

Participatory Security: Citizen Security, Participation, and the Inequities of Citizenship in Urban Peru

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This article discusses a model of local governance referred to here as ‘participatory security’, in which citizens are held responsible for maintaining urban security by participating in municipal programmes. I argue that the goals of universal ‘inclusion’ through democratic ‘participation’ are undermined by political ideologies espousing both rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Through ethnographic cases from highland Peru, in which city centre neighbourhoods and peripheral zones are expected to participate in markedly different fashions, I demonstrate how the discourse of responsibilities translates into differential participation and effectively institutionalises the layered imbalances of urban citizenship in new and highly consequential ways.

Keywords: citizen security, political participation, democracy, inequality, Ayacucho, Peru.

Glossy posters hanging in district municipal offices in the highland provincial capital of Ayacucho, Peru, continuously remind visitors of the governing national policies of ‘citizen participation’ (Figure 1). The cartoonish cast of characters – generically representing a culturally (and presumably socially) diverse but united nation – is involved in what can only be assumed to be ‘labouring for the good of the community’. Displayed through an assortment of font, colour, italics, and bold prints, the text reads: ‘I exercise my citizenship with responsibility. I fulfil my *duties* and demand my *rights*!’. This deceptively simple and potent declarative statement also seems to suggest that this communal labour – framed as a literal embodiment of citizenship – is also essential to the health of the nation and its common good. The imagery and the text, together, further emphasise the explicit ways in which current models of governance tie democratic responsibility to the twin concepts of *derechos y deberes* (the rights and duties of citizenship).

The appropriation and modification of civil participation to emphasise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship has been particularly effective as an official political strategy within Peru’s contemporary apparatus of Seguridad Ciudadana (Citizen Security). These new national policies and local ordinances implicate the entire community in the duties of maintaining urban security, circulating the rhetoric of shared responsibility through abundant government slogans such as *Seguridad Ciudadana, Tarea de*

Figure 1. 'Derechos y Deberes' Poster Displayed in the Jesús Nazareno District Municipality



Source: photo by author.

Notes: The words 'exercise', 'citizenship', and 'responsibility' are in bold font; 'citizenship', 'duties', and 'rights' are in red.

Todos '(Citizen Safety, Everybody's Task)'. On the surface, the participatory turn in contemporary processes of urbanisation seems to extend and deepen the reach of urban citizenship. The ideology that drives participatory security programmes asserts that by participating in local governance, all citizens are capable of shaping, cultivating, and securing their own community's well-being. Participating in urban governance, it is implied, in turn strengthens a universal urban citizenship.

In this article, I analyse ethnographic cases of inequitable community participation in Ayacucho's municipal security programmes, and I use these to challenge the official conception of citizenship that presumes an idealised and uncomplicated equation by which democratic rights and responsibilities assure social equality and inclusion. These municipal security programmes are part of an emerging model of what I call *participatory security*: a broad political strategy for governing urban security through the mechanisms of democratic participation. The term participatory security is intended to draw attention to the complicated relationships between the doctrines of citizen security and the philosophies underpinning participatory democracy. Through contrasting experiences of participation, I demonstrate how participatory security programmes instead project unequal expectations upon diverse urban communities. The remarkable geography of participation that has emerged in Ayacucho as a result does not simply mean that peripheral and centre communities organise and participate separately; it means that they participate differently. Moreover, only after participating in these particular ways are marginal communities able to demand and receive the attention of the municipal security apparatus.

The language of participation is not entirely new to Peru; it was converted into everyday currency through a complex trajectory of governmental aid policies designed by highly centralised governments, particularly those of Juan Velasco (1968–1975) and Alberto Fujimori (1990–2000). However, as detailed below, the contemporary democratic model is distinguished by the explicit incorporation of citizen responsibilities and duties. These unequal responsibilities are carefully evaluated within municipal decisions about the allocation of finite resources. Assessing the possibility of municipal support for security work in the city's outlying areas, for example, then-director of Citizen Security, José Antonio Antezana, stated categorically: 'but first, we want to see that the population and the neighbourhood organisations meet their responsibilities as citizens' (interview, 2007). Accordingly, in order for communities in the urban periphery to fully benefit from government services for urban security – ranging from police support to municipal radios – they were first expected to participate in security efforts, most notably through their own manual labour.

Alongside the ideology of inclusion, 'participation' simultaneously functions as a strong organisational model, not only of governmental tasks and priorities but also of social differences, extending the well-worn paths of class and racial divides. As Ayacucho's local security officials define the role of civil participation in their programmes, they differentiate responsibilities based on an assumed divide between the spatially compact city centre (referred to as the *casco urbano*) and the sprawling peripheral districts (referred to as the city's 'belt', the *cinturón de la ciudad*). While this divide between city centre and urban periphery is partially a logistical component of localised neighbourhood organisation within the participatory system, it is also a heavily ideological divide permeated by histories of social inequality. Although some surprising alliances emerge in the new social contours of these participatory security programmes, the centre/periphery divide is a powerful – and uncontested – organising principle in large part because it mirrors the politically potent and deeply ingrained social differentiations well-known to the region: a city centre inhabited by the traditional urban elite, and a much more expansive periphery, the marginal urban zones that swelled in size as they incorporated the thousands of rural migrants during and after Peru's internal war with the Maoist insurgent group Shining Path (1980–2000). Thus the communities that are geographically peripheral to the city's historic centre are also marked as socially marginal, associated by those in power with the indigenous, Quechua-speaking, rural hinterlands rather than the historical networks of regional power emanating from the city. Lacking roots within the urban power structures, these migrants are in turn marked as recent urban citizens. This narrative of the social and political history of the city continues to shape the expectations for the marginalised peripheral communities: held differentially responsible for undesirable urban changes, including increased urban insecurity, these populations are in turn expected to participate differentially to solve those urban problems. Layered onto this troubled narrative is Ayacucho's profound stigma as the birthplace of the Shining Path. This history catapulted the city into a symbolically significant position in the country's perceptions of insecurity, and thus into a unique role in the development of national policies regarding civil participation in urban security measures.

Contrary to the glossy images and slogans depicting a nation labouring together for the common good, the unequal labour of participation expected within Ayacucho's participatory security programmes results in communities and individuals that embody citizenship differently, both literally and figuratively. José Bengoa pointedly observed that 'the map of exclusion goes hand-in-hand with the map of citizen security'

(Bengoa, 2000: 53); in fact, I argue that the inequitable map of citizenship becomes further entrenched through these participatory security programmes. Rather than universalism and inclusivity, we see how the practices of ‘participation’ instead foster relationships that much more closely resemble the disjunctive citizenship identified by Holston and Caldeira (1998) and Holston and Appadurai (1999). I argue that the rhetoric of citizenship being deployed in these security programmes – in which urban communities are said to possess duties or responsibilities – is deeply divisive to the urban social and political fabric of the city, and effectively institutionalises social inequality through the established paths of participation.

Urban Security and Civil Participation in Ayacucho

The concept of *seguridad ciudadana* (citizen security) appeared across Latin America in the late 1990s, broadly encompassing ‘threats to public, social, and political order posed by rising common crime and fear of crime’ (Neild, 1999: 1). In Peru, *seguridad ciudadana* stood alone as an organising principle by 2003, when it became national politics through the creation of the National Citizen Security System (Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Ciudadana, SINASEC) (Congreso de la República del Perú, 2003), mandating the formation of local offices and committees throughout the country. Around the same time, the United Nations was embracing the new concept of human security, defined as freedom from want and freedom from fear (Commission on Human Security, 2003). Although the concept of *seguridad ciudadana*, at least as formulated in Peru, was less abstract than that of human security, and intended to address urban crime and violence in a more direct way, they both mark a sharp departure from traditional policies of state or national security. The re-conceptualised social and political keyword of citizen security was encoded with other concepts of freedom and universal rights, and positioned to represent the concrete as well as intangible elements of the public good.

Perhaps even more significant, Peru’s model of citizen security was fundamentally inseparable from the simultaneous reformulation of *participación ciudadana* (citizen participation): the soul of the citizen security paradigm involved not just a shift to emphasise individual securities but, more importantly, an ideology of collective responsibility and organisation under a transitional democracy. This new paradigm for governing urban security champions a model of participatory democracy that frames the tasks of governance as shared responsibilities between government institutions and local citizens. Indeed, the team who originally designed the country’s citizen security paradigm held as a guiding principle that ‘without the participation of the citizenry, insecurity cannot be confronted’ (Costa and Basombrío Iglesias, 2004: 68). By referring to this new paradigm as *participatory security*, I highlight the deep ideological, philosophical, and legislative connections that were forged between the nascent Citizen Security System and the popular ideals of democratic participation.

As in other Latin American countries (cf. Estévez, 2001; Dammert, 2006), the development of Peru’s National Citizen Security System was accompanied by significant institutional developments, with newly defined organisational structures and broad-stroke policies. The redirected priorities and configurations channel the allocation of resources and, equally important, work to mobilise different political actors and establish particular social and political relationships. As such, citizen security is much more than a doctrine (a set of political beliefs, priorities, and laws); it is formalised and institutionalised as a government system (a set of concrete political imperatives and

structured relationships). As both doctrine and system, Peru's citizen security apparatus is highly significant precisely because it was intentionally imagined and designed to promote the new national priority of democratic participation. The momentum gained by the model of participatory security, however, was facilitated by deep historical intersections between urban social organisation and the missions of urban security. This was particularly true for Ayacucho, with its unique relationship between participation and security.

A foundational moment in the development of Peru's official discourse of 'participation' was president Juan Velasco's participatory revolution (1968–1975), complete with slogans such as 'A Society in Full Participation' and a national agency (Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social, SINAMOS) charged with promoting participation in government programmes (cf. Franco, 1975; Dietz, 1998; Stokes, 1995). Two decades later, Alberto Fujimori's government (1990–2000) rejuvenated a complex system of participation through aid programmes that were aimed predominantly at calming the increasingly aggressive demands for basic services in marginalised communities (cf. Burt, 2004; Remy, 2005; Schönwälder, 2002). The current model of democratic participation is imagined in stark contrast to the policies of Fujimori and his predecessors: instead of what critics refer to as *asistencialismo*, (dependence upon temporary band-aid hand-outs), it is said to give citizens – especially in marginal neighbourhoods – a political and social obligation to take control of the betterment of their community.

With the country embroiled in a protracted internal war with Shining Path, Fujimori's articulation of participatory programmes established a complex relationship with concerns of security. Under the guise of security and social order, Fujimori's centralised government initially tightened their control over popular organisations by infiltrating local groups, arresting youth suspected of gang activity, and launching accusations of terrorism against the most radical civil organisations. In later years, Fujimori began to modify this policy, co-opting local organisations by constructing clientelistic relationships with the centralised state (Blondet and Trivelli, 2004). As Fujimori's popularity began to wane at the end of his second term, his government recalibrated the link between security and popular participation in local governance. Specifically, by reshaping the rhetoric of social pacification, Fujimori devised programmes to incorporate local communities into security policies through neighbourhood organisations. In this process, Ayacucho's local history of neighbourhood organisation diverges sharply with that documented in Lima and other parts of the country. Central to the new security plans was an aggressive campaign to recognise the indispensable role of the *rondas campesinas* (peasant patrols) in the internal conflict. Simultaneously, however, the government was systematically disarming these organisations. As part of this delicate dance, Fujimori developed a semi-experimental programme creating *rondas urbanas* (urban patrols), in which city neighbourhoods were militarily trained to protect security and order in their own communities. The country's first formally recognised urban ronda was registered in Ayacucho's 'Covadonga' shantytown (Vivas, 1999). While the organisational model for these urban programmes drew directly from the experiences with the rural rondas, featuring rotating community patrols and local justice, the formalised programmes in Ayacucho were distinguished by an expanded working relationship with the Peruvian military (interviews with interviewee 1, 2004; interviewee 3, 2004). With rigorous training by military leaders, young men could count two years of service to their community's *ronda* as fulfilment of their obligatory military service. However, in 1999, military service was made voluntary and almost instantaneously a core incentive for participation in the urban *rondas* was removed.

In Ayacucho, the 1999 change in military code coincided with local municipal legislation officially implementing the formation of '*juntas vecinales*' (neighbourhood organisations) (proposed nationally in 1981). Within a couple of years, the new organisational model replaced the short-lived *ronda* experiment. Unlike the *rondas*, who responded to military command, the new *juntas* receive minimal support from municipal offices and the National Police, and largely function autonomously and democratically. For many local *ronda urbana* leaders, reorganising into the new system of *juntas vecinales* was a disillusion, as they were rendered completely powerless and unsupported (interviews with interviewee 2, 2004; interviewee 5, 2005).

The new urban *junta vecinal* structure extended the legislation establishing municipal offices of Neighbourhood Participation and Citizen Participation. Together, this legislative package formalised the relationships between neighbourhood organisations and municipal institutions. As such, it facilitated the mandate of the National Citizen Security System, according to which provincial citizen security committees must 'promote the organisation of *juntas vecinales* in their jurisdiction'. Locally, Ayacucho's Provincial Citizen Security Committee stated definitively that its objective, vision, and mission all serve to reduce common crime and hazards with the participation of civil society (Comité Provincial de Seguridad Ciudadana, 2004). The alliances between new and existing programmes and institutions of participation were crucial to the impact that the new participatory security paradigm had on the government's efforts to redefine urban citizenship as dependent upon collective efforts to promote and maintain security, now identified squarely within the realm of the 'public good'.

Where the contemporary language of participation differs markedly from previous legislation is in the symbolic emphasis on democratic responsibilities, or on the rights and duties of citizenship. This conscientious politics of citizen responsibilities hinges upon what are considered the vestiges of populism lingering in previous conceptualisations of participation as merely rights that citizens could demand. The legal parameters of citizen participation have been modified to emphasise that citizens have rights and government has responsibility, but also that government responsibility has limits and citizens have responsibilities. When this philosophy of citizen rights and responsibilities is put into practice, governmental participation programmes can be leveraged as a means of transference of political responsibility from government agencies to civil organisations. This is similar to what Julia Paley refers to as the 'paradoxes of participation' (Paley, 2001), in which participation motivates a population by providing a sense of meaning to citizenship while simultaneously limiting public action. In this way, participation can function as a hegemonic control mechanism by which governments – sometimes deliberately – alleviate themselves of certain responsibilities by expecting civil organisations to carry out those tasks.

Despite well-meaning and democratic intentions, the powerful ideology of the common good was, in practice, anything but common, since the inequitable allocation of rights corresponds directly to the inequitable allocation of responsibility to solve problems of urban insecurity. Official slogans claiming that citizen security is everybody's task explicitly position both citizen participation and urban security as critical components to the country's democratic transition. As Jorge Antonio Antezana, Ayacucho's then-director of Citizen Security explained, he saw his primary responsibility to be not only eliminating insecurity in the city but, in fact, making the population aware of (*concientizar*) their democratic responsibilities as citizens (interview, 2007). These democratic responsibilities are not universal, however, since citizen participation is valued and promoted differently across urban neighbourhoods.

As evident in the ethnographic scenes analysed below, the relationship between the rights and responsibilities of citizenship becomes increasingly unequal through the very definition of urban insecurity as a social problem, and as connections are drawn between causal responsibility for the insecurity and political responsibility for solving it (cf. Gusfield, 1981: 12). A core principle of Ayacucho's local participatory security programmes is that in addition to punitive control measures, any successful long-term strategy primarily involves prevention. Prevention, as formulated by the Provincial Municipality, includes everything from coordinated patrols to public awareness campaigns aimed at recuperating values and cultivating a culture of peace (cf. Comité Provincial de Seguridad Ciudadana, 2004; interview with G. Miranda Gutiérrez, 2007). As the urban periphery is continually assumed to be the cause for the city's security crisis, these marginalised communities are held disproportionately responsible for the tasks of prevention, such as performing night patrols and constructing their own community centres. City centre organisations, meanwhile, are engaged in the repressive measures of securing order, such as observing police interventions, filing police reports, and holding officials publicly accountable for enforcing laws. The mechanisms of the participatory security apparatus – which distinguish repressive and preventative strategies – grate against the idealistic goals of universal integration into urban society by differentially allocating the 'responsibilities' of urban citizenship.

Ethnography of 'Participatory Security'

Enforcing Security in the Urban Periphery

On a sunny Sunday morning in 2005, hundreds of residents of Los Olivos, one of the sprawling neighbourhoods on the far southeast side of the city, were gathered for a *faena* (communal work party). They were preparing a newly-acquired dirt plot for the construction of a community centre, and it was dusty and hot as they worked with picks and shovels, women and men, young and old, together (Figure 2).

After several hours, the president of the Residents' Association called an end to the heavy labour and began a general meeting of the relatively new neighbourhood organisation. As the group formed a circle, the president launched into a plea for greater participation from the neighbourhood members in the affairs of the association. He reminded them emphatically of the risks associated with being community leaders trying to 'do something for our zone'. They received frequent threats and 'could die at any moment', he said, and they needed everybody to get involved (*meter la mano*), to demonstrate dedication, commitment, enthusiasm, and 'love'. Today is not like yesteryear, he continued, when 'everything was obligation and punishment' from community elders. Today 'we live in a democracy', and the wellbeing of Los Olivos depends not upon a few leaders but upon the voluntary labour 'for the pueblo', with everybody participating enthusiastically.

Los Olivos reaches into the most marginalised geographic corners of the city, one of the many urban expanses that were barely illuminated at night and serviced by only a few wide and dusty unpaved arteries. It is located in the district municipality of San Juan Bautista, infamous for its reputation as the most dangerous district of the city. Central on the agenda that day was a discussion about strategies that Los Olivos could adopt for guaranteeing security. This agenda was propelled by the emotional appeals of the young man who worked as the sole night patrol for the zone, 'risking his life' in

Figure 2. *Faena* (Work Party) to Construct a Community Centre, Los Olivos



Source: photo by author.

confrontations every night with gang members and drunks. He had come to the meeting because his boss refused to pay him, saying that residents of Los Olivos were not paying their monthly quota for the security service. By the end of the meeting the options were clear: either community members could vote to pay monthly quotas to continue hiring the security service, or they could opt to organise themselves in nightly patrols for their own neighbourhood security, as they had done for years in the past and as other areas continued to do.

Throughout the conversation, the two options were repeatedly framed within the discourse of responsibility and the need to organise in order to fight for their own community's needs. The representative of the municipality's security forces (and fellow resident) explained in detail how it was up to residents to use the whistles provided by the municipality when there was a problem, to 'surround a thief from all sides so he can't escape'. Someone else grabbed a two-way radio provided by the municipality and called the central command to demonstrate that they indeed worked. Nonetheless, another member in charge of neighbourhood security warned: 'we can't wait for the authorities to take care of our problems, everybody has to help, don't wait for the whip to be thrown like old times!'

Underlying the security meeting was the assumption that local problems will not be solved by the municipality or other government institutions. Police and district *serenazgo* (security forces) were viewed as only secondary affairs – they are necessary for subsequent formal procedures but cannot be relied upon for the critical tasks of protecting the neighbourhood and assuring security and order. Residents of Los Olivos are proud of their past successes in reducing the common crime and gang activities that were rampant in the early years, when it was first populated and considered a no-man's land. They now claimed to have not a single active gang in their zone, having instead incorporated former members into the community's many grassroots organisations and

youth groups. Moreover, in the eyes of local organisers, this success was achieved largely through their own efforts, with minimal outside assistance.

The security practices discussed in this Los Olivos meeting fit squarely into municipal conceptions of ideal forms of participation. The high value placed upon these activities reflects the local government's broader approach to civil participation, in which local control is an integral part of the 'participatory security' strategies. In the world of circulating statistics about insecurity in Ayacucho, one of the most-repeated concerned the 300 police officers allocated for the entire metropolitan city. This dreadfully small police force was barely enough, the argument went, for protecting the city centre and it was certainly not sufficient to reach the peripheral areas. Thus the city relied heavily upon district security forces, but these were equally undersized: San Juan Bautista was home to over 35,000 residents but boasted only six individuals in their district *serenazgo*. Chronically under-staffed, district security forces in turn depended upon the kind of coordinated local security work (mainly at night) that was being negotiated in the Los Olivos meeting.

San Juan Bautista was the first district in the city to establish a *serenazgo* force in 1998, two years before the provincial municipality established theirs (Municipalidad Provincial de Huamanga, 2000). From its initial conception, it was designed to function as a joint effort between the municipality and organised civil groups. The whistles and radios given to the Association in Los Olivos were examples of the precious resources that the provincial municipality reserved for the most trusted and depended-upon neighbourhood organisations. Nonetheless, persistent funding gaps in municipal security programmes continue to be filled by coordinated grassroots work, particularly through neighbourhood-organised fundraisers to purchase the additional supplies necessary to outfit their night patrols (interview with interviewee 4, 2005). In fact, initially all district residents were required to pay monthly dues for the security operation (*La Calle*, 1998), and the specific amount varied according to the individual's residency zone.

These governmental policies officially mandating community security work were designed around a powerful belief in the direct correlations between those marginal communities and the city's insecurity. As common crime and gangs emerged in the city's public consciousness in the late 1990s, it was immediately associated with the *barrios* (the expanding marginal communities largely populated by then-recent migrants to the city), and the torn social fabric resulting from the years of civil war with the Shining Path (cf. Vergara Figueroa and Condori Castillo, 2007). The prevalence at that time of this association is evident in the inaugural issue of a local magazine, which included statements from 'people on the street' about youth crime: 'It all originates in the barrios[...]. They are the culprits of this social disgrace[...]. There didn't used to be delinquents' (Somos, 1997). Reminiscent of racist ideologies linking rural and indigenous peoples to inherently non-rational, instinctive, and often violent behaviour (cf. Poole, 1994; de la Cadena, 2000), the urban poor are also portrayed as perpetuating lawlessness (cf. Aguirre, 2005; Goldstein, 2004). In other words, it is not simply that youth delinquents live in the outlying neighbourhoods but that those peripheral – marginal – neighbourhoods produce delinquency and other social disgraces. Peripheral neighbourhoods are, in this way, ideologically, socially, and politically marked as causally responsible for the city's public safety problems. This logic asserts that because the urban periphery is the source of the city's insecurity, its residents hold a unique responsibility to solve the security problems through the preventative measures of the citizen security apparatus. Limited budgets notwithstanding, the coordinated relationships between grassroots organisations and government security programmes

institutionalise pervasive and long-standing forms of discrimination and marginalisation precisely because of the expectations that marginalised communities participate by enforcing urban security through their own manual labour, from building community centres to performing night patrols.

Paradoxically, the same stereotypes linking marginalised communities to the city's torn social fabric further justified discriminatory security policies by suggesting that this unequal system was more effective at maintaining security. Specifically, these prejudices informed a common belief that organisations in the periphery are better organised, more committed, and more motivated to participate. Reflecting an ideology about poor communities and migrant populations, the theory suggests that residents of the peripheral neighbourhoods need to organise in order to survive, or that they organise because they have more to lose than the complacent city centre residents. An urban version of the essentialised characteristics of *lo andino* adds a further overlay, providing a pseudo-historical justification for over-reliance on local labour in the urban periphery. This is plainly visible in the 2001 legislation launching the Participation of Neighbourhood Self-Development Organisations (Municipalidad Provincial de Huamanga, 2001). Through the language of underdevelopment in marginalised communities, this ordinance celebrates the virtues of a hardworking population with high moral and ethical virtues who are concerned about the wellbeing of the community, and stipulates that the foundation of the self-development work carried out in peripheral neighbourhoods is communal work, or obligatory active participation in the *faenas* (work parties) and *jornadas* (scheduled shifts) as well as participating actively in the work of citizen security.

Given the long history of antagonism in Peru between civil organisations in marginalised urban areas and the various local and national government entities, it might seem ironic, at first glance, that the civic activities found in the peripheral neighbourhoods, such as Los Olivos are, at least in certain contexts, considered such exemplary forms of participation. Indeed, a common line of argument in Ayacucho reasons that civil organisations in peripheral areas (such as communal kitchens or Mothers' Clubs) were converted by Fujimori into mere distributors of centralised clientelist government control, recycling the misery through populist relationships. Within NGO and government sectors, meanwhile, these organisations are framed as examples par excellence of the possibilities and potentials of democracy to incorporate *barrio* residents in governance through participatory venues (cf. Blondet and Trivelli, 2004). Yet another line of analysis argues that the democratically elected government of Alejandro Toledo (2001–2006) sought to disassociate these aid programmes from previous populist politics by eliminating the payouts to participants; in so doing, an ideology espousing that it is not good to simply give handouts to the poor was transformed into the expectation that poor urban residents (and women in particular) should volunteer their time to projects aimed at improving their neighbourhoods (Mortensen, 2010).

The legislative manoeuvres mandating coordination with local organisations in the periphery amount to the official outsourcing of the most demanding and risky work of urban security to residents of the urban periphery. In the process, the political responsibility to solve the city's problems is formally passed directly to these already-marginalised communities. With resources and infrastructure stretched beyond their limits, government officials and institutions make selective decisions in the implementation of security measures. As a direct result, security is simply not guaranteed an equal right of urban citizenship: the city centre often receives disproportionate services from official security forces while security in the periphery is outsourced to community members themselves. In the overall implementation of municipal security

measures, a critical factor is the official assessment of a given community's own participation in the security efforts, their own embodied practice of security. This unequal logic of participation is rationalised through the presumed correlation between cause for the insecurity and the political responsibility to solve insecurity; it is justified further through cultural arguments about the presumed organisational abilities and needs of communities in the urban periphery. I argue that this pattern eventually institutionalises marginality within the official practices of participatory security in Ayacucho: communities on the social, economic, and geographic margins are expected to govern their own security, to volunteer their own time and bodies. As we will see in continuation, the same is not expected of the urban elite in the city centre.

Documenting Insecurity in the City Centre

Just one day after Ayacucho's provincial municipality declared a 90-day 'Citizen Security Emergency' in September, 2004, resulting from violence attributed to the city's nightlife scene, government officials carried out the latest in a long stream of interventions to forcefully close several unlicensed nightclubs. The clubs in question were concentrated along the first two blocks of Jirón Asamblea, radiating out from the city's historic main plaza. Following explicit and emphatic requests from municipal officials coordinating the closures, a group of women from the area's *junta vecinal* took a public stand, holding signs and chanting outside the clubs being closed. Towards the end of the operation, while the State Attorney for Crime Prevention was finishing his report and the police were still on guard, the president of the neighbourhood organisation was allegedly held at knife-point by an infamous club owner, who threatened her life if she continued to press for closures.

The next morning seven members of the *junta vecinal* (neighbourhood council) went to file an official report with formal testimonies in the State Attorney General's Office (*Fiscalía*). One at a time, the women took a seat at a large metal desk crammed into the small room and gave their testimonies. The rest waited on the balcony overlooking the colonial courtyard, recounting the previous night's events and sharing their own stories. Despite the scripted quality to their narratives, it was clear that their personal stories had not yet circulated within their newly-formed organisation, and although most of them were long-time residents of the highly concentrated neighbourhood, they hardly knew one another.

The *junta* members also intended to talk personally with Jaime Cuadros, the Fiscal who was present during the incident, hoping to include his testimony in their report. They were polite but relentless as they returned time after time to request an appointment, and were repeatedly turned away by his secretary. When Fiscal Cuadros eventually invited them in, he was cordial but adamant that he would not provide a testimony, and defensive against their pleas. As they stressed the risks that they ran as common citizens he interjected continuously, reminding them that he was also at risk: 'All of us there last night exposed ourselves, not just you'. The women reiterated that 'we are witness to [these problems] and we are here fighting on behalf of the whole community (*pueblo*)', but Fiscal Cuadros snapped back: 'do you think I'm not working?' The conversation ended abruptly, dissatisfying for all parties.

Within the broad participatory security mission, Jirón Asamblea and other city centre neighbourhood organisations were periodically invited to make visible appearances such as this at municipal events and operations, participating through the act of 'witnessing' or 'being present' (*presenciar*). In stark contrast to the participation described for Los

Olivos, these city centre residents were expected to participate purely through their presence in official activities, and not through more direct labour or involvement. *Junta* members, all the same, considered this to be a risk they took for the 'good' of the city, and they insisted that this role was crucial to the municipality's success. As they explained to Fiscal Cuadros, '[The mayor] told us that our presence was important [during the police intervention]. That's the only reason that we were there!'

Members of this *junta*, like most members of city centre neighbourhood organisations, occupied historically influential structural positions in the city's society, through which they were socially, politically, and economically capable of putting considerable pressure on specific authorities. Members often had familial ties to specific acting officials or relationships with governing political parties and they often had extensive experience with the hierarchies and infrastructure of local government, comfortably and confidently moving around the offices scattered throughout the city centre. They could also apply pressure through the very public and powerful medium of the media, since as prominent families, important local business owners, and respected professionals, their complaints and accusations appeared frequently in print, radio, and television news, and they had the funds to finance personal announcements.

Despite wielding significant public pressure as individuals, however, once organised into a new *junta vecinal* they had far less influence, and members often felt that their efforts were futile and that they were not taken seriously. More palpable still was the sense that the role of city centre *juntas* in the city's security controversies, and the associated risks, went unacknowledged, even by governing officials such as the Fiscal. As with other expectations and evaluations of civil involvement in urban security, the reasons behind this specific relationship can be sourced to the prevailing conceptions of 'participation' within government programmes.

As in the scene described, the principle actions of this *junta vecinal* involved a particular category of formalised interactions with state institutions: filing continuous official documents in government offices, such as complaints (*denuncias*, *reclamos*) or demands (*solicitudes*, *memoriales*). While some of their complaints were against other members of civil society (nightclub owners, in this case), the vast majority of complaints were against specific government officials for not enforcing municipal resolutions and ordinances and for not carrying out official duties. Parallel to these formal complaints, they also launched a powerful campaign for municipal accountability, demanding that officials commit themselves to achieving citizen security. This type of citizen vigilance is widely endorsed by many NGOs as a crucial tool of democratic participation, fulfilling the abstract civil responsibility to hold government authorities accountable.

Not surprisingly, inside the municipal offices, participation is defined through another set of criteria, and vigilance as practised by the city centre organisations is perceived as an obstacle to valuable collaboration and a hindrance to realising the municipality's broad agenda of citizen security. Actions such as filing reports and demands are regarded not as legitimate forms of participation, but instead as markers of disillusionment and discouragement. Likewise, accusations by officials that residents of the city centre don't participate in citizen security programmes because they have become too complacent served to deflect attention away from the antagonism with which city centre organisations met government officials, and highlighted instead that these *juntas* did not follow the municipality's priorities in identifying citizen security concerns. As a result, these formally registered *juntas vecinales* received *no* institutional support (logistical or material) from civil participation programmes. Alexi Avilez, then-director of the municipal office of Neighbourhood Participation, justified this decision

very explicitly by observing that they were too limited to their singular concern over nightlife and did not work for 'citizen safety at every level' (interview, 2005), meaning that they did not share the same set of priorities outlined in the provincial municipality's 41 identified factors for insecurity in the city. As long as the city centre neighbourhood organisations did not share these priorities, and participate in the municipality's agenda, then they would receive no municipal support, they would be hard pressed for warm welcomes from officials, and theirs would not be considered an exemplary form of civil participation. In practice, within the participatory security programmes, participation is framed as virtually synonymous with positive collaboration in the implementation of municipal strategies and physical enforcement of urban security.

Although officials wished that the city centre organisations shared the municipality's citizen security agenda, and they were sometimes exasperated by the absence of residents when the going got tough, in practice there were concrete limits to what was expected or needed from city centre residents and organisations. They were only invited to participate to the extent that they could be present in municipal operations; very unlike organisations in the urban periphery, city centre residents were not expected to take more direct physical action in the realm of citizen security, such as manual labour or performing night rounds to watch over their neighbourhoods themselves. By contrast, such expectations were held of neighbourhood organisations in peripheral areas such as Los Olivos.

The stark contrast between the participation of city centre *juntas vecinales* and the organisations in peripheral communities clearly demonstrates how participation is narrowly defined and differentially valued – a far cry from the idealised goals of inclusive citizenship and transparent governance. Instead, with city centre residents participating through indirect security activities (such as witnessing police interventions) and the peripheral community participating directly and physically through manual labour and night patrols, these urban communities are actively embodying inequitable citizenship. In other words, the discrepancies in how forms of participation are valued serve to institutionalise inequality by placing disproportionate responsibility upon marginalised communities. Only by first fulfilling those asymmetrical expectations can peripheral communities lay full claim to one of the most talked-about (and elusive) rights of urban citizenship: urban security and safety.

Conclusion: Disjunctures of Participatory Citizenship

'The Achilles heel of communal prevention programmes', wrote Lucía Dammert, is the 'tendency towards exclusion, creating a threatening "other", stigmatised as dangerous and allegedly legitimised by the community' (Dammert, 2005: 3). Although Dammert concluded that this tendency can be countered through 'the design of inclusive politics of participation in initiatives that generate higher quality of life for all citizens', I have presented instances in which participatory initiatives have had exactly the opposite outcome. By translating geographies of causal and political responsibility for urban insecurity into geographies of participation, what I refer to as the participatory security paradigm has preserved the stigmatised role of the dangerous 'other' and thus actively reinscribed existing social distinctions. Furthermore, through these practices, pervasive disjunctures in urban citizenship are continually naturalised, depoliticised, and institutionalised in newly consequential ways.

Writing about urban security in Bolivia, Daniel Goldstein described how international discourses of rights and security appeared contradictory to urban residents of Cochabamba's outlying *barrios*, many of whom demonised the discourse of human rights as protecting criminals and thus preventing long-term security. The 'Citizen Security' model was, in this context, intended to strike a new balance: 'rather than pitting rights against security, *seguridad ciudadana* acknowledges security to be a right, guaranteed by the state to its citizens' (Goldstein, 2007: 59). While the dominant national and international democratic paradigms present urban security as a right of citizenship, we have seen here that this right is not necessarily an inalienable one guaranteed by the state; in some instances, official programmes of participatory security have redirected security to be an earned right of citizenship. Accentuated through glossy posters espousing that democratic citizenship involves both rights as well as responsibilities, the 'participatory security' apparatus is essentially pitting rights directly against security. In essence, only the citizens who fulfil their duties – as defined by the official institutions overseeing urban security – are then eligible to have their demands prioritised and respected by those same institutions, or, ultimately, to exercise their rights as urban citizens. This is nowhere clearer than in the careful words of Ayacucho's then-director of Citizen Security: 'any citizen who fulfils his duties is *more than welcome* to exercise his rights' (interview with J. A. Antezana, 2007, emphasis in original).

All of this leads to some rather provocative conclusions. First, not only is security itself not an unconditional right guaranteed equally to all citizens (in spite of governmental rhetoric and glossy posters), but the official assessment of a community's participatory commitment was leveraged in a tight calculation of differential, and differentially earned, rights to municipal support for maintaining urban security. As a consequence of imbalanced and exclusionary geographies of participation, such contemporary security programmes are hardly better at responding to the priorities and needs of marginalised urban residents, let alone bringing about a radical change towards more inclusionary citizenship. Instead, long-standing social and economic differences are paradoxically brought to life through democratic programmes of participation in local governance. Specifically, these inequalities are ingrained through the civic philosophy asserting that democratic rights are predicated upon meeting certain responsibilities.

The idealism of democratic participation is highly seductive, offering the potential for egalitarianism or horizontality, inclusive cooperation, and the dream that social inequalities can be remedied, or at least minimised. The disparities in the forms of participation examined in this article are not simply examples of an imperfect system failing to meet an attainable goal of inclusivity. Rather, they illuminate some of the precise mechanisms by which the ideals of democratic inclusion in public governance are systematically overpowered by the promotion of disparate forms of participation. In fact, these disparities are only the most current incarnation in a history of formal relationships with government entities that foster asymmetrical involvement and incorporation of neighbourhood organisations. These experiences also remind us how highly misleading it would be to suggest that participation can ever be fully inclusive and equal; it is by nature filtered through layers of historical relationships and experiences, and as such it is highly exclusionary. The imbalanced expectations of duties and responsibilities – of embodied commitment and physical action – mask entrenched social and economic inequalities. In effect, the contemporary model of democratic citizenship has reframed the terms of marginalisation through the very practices of participation.

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