Chapter 1.

14. There exists a huge amount of literature on the women's movement in Peru and in Latin American in general. See, for example, Barrig (1986), Vargas (1990, 1992), Jelin (1990) and Jaquette (1989a).

15. This point was raised by almost all of the female interviewees during my field research in the district of El Agustino.

16. The term "assistentialism" commonly denotes dependence on donor agencies.

17. I know of no studies that provide reliable and comprehensive data on the level of participation in urban popular movements, which can of course be subject to great fluctuations. However, some figures can serve as an approximation. As was mentioned before, by 1987 there existed 7,458 *vaso de leche* committees in Lima, as well as 794 communal soup kitchens (Allou 1989, 74). Furthermore, 215 neighbourhood organizations were recognized by the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima, while another 57 were in the process of being recognized. While these numbers may appear relatively small, it can be assumed that most inhabitants of urban shantytowns have been members of some form of neighbourhood organization, at least during the period when their settlements were formed. With respect to associations of migrants from other departments, Carlessi puts their number at 6,000 (Carlessi 1989, 15). Pásara and Zarzar, on the other hand, quote from a 1990 survey by the Lima polling firm Apoyo, in which three out of four respondents from the two lower socio-economic categories declared that they did *not* belong to any type of institution or association (Pásara and Zarzar 1992, 193).

18. Barrig (1990) has shown the consequences of such a development for the *vaso de leche* committees in Lima. While many women leaders were empowered by their participation in the committees, for the rank and file, the *vaso de leche* programme sometimes came to signify little more than a service provided by the state. Seen from this angle, the leadership acted as some sort of intermediary between the programme recipients and state institutions, and the characterization of the programme as "assistentialist" is not entirely misplaced. See, however, the conclusion to this chapter.

19. This strategy was first announced by Abimael Guzmán in a lengthy interview with the newspaper *El Diario* in 1988 (Guzmán 1988, 17). The considerable literature on Sendero Luminoso includes the volume edited by Palmer (1992), which brings together more recent articles by a number of renowned "senderologists."

20. The settlement was named after Felix Raucana, who was killed in a violent confrontation with security forces. Sendero Luminoso also made significant inroads in the settlement of Huaycán, as well as in the district of San

Juan de Lurigancho, particularly in a section called Canto Grande, and more recently in Villa El Salvador. See Smith (1992) and Morales (1991) for further details.

21. The relative weakness of urban popular movements was further corroborated in a number of other studies. Romeo Grompone (1990), for example, argues that many associations formed by small entrepreneurs in the informal sector are extremely fragile, while Rodríguez Rabanal (1989) points out the detrimental psychological consequences of extreme poverty.

22. The theme of an alternative modernity has been explored by various writers, among them Carlos Franco (1991).

23. The concept of *anomie*, which of course goes back to Durkheim's classical formulation, has also been applied to the Peruvian context by Neira (1987). See also the critiques of Neira's approach by Romero (1987), Lynch (1989), and Tovar (1991).

Notes to Chapter 4

1. While the centre-right Acción Popular party won a considerable share of the popular vote in the electoral contests of 1980, the popular sector mostly tended to vote for the left or APRA in the following years (Dietz 1985, 1989, 1991; Cameron 1991). As of late, there are some indications that this trend may have come to an end, most notably, the rise of Alberto Fujimori and other political independents, such as Ricardo Belmont, in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Roncagliolo 1989/1990; Degregori and Grompone 1991).

2. For an historical analysis of the development of municipal government in Peru, see Mejía (1990), or, more briefly, Castro-Pozo and Delgado (1989, 21-32).

3. For most of its history, the unitary Peruvian state has had three distinct levels of territorial organization, namely, departments, provinces, and districts. Departments are divided into provinces, which are further divided into districts. While the 24 departments and the constitutional province of Callao that existed in 1987 were administered by a prefect appointed by the central government, the 180 provinces, the municipality of Metropolitan Lima, and the 1756 districts had been governed by democratically elected local governments since 1981 (Schmidt 1989a, 8; Mejía 1990, 151). Regions, on the other hand, constitute an additional level of territorial organization that was superimposed during the 1980s on the existing framework. They were formed on the basis of constitutional provisions and subsequent laws, particularly the Basic Law of Regionalization, Ley No. 24650, and its later modifications. Regions can comprise one or more

departments, without, however, replacing the departmental structure as such. Most regions that were established in the 1980s never achieved a sufficient degree of consolidation and the regionalization process was thrown into further disarray when President Alberto Fujimori blocked the transfer of functions and powers to the regions following his *auto-golpe* of April 1992 (Slater 1991, 39). The new Constitution of 1993 again allowed for the formation of regions; however, at least for now, there appears to be little momentum to put regionalization back on the political agenda.

It would be impossible at this point to go into further detail with respect to the regionalization process of the 1980s and to review the findings of the considerable body of literature that exists on the topic (González de Olarte 1989; Méndez 1990; Slater 1991; Kim 1992). However, some crucial reasons for the failure of the process should at least be mentioned, most of which relate to the political context in which it evolved. Given the potential size, powers, and resource base of the new regions, they were poised to develop into significant new centres of political power on a scale exceeding that of most municipalities, with the exception of large cities and particularly Metropolitan Lima. It is not surprising, therefore, that the regionalization process, which comprised not only the physical delimitation of the regions, but also the definition of their precise functions, prerogatives, and resources, was marred by politically motivated struggles from its inception. As a result, the principal objectives of the regionalization scheme, such as the devolution of political decision making powers to the regions, support for regional economic development, and greater citizen participation in regional affairs, were soon lost or at least overshadowed by attempts on the part of the main participants to use the programme in order to build regional support bases or to prevent others from doing so. This was particularly obvious with regard to the role played by the APRA-led national government under Alan García. In other words, the regionalization process in Peru closely resembled the pattern described in Chapter 2, in the sense that the proclaimed goals of decentralization policies are often shunted aside in favour of the political interests of the parties involved.

4. However, this should not be interpreted as a willingness to devolve real powers from the central to lower levels of government. As José Carlos Mariátegui has remarked quite fittingly, referring to the 1920s and the preceding period, "decentralization, no matter what form it has taken in the history of the republic, has always represented an absolutely centralist concept and design" (Mariátegui 1971, 166).

5. In the Peruvian case, a strong centralist faction within Acción Popular came out against political decentralization after the party's victory in the 1980 general elections, because it feared that strong local governments would hinder the implementation of the neo-liberal adjustment programme required by international lenders. Another group of influential AP members was opposed to

political decentralization because they saw their position as power brokers between the central government and the provinces threatened (Wilson and Garzón 1985, 332). Similarly, many political actors opposed the regionalization process in the mid- and late 1980s, on the grounds that they feared it would strengthen regional political support for the ruling APRA party.

It should be pointed out that political incumbents do not simply renege on their previous commitments because "politicians always lie," but because political decentralization entails some specific strategic dilemmas for them. This also explains why decentralization is more likely to be championed by political outsiders rather than insiders. For one thing, political decentralization is risky: it can create considerable institutional disorder and upset local balances of power, possibly mobilizing previously dormant social and political actors and provoking social unrest. Furthermore, political decentralization is bound to strengthen political adversaries with strong power bases at the local and regional levels, which cannot be in the interest of any political incumbent. Finally, as Schmidt has pointed out, "political entrepreneurs" are unlikely to stake their fortunes on political decentralization, for even if they are successful, the effects of decentralization programmes are often less tangible than conventional public goods, they are more difficult to attribute to the provider, and they are realized only over a longer period of time (Schmidt 1989a, 40).

6. These developments have been analyzed in more detail elsewhere. See in particular, Lechner (1982, 1985, 1991), Cotler (1987), Munck (1989, 1990), Chilcote (1990), Petras (1988), Weffort (1989), and the special issue of *Latin American Perspectives*, entitled *Democratization and Class Struggle* (1988). Barros (1986), Ellner (1989), Carr and Ellner (1993), and most recently, Castañeda (1993), provide useful overviews.

7. Parallels to similar "post-Marxist" positions within the Western European left, such as those expressed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985), are not accidental. Gramscian thought was popularized in Latin America by leftists returning from exile in Western Europe, where the work of Antonio Gramsci had experienced a renaissance. For a more profound analysis of the theories and especially the concepts developed by Gramsci, see Sassoon (1987) and Kebir (1991).

8. Such criticisms have been voiced, for example, by Amin (1991), Nef (1986, 1988), and Herman and Petras (1985).

9. Aside from partisan accounts (Letts 1981; Nieto 1983), there exist brief overviews by L. Taylor (1990) and Haworth (1993), as well as the largely journalistic and descriptive volume by Rojas Samanez (1991), which by now has appeared in its eighth edition. On the basis of this literature, the Peruvian left can loosely be subdivided into three different orientations, namely, a revolutionary, a radical-democratic, and a reformist one (the use of these labels is inspired by Barros' [1986] insightful analysis of ideological changes within the

Latin American left). As opposed to the revolutionary and the radical-democratic stance, both of which are discussed in more detail elsewhere in this dissertation, the reformist approach focuses more narrowly on the established political institutions to achieve political and socioeconomic changes and attributes less weight to popular movements.

The revolutionary orientation was initially composed of a multitude of parties and groups that had emerged from within the new left of the 1970s, most of which later coalesced into three main parties, namely, the Partido Unificado Mariateguista (PUM), the Unión Nacional de Izquierda Revolucionaria (UNIR), and the Frente Obrero Campesino Estudiantil y Popular (FOCEP). Among its leaders were PUM-leader Javier Diez Canseco, Jorge Hurtado of UNIR, as well as ex-guerrilla Hugo Blanco, who had acquired a certain celebrity due to his prior involvement in peasant struggles. The oldest political party on the Peruvian left, the Partido Comunista Peruano (PCP), maintained an alliance with the revolutionary faction for most of the 1980s, but its stance often wavered and it cannot be easily subsumed under any of the three labels. The radical-democratic orientation, on the other hand, derived most of its support from independents within Izquierda Unida, among them such prominent personalities as Henry Pease García and Rolando Ames, both of whom had been influenced by Christian ideas. Towards the late 1980s, two smaller parties emerged from within this orientation, the Movimiento de Afirmación Socialista (MAS), which was founded in 1991, and the Partido Mariateguista Revolucionario (PMR), which split from the PUM in 1989. The reformist orientation, finally, consisted chiefly of the Partido Socialista Revolucionario (PSR), which had been founded by pro-Velasco generals in 1978, the Partido Comunista Revolucionario (PCR), and the Convergencia Socialista. Enrique Bernales, who for much of the 1980s played an important role in the Peruvian senate, and PCR-leader Manuel Dammert were some of the key figures within the reformist orientation. The reformist faction became starkly visible in the late 1980s, when it separated from Izquierda Unida to form a competing leftist alliance, Izquierda Socialista, taking with it the hitherto independent and former IU President, Alfonso Barrantes.

Despite the ideological and programmatic differences between its different factions, the majority of the Peruvian left joined forces in the United Left alliance, or Izquierda Unida, in September 1980. In the following years, Izquierda Unida experienced a number of important electoral successes, most notably during the 1983 municipal elections, and became the second strongest political force in the country after APRA. However, after the defeat in the presidential elections of 1985, when Alfonso Barrantes came in second to Alan García, and especially the loss of the mayorship of Metropolitan Lima in 1986 to APRA, divisions within the alliance became increasingly noticeable. After these divisions had proved to be unbridgeable during the First Party Congress in Huámpí in ..., the alliance broke up into two rivalling factions, Izquierda Unida and Izquierda Socialista. In the following years, the Peruvian left entered a long process of fractious infighting and decline, which was further accelerated after

Alberto Fujimori's dissolution of the Peruvian parliament in 1992, and from which it has yet to recover.

10. This kind of jargon is reminiscent of the one used by Sendero Luminoso. The fact that Diez Canseco began using terms that were coined by Sendero Luminoso, such as *viejo estado* or *colchón* (mattress), which for him describes the role of the left as a buffer between the social movement and the state, can be read as an attempt to regain lost ideological terrain from Sendero Luminoso.

11. Consequently, in an interview by the author, Henry Pease insisted on labelling his approach "revolutionary," despite his renunciation of revolutionary violence (Pease 1992).

12. For a detailed analysis of the results of this election, see Tuesta (1983).

13. My translation.

14. It should be noted that there existed no unified revolutionary strategy among Peruvian leftists at the beginning of the 1980s. Many, like Chirinos, Calderón, and Delgado, who expressed revolutionary ideas at the time, always stressed the practical possibilities for reform and later supported positions that were compatible with social democratic ideas.

15. Potentially, this would apply not only to leftist-led, but to all local governments. It is no surprise, therefore, that the AP-led provincial government of Lima under Eduardo Orrego pushed for a replacement of D.L. No. 051, which later resulted in the promulgation of the new Ley Orgánica, Ley No. 23852 by the national government. I will explain how this law affected the situation of local governments in the following chapter.

16. Translation: from protest to proposal.

17. Chirinos distinguishes between four different modes of participation in local government, based on the degree of autonomy of its agents and the extent to which they can intervene in the municipal administration. These modes are, in ascending order, participation by delegation (i.e., elections), subordinate participation, collaborative participation, and democratic participation (Chirinos 1991, 89ff.).

18. Villa El Salvador was the only instance where such a form of autogobierno was effectively tried. For reasons to be explained in more detail in Chapter 6, the experience of Villa El Salvador constitutes an exceptional case.

19. Translation: from protest to proposal, or, from demand-making to management.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. The strong showing of APRA in 1983 foreshadowed Alan García's victory in the presidential elections of 1985 and APRA's subsequent dominance of Peruvian politics from the mid-1980s to the end of the decade. See Graham (1992), for example, for a more detailed analysis of this period. For the purposes of this thesis, I will refer to the national political scene only insofar as this is necessary to put municipal politics in perspective.

2. According to electoral law, the winning party was accorded the mayorship as well as the absolute majority of seats in the municipal council, even if its share of the popular vote was below 50%.

3. Not all leaders of IU shared this optimism. Alfonso Barrantes, for example, opined that "not all of those who protest against the economic policy of the government can be identified with the ideas of the left" (Barrantes 1984, 222).

4. Barrantes has never laid out his views in comprehensive form in writing. However, as a highly visible public figure, he has given numerous interviews to periodicals such as *Caretas*, *Debate*, *La República*, and *Quehacer*, some of which are included in Barrantes (1984). From the early 1980s onwards, these interviews show Barrantes progressively moving away from a revolutionary position to espouse much more moderate views. While continuing to use a fairly radical jargon, describing himself at various points as a Marxist-Leninist and an admirer of Joseph Stalin, he defines himself first and foremost as a Mariáteguist, which for him indicates a commitment to pluralism and tolerance of opposing viewpoints. (For an insightful analysis of the thought of José Carlos Mariátegui, who is claimed by *all* factions of the Peruvian left as an intellectual precursor, see Vanden [1986] as well as Mariátegui himself [Mariátegui 1971]). Furthermore, when probed on the depth of his loyalty to some basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism and Stalinism, this loyalty often seems tenuous at best. In one interview, for example, Barrantes concedes that he is willing to adopt from Stalin only the "positive sides," that is, his contribution to the resistance against Nazi-Germany and the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union (Barrantes 1983a, 29). In another interview, Barrantes admits that he sees in Marxism-Leninism merely a method of analysis, without necessarily subscribing to some of its key principles, such as the dictatorship of the proletariat or the one-party state (Barrantes 1983b, 28-29).

5. Obviously, while tactical considerations with respect to its electoral fortunes undoubtedly played a role in what Neira has called the "legitimization" of the Peruvian left (Neira 1984), it would certainly be too simple to attribute this shift to tactical considerations alone. As we have seen in the previous chapter, it represented a genuine redefinition of the ideological orientations of large parts

of the Peruvian left, which can only be properly understood against the background of a highly complex and conflictive process of ideological change, in which the Latin American left as a whole thoroughly redefined its stance towards representative democracy.

6. This is a common dilemma for leftist political parties. See Przeworski (1985).

7. According to some, he was also the main reason why the alliance finally broke up in 1989 (Pease 1992).

8. It is no surprise, therefore, that leftist leaders often give credit to the ex-mayor of Lima, Eduardo Orrego, for his administration from 1981 to 1983. Naturally, this does not mean they endorse the political programme of his party, Acción Popular.

9. According to Alfonso Barrantes, this decision was opposed by some IU councillors, who insisted on the prevalence of political criteria: "La izquierda tiene vocación de policía, todo lo quiere capturar" (Barrantes 1991).

10. Notably, APRA was the only party that declined to cooperate with the Barrantes administration, given that it competed with the United Left for the same segment of the electorate (Barrantes 1991).

11. See Chapter 2 for a discussion of the concept of participation. Rojas Julca (1989) and Chirinos (1991) provide comprehensive accounts of the specific policies that were enacted under the Barrantes administration in order to enhance popular participation.

12. As Castro and Delgado point out, D.L. No. 051 unleashed a veritable "tide of profound discontent" (Castro and Delgado 1989, 41), not only because it severely limited the powers of local governments, but also because the national government had failed to consult mayors and councillors over the new law, including those that belonged to the ruling party, Acción Popular. One of the most prominent opponents of D.L. No. 051 was Eduardo Orrego, then-mayor of Lima.

13. Local governments were not explicitly given *political* autonomy in the Constitution of 1979, because a number of legislators in the Constituent Assembly feared that doing so would endanger the unity of the state and introduce a federalist element into the Peruvian political system. However, as Castro-Pozo and Delgado rightly remark, the fact that local governments exercise at least some of their functions and prerogatives independently goes to show that they enjoy a certain degree of *practical* political autonomy (Castro-Pozo and Delgado 1989, 39). By giving local governments economic and administrative autonomy, they

were in fact put in a position to exercise the role of government in these fields.

14. In an interview with the author, ex-mayor Alfonso Barrantes complained that frequently, newly-built roads linking popular districts with the rest of Lima, the so-called *troncales*, were dug up by central government agencies in order to install water pipes, electricity lines, etc. (Barrantes 1991).

15. According to Henry Pease (Pease 1992), the construction of train tracks went ahead in the north and the south of Lima, even before plans had been completed as to how to cross the city centre. In the words of a World Bank representative, quoted by Henry Pease: "El Perú es un país al revés."

16. For a detailed analysis of the financial situation of the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima, see Arnao and Meza (1990), as well as Delgado (1991). Mejía (1990, 161) provides a list of laws and decrees regulating municipal financing from 1980 through 1987.

17. This resulted in seven strikes by unionized municipal employees, which was more than under the previous or the two subsequent city administrations (Pease 1992; Pease 1991, 34). In an interview with the author, Alfonso Barrantes criticized the unions for putting the immediate interests of their members, i.e., their salaries, over the interests of the popular sector as a whole (Barrantes 1991). This view is echoed by Henry Pease: "No jugaron un rol de izquierda los que allí se denominaron izquierdistas. Fue el economismo chato de siempre" (Pease 1991, 34).

18. Chirinos points to three minor advances of Ley No. 23853 over D.L. No. 051: its recognition of the *cabildos abiertos*, albeit in a very limited form and restricted to communities with no more than 3,000 inhabitants, the provision that rural communities formed on the basis of traditional customs can fulfil the functions of municipal agencies, and the right of local governments to consult the inhabitants of their jurisdiction over municipal policy (Chirinos 1991, 98-99).

19. This promise was contained in a proposal for a municipal by-law, which was part of a series of legal norms proposed by Izquierda Unida during the previous years. See Delgado (1982b).

20. As Borja has pointed out, a *minimum* of democratic openness and administrative efficiency on the part of the municipal administration is in fact a central precondition for an expansion of popular participation (Borja 1988b, 26). However, this does not invalidate the statement that popular participation is crucial for any *profound* democratization of local governments.

21. According to Mejía, most provincial municipalities in Peru adhere to the technical-administrative model, whereas most district municipalities, as well as the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima, apply the political model (Mejía 1990, 134).

22. Normally, this process consists of several separate steps (Serrano 1987, 230-231). It begins with the legal recognition of the new settlement, after its outside boundaries have been determined and conflicts with the previous landowner and with adjacent settlements have been resolved. If this is impossible, the settlement is usually relocated to a new site. As a second step, a precise plan of the new settlement is drawn up, which in many cases involves completely redrawing the original boundaries of the individual plots, as well as making provisions for roads, sewers, communal facilities, etc. This second step is usually performed with technical help from the municipality or from NGOs. Subsequently, a detailed census of the inhabitants is taken to determine who actually has the right to remain in the settlement. Only after the completion of this phase and the resolution of outstanding boundary or ownership disputes, land titles to the individual *pobladores* are finally distributed.

23. The Barrantes administration granted 112,000 land titles from 1984 to 1986, as opposed to 46,500 that were given out from 1982 to 1984 under Eduardo Orrego. During the entire period from 1946 to 1980, the central government distributed a mere 25,500 land titles (Castro-Pozo, Iturregui, and Zolezzi 1991, 303).

24. A similar case is the Comisión de Saneamiento Físico-Legal (COSFIL) in the district of El Agustino (Derpich 1986, 105).

25. While local governments technically controlled the use of land in urban areas, the actual process of appropriating unused land for municipal land development schemes was often very complicated. See Castro-Pozo, Iturregui, and Zolezzi (1991, 305-308).

26. My translation.

27. These marches, which were among the largest popular mobilizations of the decade, resulted in the promulgation of Ley No. 24059 on 4 January 1985, which extended the *vaso de leche* programme to all Peruvian municipalities and at the same time reserved funds for it in the national budget. On the negative side, Ley No. 24059 made the programme susceptible to a certain degree of central government control, however, its actual administration remained in the hands of the provincial municipalities.

28. My analysis confirms the results of Carol Graham's study, who notes that the practice of IU compares favourably with subsequent efforts on the part of the

APRA-led national government to establish a political support base in the popular sector. In the case of the PAIT and PAD programmes, which were designed to create temporary employment opportunities in the informal sector, top jobs in the programme administration were often reserved for APRA members, and programme participants were urged to participate in rallies to support APRA leader Alan García (Graham 1991, 123).

29. The best-known example is probably María Elena Moyano, who rose from the ranks of the Federación Popular de Mujeres de Villa El Salvador to become vice-mayor of the district. Ms. Moyano was also a leading member of the Movimiento de Afirmación Socialista (MAS) and a likely future candidate for the Senate, before she was murdered by Sendero Luminoso on 15 February 1992.

30. The *juntas distritales de planeamiento* (district planning boards), which were established towards the end of 1986 and in which representatives of neighbourhood organizations participated together with mayors and councillors in the elaboration of the Plan Director de la Ciudad (i.e., the master plan for the urban development of Lima), suffered the same fate (Pease 1988, 91; Chirinos 1991, 114-115; Iturregui 1990).

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Due to its exploratory nature, my study relies on a series of open-ended, semi-structured interviews with representatives of urban popular movements, political parties, and the local government of the district as its primary source of data. These interviews, which were structured around a common set of questions, were conducted between November 1991 and February 1992 in El Agustino, as well as in the neighbouring district of Santa Anita (for a complete list of those interviewed, see Appendix). Aside from interview data, I have also drawn on participant observation and on printed sources, such as newsletters and material provided by the municipal administration, NGOs operating in the district, and others.

2. José Matos Mar refers to the neighbouring settlement of San Cosme as follows: "Puede afirmarse que desde su origen hasta hoy, San Cosme simboliza la barriada limeña. Por su ubicación, es la primera que causó gran impacto en la opinión pública. Constituyó el primer caso de invasión de la propiedad privada por un organizado movimiento masivo. Está ubicada en un punto obligatorio de entrada para los migrantes de la sierra central y sur del país y alrededor de una zona de gran actividad comercial. La barriada misma se levanta sobre el cerro del mismo nombre que, con El Pino y El Agustino, conforman una serie de colinas que rodean parte del distrito de La Victoria, vecinas a La Parada, los mercados Mayorista y Minorista y el canal de Yerbateros" (Matos Mar 1977, 68).

3. When the new district of Santa Anita was carved out of the existing districts of El Agustino and Ate-Vitarte on 25 October 1989, both of them lost a sizable share of their territory and population in the process.

4. As was mentioned before, according to electoral law, the winning party in municipal elections obtained the mayorship as well as the majority of seats in the municipal council, independently of its share of the popular vote.

5. I am following the chronology provided by Calderón and Valdeavellano (1991, 144-151). Other sources quote slightly different dates, such as CENCA and SEA for the constitution of the MIADE Túpac Amaru (CENCA and SEA n.d., 36). There is also a certain overlap between the three phases, which is due to the fact that the implementation of the project did not always proceed at the same speed.

6. For further data as well as maps of the individual MIADES, see issues no. 24 and no. 35 of *El Agustino: Boletín Municipal*. The entire MIADE Andrés A. Cáceres, as well as most of the MIADE Primero de Mayo later became part of the newly created district of Santa Anita.

7. In her analysis of the financial situation of the municipality of El Agustino, Elsie Guerrero documents a drop of 52% percent in municipal spending between 1988 and 1989, when inflation is taken into account. From 106,239,000 intis in 1988, the municipal expenses nominally rose to 929,268,000 intis in 1989, but in real terms decreased to only 50,031,000 intis (Guerrero n.d., annex 3). This is equivalent to a drop from US\$ 662,750 to US\$ 373,810, calculated on the basis of the annual average of the official exchange rate.

8. SEA worked in the MIADES Zona Plana, Primero de Mayo, and UPMIRR, CENDIPP in the MIADES José Carlos Mariátegui and Cerros Unidos, and CENCA in the MIADE Túpac Amaru.

9. In an interview with the author, Mayor Quintanilla proved to be well aware of the contradiction between the left's new role as part of the political system and its original project of revolutionary change, without, however, indicating ways of solving it: "Antes yo era incendio, ahora soy bombero" (Quintanilla 1991c).

10. The political character of the MIADES project was reaffirmed by Mendoza (1989) in his response to an article by Suárez (1989), who had emphasized the technical merits of the proposal and its value as an urban planning tool.

11. Generally speaking, no political party had strong roots or organizational structures in the district (Escalante 1992; Quintanilla 1991c).

12. Not surprisingly in a climate of resentment following a recent breakup, the political scene in El Agustino is rife with allegations of manipulation not only by the municipality but also by its adversaries. The examples mentioned in this chapter were confirmed in a number of interviews with members of urban popular movements, NGOs, and the local government of the district.

13. In fact, at least according to some accounts, the *promotores* were more loyal to the PUM and therefore more likely to follow its directives than those of the municipal administration. This resulted in conflicts with the mayor, who finally used the municipal budget cuts following the implementation of Fujimori's economic adjustment programme in 1990 as a pretext to severely curtail the staff of the PRODES in 1990, reducing it to only about 10 (Romero 1992).

14. Translation: Most of what the promoters do in the settlements is misinform (the population).

15. Despite the previous pledge to allocated a share of the municipal budget to the FODECO and to let the MIADES decide autonomously over the use of these funds, this posed no major problems. As was mentioned before, the MIADES operated at the margin of the law and were based on nothing more than a resolution by the district council. In practice, the Ley Orgánica de Municipalidades, Ley No. 23853, left all major decision regarding the operation of the municipal administration in the hands of the *alcalde*, especially those related to municipal spending.

16. The following section draws heavily on an interview with Rosario Romero (Romero 1992).

17. It should be noted that in other MIADES, the municipal administration was less successful. In the case of the MIADE UPMIRR, which was considerably more consolidated than José Carlos Mariátegui, the *coordinadora de pueblos* did not receive the same level of support (Estrada 1992), and in the MIADE Cerros Unidos, municipal *promotores* were asked by MIADES president Angel Blas to keep out altogether (Maraví 1992).

18. For example, the SEA had been instrumental in the constitution of many *comedores populares* (Cáceres 1992; Libia 1992) and had later helped to set up the *vaso de leche* committees.

19. Translation: to undercut the leading role of the municipality a little bit.

20. This is not to say that all participants of the CG unequivocally supported a system-immanent strategy. As was mentioned before, the PMR and the MAS considered the CG to be the possible core of a new *frente amplio* or broad front of the left and urban popular movements, and they explicitly stated that they had not abandoned the ultimate goal of popular *autogobierno* or self-government (Confluencia Socialista 1991). What distinguished these actors from the PUM and the municipal administration, however, was the fact that these terms could mean somewhat different things to them. In particular, these actors did not seem to be completely clear on whether a shift to popular self-government would entail a complete break with the existing political system, or "only" an expansion of popular participation and the introduction of some mechanisms of direct democracy alongside those of representative democracy. This ambiguity represents a more general ambivalence within the Peruvian left towards representative democracy. The efforts to obtain legal recognition for the CGs in El Agustino and elsewhere, based on a proposed law tabled on 18 March 1991 in the National Assembly by leftist MP Julio Díaz Palacios, can be seen as an indication that a system-immanent approach was nevertheless dominant. By contrast, the municipal administration refused to seek legal recognition for the MIADES, since this would have meant to recognize the validity of existing laws and to undermine the character of the MIADES as an alternative political project (Atúncar 1992).

21. Several interviewees, often sympathizers of the municipality or the PUM, charged that the NGOs were indeed guilty of politically motivated interference (Atúncar 1992; Casanova 1991; Giraldo and Berna 1992; Quintanilla 1991c). However, most of these accusations were unspecific and are therefore hard to substantiate. The only concrete example mentioned was the case of an urban popular movement leader from the MIADE UPMIRR, who allegedly received a plane ticket for a trip to Spain (Atúncar 1992).

22. I disagree on this point with Delpino and Pásara (1991), who argue that leftist NGOs more or less control urban popular movements and impose their own agendas on them, using their power as financial go-betweens between these movements and foreign donors.

23. During the previous APRA administration under Alan García, the *clubes de madres* had privileged access to government funding via the PAD, as opposed to other women's organizations. According to Ana Martínez, the president of the *clubes de madres* of the neighbouring district of Santa Anita, this did not mean that the *clubes de madres* were open only to APRA supporters, however, their privileged situation resulted in a certain distance between them and the remaining women's organizations (Martínez 1992). This situation changed after the passing of Ley 23507 in February 1991, which allocated the respective resources equally to *clubes de madres*, *comedores populares*, *vaso de leche committees*, and other organizations (Ugarte 1991).

Notes to Conclusion

1. It would go too far at this point to examine these issues in greater detail. See, for example, Delgado (1994).

2. Interestingly, the literature has only recently begun to recognize that the political and economic exclusion of the popular majorities poses a problem for democratic consolidation (Mainwaring 1992; O'Donnell 1992).

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