WHO DECIDES AND WHO PROVIDES?

The Anarchistic Housing Practices of John Turner as Realisations of Henri Lefebvre's Autogestive Space.

Alternatives: Global, Local, Political

Richard Bower

ABSTRACT

This paper re-frames the work of participatory development architect John Turner in 1960s Peru as a practical realisation of the political potential of autogestive space advocated in Henri Lefebvre's post-Marxist discourse. An analysis of the anarchistic politics that underpin Turner's participatory development reveals a critical intersection of autogestion and informal space, and subsequently a questioning of the socio-spatial resonances of anarchist practices and Marxist theories. This analysis is exemplified by the critical re-framing of Lefebvre's much cited proposition of 'The (Social) Production of (Social) Space' against Turner's anarchist questioning of 'Who Decides and Who Provides?'

KEYWORDS

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This essay critically intersects aspects of the informal and anarchistic housing practices that underpin the urbanisation of the Global South with the Marxist concept of autogestion and worker self-management of economies. This critique is specifically explored through a comparison of the participatory housing practices of John Turner and Henri Lefebvre's spatial interpretation of autogestion and 'the (social) production of (social) space'.[1] This comparison straddles geographical distinctions of Global North and Global South,[2] as well as assumed divisions between Marxist and anarchist principles.[3] However, the resonance between the socio-spatial characteristics in both Turner and Lefebvre's discourses reveals an opportunity to critically question these divisions and to recognise everyday practical contestations of globalised neoliberal space.

In exploring this critical comparison, we will first introduce and contextualise the importance of Turner's development housing practices, before examining how the theoretical principles of autonomy and individual freedom that pervade throughout his work represent an anarchistic realisation of the socialist principle of autogestion. Having described the social structures of informal housing practices as a platform for autogestion, Lefebvre's spatial re-articulation of the social production of social space will be reframed in the context of informal housing communities throughout Latin America and the wider Global South. This thread of analysis concludes with a critique of the assumed interoperability of anarchist and Marxist theories as they pertain to the everyday real-world politics social agency and spatial practices of participatory and self-build housing.

JOHN TURNER

John Turner is widely recognised as a key protagonist in the development of alternative and socially progressive housing models in Latin America in the 1960s.[4] Having had a conventional architectural education at the London Architectural Association, Turner worked in informal spaces across Latin America for independent and government housing agencies from 1957 to 1965.[5] During this time Turner was to make a number of pivotal contributions to interdisciplinary discourses of architecture, development, urban design, and housing. Whilst his contributions to academic discourse are limited in number, at the

height of his prominence Turner's work led to profound changes in government and non-governmental approaches to informal urban development. His ideas influenced global institutions like the World Bank and The United Nations who sought to incorporate his approaches to participatory self-build housing as a platform for urban development. Later, the socio-political principles of grass-roots urban development, architectural design, and participatory housing would also be influential on renowned schools of design at MIT in Massachusetts, the London Architectural Association, and the Development Planning Unit at University College London.

Turner's key impact on participatory housing, architecture, and informal development theory can be relatively neatly summarised by the titles of his contributions to academic discourse. Freedom to Build[6] and Housing by People[7] remain his most prominent works, with the former containing two key chapters by Turner entitled 'The Re-education of a Professional' and 'Housing as a Verb'. Throughout these written works there is an underlying anarchistic questioning of the politics and economics development at both local and international scales that structures much of Turner's thinking. Summarised succinctly as 'Who Decides and Who Provides?',[8] this underlying question remains Turner's most significant contribution to approaches to the interdisciplinary discussion of architecture, participatory housing, sustainable development, and anarchist theory.

The simple, eloquent, and critical question of 'Who Decides and Who Provides' framed Turner's advocacy to challenge assumptions of political authority and social hierarchy at both local and national scales of urban development. In seeking to answer this question Turner demonstrated quantitatively and qualitatively the failures produced by government policy and strategies and the perception of housing as objects of capitalist production and consumption. In doing so he offered a reinterpretation of globalisation and urbanisation in the Global South as a positive counter-narrative to the model of capitalist development and housing being defined by the Global North as the assumed solution to neoliberal global urbanisation.

THE PROBLEMS OF HOUSING AS A NOUN

Throughout the Twentieth Century the conventional government response to the rapid economic migration and informal urbanisation of the Global South (and particularly Latin America) was defined by the principles of modernist planning and housing architecture.[9] Seemingly irrespective of socialist or capitalist political governments, the modernist methodology of tabula rasa development was advocated by architects and planners alike for the speed and economic efficiency of raising the living standards of impoverished populations.[10] Thus, concrete modernist housing towers were swiftly imposed upon cities through centrally administered state urban development programmes.[11] In practice this

meant the systematic reliance upon large government construction contracts being fulfilled by private companies, each seeking to maximise the profit from these projects. Concurrently, this process alienated home owners from any involvement in the production of their own homes. In essence, government backed commodification of housing as objects of public consumption.

The rapid urbanisation of Latin America and Peru coincided with a number of popular uprisings against military dictatorships in the Global South during the 1960s, and concurrently with anti-capitalist and socialist protests across the Global North, both culmination in the worldwide protests and revolutions of 1968.[12] In Peru, protests against global political and capitalist influences on local economic inequalities led to popular student and worker protests across the country.[13] Concurrently, the May 1968 anti-capitalist movement in France and particularly in Paris remain one of the most recognisable example of radical political protest experienced in the Global North during the Twentieth Century.[14]

Whilst ultimately these political moments failed to stop the rise of capitalist politics and economics, the spontaneity of such radical protests remains at the core of both traditional Marxist and anarchist interpretations of revolution.[15] But whilst revolutionary protest is radically alluring, it is also historically proven to be almost inherently fleeting. In spite of moments of revolutionary spectacle seen by both Lefebvre in Paris France and Turner in

Lima Peru, the sustained realisation of such social and political agency remains isolated within a capitalist context, and unable to offer practical realisation of autogestion and an alternative social production and space.

Set against this context Turner's experiences across Latin America provide a documentation of the impact of centrally determined housing projects that emerged concurrently with emerging political protest and unrest at the Westernisation of space and society. In contrast to the slow failure and cultural decline of modernist and socialist housing in the Global North,[16] the pronounced social, political, and inequality of 1960s Latin America immediately highlighted to Turner the economic impracticality and social failure of centralised housing models. The social and economic problems of rapid urbanisation that such development sought to re-balance (or mask) was merely revisited in governmental policies that distrusted and disregarded the power and possibilities of everyday enterprise and the groundswell of community agency that was latent within informal settlements.[17]

In response, Turner's analysis revealed how the scale and homogeneity of formal centralised housing development was intrinsically unable to reflect the variety of lifestyles that were vital in the economic evolution and social sustainability of cities and economies of scarcity.[18] Through detailed social and economic studies he observed that both the construction and occupation of Westernised mass housing generated economic

relations and social spaces of alienation.[19] The wider positive anarchistic politics of these observations did not go unrecognised by Turner:

"If the possibilities of self-governing network structures and decentralising technologies are realised - that is, those which do not demand highly centralised production, distribution, or servicing systems - and if the intrinsically oppressive wastefulness of heteronomous structure is also generally recognised, then those concerned with the future will take whatever action they can in order to become independent of destructively centralist organisations and thus they will institute an alternative and viable world order." [20]

Crucially, Turner's most significant contribution is not his observation of the impacts of Westernised urban development. Instead of focusing on negative critique, he responded by developing a positive facilitative approach to self-build housing projects that demonstrated the economic and political potential of alternative models of participatory housing.[21] He recognised that the informal housing being built by the poorest and most socially ostracised communities was actually a reflection of user and social values defined not by economic and political quantification of what it was, but by a far more complex, nuanced, and qualitative political understanding of what it did for people and their communities:

"If the usefulness of housing for its principal users, the occupiers, is independently variable from the material standards of the goods and services provided as the case studies and other sources show, then conventional measures of housing value can be grossly misleading. As long as it is erroneously assumed that a house of materially higher standards is necessarily a better house, then housing problems will be mis-stated." [22]

THE SOCIAL VALUE OF INFORMAL SELF-BUILD HOUSING

In contrast to the government backed state modernist projects, Turner observed that illegal and anarchistic housing practices that produced simple yet sustainable informal settlements were a source of previously un-recognised social and economic value.[23] The self-management, organisation, and collaboration of people to level and maintain streets, hook up rudimentary services and electricity distribution, and eventually to agitate for local state services was a necessary and justifiable method with which to produce socially sustainable communities.[24] As a response to contexts of economic and legal absence, informal self-build housing communities produced sustainable alternative social relationships of grass-roots community agency – albeit by appropriating their land through illegal squatting or informal purchase.

Within informal self-build communities, large quantities of housing were able to be produced using a range of user-defined and community managed techniques and processes that in turn produced realistic solutions and spaces that could adapt to the needs of a heteronomous population.[25] Moreover, in contrast to government led modernist housing *superbloques*, informal housing was not produced as instantaneous products, but instead was an ongoing social process that recognised the value of spaces, homes, and lives as part of everyday social practices. Such informal self-build housing was an acutely appropriate and intellectual response by the urban poor to provide housing for themselves at an affordable price and on a strategic scale that could cope with the enormity of urban migration and informal housing growth. More importantly, this housing was adaptable, secure, and provided opportunities to grow sustainably over time as communities grew around them.

In comparison to Lefebvre's post-Marxist analysis of the interconnection of politics and space, the anarchist principles of Turner's work are an explicit critique of the political paradoxes of socialist policies, perhaps most notably summed up by his observation that *"governments have done so little with so much, whilst poor people have done so much with so little"*.[26] The control and freedom to build that was appropriated by informal housing settlements was in essence a form of grass-roots political autogestion; it was in

essence a realisation of Lefebvre's famous advocacy for the (social) production of (social) space and relations.[27]

In more practical terms, Turner recognised the value of the pre-existing autogestive nature of informal settlements and subsequently went on to actively support and facilitate the development of such spaces through government sponsored loans to support individual self-builders to buy building materials from community operated workshops.[28] Similarly, he advocated for the government provision of 'sites and services' that provided the necessary infrastructure to support new self-build communities, whilst also pushing for the retrospective upgrading of favela community roads, water supplies, and electricity.

This facilitative model of development practice related to both everyday grass-roots practices and strategic policy scales.[29] The need for interaction at the scale of both individual community support and national policy is a reflection of the same characteristics of autogestive space proposed by Lefebvre. The translation of the principle of self-managed economies into a spatial context relies upon both the everyday spontaneity and creativity of communities and also the political will to support change that develops from the grass-roots upwards. Turner's practical realisation of these principles relied upon the ability to garner strategic political support for social policies that would supply services, building materials, and building knowledge to local communities. Whilst they relied upon an engagement with strategic state policies,

Turner's practices produced new sustainable social relationships of production that utilised the anarchistic enterprise of informal space, and supported a model of development that was socially integrated, economically viable, and politically vibrant.

The socio-economic implications of self-help housing and anarchistic development challenges the traditional Marxist assumption that political change can only be achieved through revolution and socialist state governance. Yet Turner's observations notably did not seek the dissolution of strategic governance and support,[30] but instead resonate with Lefebvre's advocacy for the social production of space both in everyday life but also in strategic structures that support social principles of equality and mutuality.[31] In essence, Turner pursued a simple advocacy for the social and political imperative of autonomy, choice, and freedom that would facilitate and support individuals and communities to produce homes and social spaces for themselves:

> *"When dwellers control the major decisions and are free to make their own contributions to the design, construction or management of their housing, both the process and the environment produced stimulate individual and social well-being. When people have no control over, nor responsibility for key decisions in the housing process, on the other hand, dwelling environments may instead become a barrier to personal fulfilment and a burden on the economy."* [32]

SELF-HELP HOUSING THEORY

To support his critique of the misplaced power and control inherent in the efficiency and authority of government mass housing, Turner utilised alternative political and sociological theory drawn from anarchistic theory, notably including Colin Ward [33], Peter Kropotkin, [34] Simon Nicholson, [35] and Ivan Illich, [36] as well as Giancarlo de Carlo's explicitly anarchist problematisation of housing.[37] Using this framework of political and architectural theory, Turner proposed that informal settlements and progressive development of barriados and favelas was simply an *"architecture that worked".[38]*

Turner's observations and practices also built upon the ideas of anthropologist William Mangin whose publication, *The Latin American Squatter Settlement: A Problem and a Solution,* [39] exposed the unwarranted social stereotypes of irregular settlements. In a detailed socio-economic study of intergenerational development and social sustainability, Mangin documented that if informal self-build housing is given moderate and sustained support it offers demonstrably better social value than formal mass housing development.[40]

This analysis aligned with the observations of Charles Abrams, [41] who similarly advocated the economic incapacity of centrally planned mass housing policies and the formal housing market for its characteristics of economic inefficiency and social

homogeneity. Reflecting both Mangin's and Abram's observations, Turner's architectural agency reimagined the purpose of architectural practice as an act of humility and empathy that could directly respond to the socio-economic material reality of informal spaces.

Turner's practical critique of the cultural and economic implications of governmental control and architectural authority coalesces here with broader political implications of participatory and user-informed housing to represent something more than the sum of their individual parts.[42] Such observations resonate with the underlying fundamental principle of political liberty and social anarchy that people to have the freedom, opportunity, and control to produce their homes and space.[43] Yet it is also emblematic of a deeper recognition of the need to pursue alternative social and political contestations of value.[44]

> *"It seems that all national and international housing and planning agencies, mis-state housing problems by applying quantitative measures to non or only partly quantifiable realities. Only in an impossible world of limitless resources and perfect justice – where people could have their cake and eat it too – could there be a coincidence of material and human values. […] So long as this fact of life remains, and as long as people's priorities vary, the usefulness of things will vary independently of their material standard or monetary value."* [45]

Turner's critique here resonates with Lefebvre's political observations that organisations tend to institutionalise the space and values of everyday life, leading to the social alienation and the reification of such activities.[46] In essence, if housing is perceived as an object of consumption it will be defined by an alienation from its producers, and its value reified as merely an object of capitalist fetishism. Advocacy for housing as a social process resonates with Lefebvre's proposition that use and exchange value are intimately interconnected with the social production of space.[47] For Turner, the social and political practices of producing informal housing is interconnected with both the political and economic value of housing as a fabric within which communities of inhabitants form sustainable social relationships.[48]

> *"Those who recognise the fact that use-values lie in the relationships between people and things – and not in things themselves – will recognise the significance of alternative means by which alternative ends are sought. This is the issue of economy. If primary values and ends are functional and defined by performance (that is, use rather than quantities), then economy must have as much to do with the means of production, as with productivity. [...] Those who confuse economy with material productivity make a dangerous error. Like market-values, industrial production has its uses but these must be limited or*

industrialisation will destroy mankind even more surely than the primitive

capitalism that generated it." [49]

AUTOGESTION

Turner's recognition of the connection between user-choice and use-value in the process of housing is pivotal. It provides a framework with which to re-perceive his work in relation to the wider principles of autogestion and political agency advocated by Lefebvre:

> *"... each time a social group . . . refuses to accept passively its conditions of existence, of life, or of survival, each time such a group forces itself not only to understand but to master its own conditions of existence, autogestion is occurring"* [50]

Autogestion is a very simple concept with very complicated political and social implications. It is often translated as *self-management*, but as Brenner and Elden note, its French connotation is perhaps more accurately understood as *workers control*.[51] In contrast to the alienation of capitalist economic and political models that exploit abstract labour and surplus value by separating management control from worker production,[52] autogestion simply proposes that workers should have direct political management of their production practices and the value they produce.[53] This can be relatively easily understood in relation to classic socialist issues of labour union rights and workers in

factories, yet self-management also poses the wider political implications of a participatory society and cooperative economy.

The notion of *self-managed economy* was first fully articulated in the 19th Century by the anarchist philosopher and economist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon,[54] whose methodological goal to eliminate exploitation and reduce alienation was soon favoured by notable economists John Stuart Mill and Alfred Marshall.[55] Yet beyond the self-management of economic relationships, Proudhon's autogestion also implied the potential of a more all-encompassing model of social organisation: it proposed that people take close political responsibilities in deciding the production of the social, cultural, and economic relationships that produce their community. Thus in anarchist and Marxist theory the wider collective notion of workers' self-management is a key theoretical principle with which to reconceive the possibility and value of direct and grassroots political practices. However, the means by which autogestion either naturally occurs or is purposefully produced has remained a fundamental issue of inertia at the core of anarchist and Marxist theory alike: how might a (democratic/socialist) society implement workers' control and more importantly, make it sustainable? For Lefebvre this inertia was a function of the collective social production and consumption of abstract space and the capitalist relationships that produce such space.[56]

The social and political inertia produced by Westernised neoliberal policy and abstract space also marks one of the ideological differences between anarchist democratic grassroots freedom and Marxist socialist state government principles. If autogestion implies the self-management of the social relationships of production, then Marxism proposes that this be achieved using a system of state governance that will redistribute power from economic elite classes to the individual worker.[57] The Marxist premise is thus the replacement of the capitalist parasitic structure of management with a similarly hierarchical but elected state management system designed to support mutualism. This mutual and socially cooperative system of governance is proposed to redistribute the value of societies products and redefine its social relationships through autogestion.[58] Thus, power is redistributed to the workers, but is also systemically retained within a hierarchical model of top-down control, with the inherent danger of ensuing mismanagement and corruption.

Yet for Lefebvre, a sociological appropriation of Marxist theory suggests that autogestion *'...is born spontaneously out of the void in social life that is created by the state'.*[59] Such a model of autogestion is intimately interconnected with the qualitative transformation of state power into a framework of decentralised political and social relationships that actively encourage participation;[60] it is not a fixed condition but a continuous process of self-criticism, debate, deliberation, conflict, and struggle:

"A discussion of self-management is certainly the proper place to recall the importance of everyday life. The revolutionary process begins by shaking up the condition of everyday life and ends by restoring it. ... Contestation does not arise against authority so much as against the entire society maintained by authority." [61]

For Lefebvre it seemed that the political principles and social qualities of autogestion emerge from everyday grass-roots reality, and must be continuously enacted and re-enacted so as to become hard-baked into the structure of everyday life.[62] Thus Lefebvre's socio-spatial appropriation of Marxist autogestion infers that the power wielded by top-down state control is intended to be dissolved by the continuous political agency of citizens. Here, the realisation of such an anarchistic model of decentralising and democratising social process remains perhaps the most fundamental element of political change that is unachieved within examples of socialist governance. Ultimately the question of what actions such a socialist government of (post-)Marxist politics could take to ensure the spontaneous and self-sustaining political agency of autogestion remains unanswered. For Lefebvre:

"The aim is to take over development, to orient growth (recognised and controlled as such) towards social needs. Whoever talks about the self-

determination of the working class or about autonomy, is also talking about

self-management." [63]

Here Lefebvre's Marxist interpretation of workers and control can be brought into close comparison with Turner's anarchist housing premises of progressive development and user choice. [64] This concept and practice of self-management provides an original response to the Marxist problem of how to socialise the means of production.

Yet as with Turner, Lefebvre is explicit that self-management is not a panacea, as it poses just as many problems as it does potential solutions.[65] Autogestion as a social principle of grass-roots political self-governance is a concept that has to be fleshed out and contextualised across the full spectrum of global conditions.[66] It is in this process that Lefebvre maintains that class and workers struggle can be stimulated through social participation, and that such active engagement in space is necessary to give self-management continued meaning.

"The analysis which I have attempted here points to the dissolution of the state,
a kind of wavering away of its power, its strategic capacity and the
ramifications of absolute politics. To this extent, the state self-destruct; the
conditions in which it functions, its social 'base', are undermined, even though
its foothold in the economic sphere remains firm. It is the institutions and

ideologies, the superstructures upon which the absolute state is erected that crumble." [67]

CRITIQUES OF SELF-BUILD HOUSING AND INFORMAL DEVELOPMENT

In spite of the potential resonance between autogestion and informal space, the Marxist critique of Turner's development practices were unable and unwilling to see the necessity and potential of supporting spontaneous grass-roots spatial agency that defines informal housing. Marxist analysis of Turner's development theory and practice has historically been un-waveringly negative.[68] Resonating with the manifest underlying tension between anarchist and Marxist socio-political theory – raised yet again in the recent debate between Simon Springer [69] and David Harvey [70] – numerous critiques of Turner's practices and theoretical contributions to housing theory have sought to highlight the damaging impact that neoliberal and capitalist appropriation of self-help housing principles have had on the economic structures of countries the Global South.

Most consistent and damning of these critiques is that of Rod Burgess who repeatedly questioned the implications of the *Turner school of development.*[71] Burgess' critique suggested that in spite of their characteristic anarchistic emergence and socio-economic subsistence, informal settlements did not function outside capitalism and the co-optive influences of market relations. They were therefore always subject to the same issues of co-option and market manipulation that could only be countered by strong socialist government housing policies. [72] Thus, self-help housing ultimately implied the

government abandoning people to survive (or not) on their own devices.[73] Any such relinquishing of collective government responsibility for the working classes ran counter to the principles of socialist politics, and conceptual principals that remain at the core of socialist theory.

However, this conventional analysis of Turner's advocacy for self-help relies upon a specific trajectory of critical analysis. By exposing the negative economic impact of the later neoliberal co-option of self-help housing Burgess claims the inherent failure of the wider social and political potential inherent within self-help housing. In essence, neoliberal co-option is deemed to imply inherent political failure.[74] Yet whilst there remain obvious interconnections between political and economic practices, such reductive reliance upon economic interpretations of Marxist politics seemingly continue to overlook the importance of social and spatial possibilities of anarchist ideas.[75]

In response to Burgess Marxist critiques, it is evident that widespread political adoption of *self-help*, *sweat equity*, and progressive housing models by organisations such as the UN and World Bank coincided with global economic models of neoliberalism, and led to an explicit political co-option of Turner's ideas. Abstracted from the human and material reality of development practice, and stripped of the political intentions of facilitating and supporting people to produce their own space as a community, the remaining principles of economic efficiency resonated with 1980s neoliberal economics whilst fundamentally

disintegrating the underlying social and political foundations of Turner's model of user-defined housing and social development.[76] As Harris identifies, the most innovative contributions Turner made in advocating the *"political necessity of user choice"* are largely overlooked.[77] Thus, Colin Ward notes the often wilfully ignored the subtle distinctions contained within Turner' discourse:

> *"Notice that he says 'design construction or management'. He is not implying,*
> *as critics sometimes suggest, that the poor of the world should become do-it-*
> *yourself house builders, though of course in practice they often have to be. He*
> *is implying that they should be in control."* [78]

In contradiction to Burgess' critiques, Turner explicitly rebuked the notion that his work and the principles of user-defined development could be reduced and de-politicised to merely the neoliberal economics of *'sweat equity'*.[79] Thus, unlike historical misreadings of Turner's work as merely a simplistic advocacy for neoliberalised sweat-equity and self-help, the explicitly spatial and political potential of autonomy and distributed governance in Turner's self-help housing policies can be seen to resonate with Lefebvrian spatial theory:

> *"Those who see this point are bound to recognise the issue of authority which*
> *determines the choice of means and which are used to achieve the ends. When*
> *economy is understood as resourcefulness, technology is obviously political as*

it is a matter of who controls resources and their uses. The central issue raised in this book is that of who decides? Who decides, and who provides what for whom is clearly the political issue of power and authority." [80]

The intersection of Marxist and anarchist principles of autogestion is highlighted in the context of Turner's spatial practices that demonstrably utilise both socialist Marxist and anarchistic strategies. His practices utilise both grass-roots individual agency and strategic engagement with national governance and economic policy. Ultimately the key element that was lost in Burgess' critique is Turner's anarchist confrontation of the political question of 'Who decides and Who Provides?'[81] The political implications of this simple question at once intersect the social use value of housing as a process with the political necessity for individuals to decide on their own needs and priorities. It is a question at the core of both anarchist and Marxist advocacies for autogestion, and is recognised by Turner as existing within the inherent characteristics of informal space. In essence, the social sustainability and spatial qualities produced by informal housing reflect a form of innate autogestion that challenges the assumptions that underpin neoliberal and capitalist globalisation.

WHO DECIDES AND WHO PROVIDES?

"They [the Marxists] maintain that only a dictatorship—their dictatorship, of course—can create the will of the people, while our answer to this is: No dictatorship can have any other aim but that of self-perpetuation, and it can beget only slavery in the people tolerating it; freedom can be created only by freedom, that is, by a universal rebellion on the part of the people and free organization of the toiling masses from the bottom up." [82]

Bakunin's proposition for the free organisation of the masses from the bottom up is as provocative today as it was in the late Nineteenth Century. It also remains largely as unrealised today as it was nearly 150 years ago – and it is perhaps even more ungraspable and seemingly unrealistic when considered from within today's Westernised space.[83] This perennial inability to challenge the interconnected imperatives that produce Westernised space – economic, political, and social – is today as problematic in both the Global North and Global South. Yet the re-appropriation and re-valuing of the anarchist principles found in Turner's development practices provides a new methodology with which to reimagine an architecture of emancipation, and the autogestive production of sustainable spaces and social relations.

Turner's question of *Who Decides and Who Provides* is vital to such a reimagining. It succinctly highlights not only the intersection of political and economic agency within development and architecture, but also frames a critique of the conventionally perceived inoperability of Marxist and anarchist sympathies.[84] For Turner the (re)balance of authority and control between strategic provision and local choice contests the assumptions of housing as a product (or noun) instead of a social process (verb). Thus, the grass-roots choice and social power engendered by producing your own space and home can only be economically and politically viable as a sustainable solution if it is facilitated and supported by political agency and change at both local and national scales.

Considered in this context anarchist principles of grass-roots political agency and free organisation of people become vital in any to produce any autogestive socio-spatial landscape and positive political culture. Turner's practices reflect the same political recognition of the implications of autogestive space, but reframes the proposal as a grass-roots methodology to support informal spatial practices. This is ultimately the realisation of a social anarchist model of political government. Yet it is only through the comparison of Lefebvre and Turner that a practicable interpretation of autogestive space can begin to be recognised. In contrast to the assumption that autogestion is part of socialist government politics, informal spaces defined by economic and political absence can thus

be re-read and re-valued as everyday laboratories of spontaneous and autogestive enterprise and invention.

Whilst disparity exists between Turner's anarchist housing practices in comparison to institutional interpretation of Marxism, their shared spatial interrogation of authority and power represents a novel and productive interdisciplinary intersection: not only are their spatial critiques comparable, their points of intersection pose a positive counter proposition to conventional Western assumptions of space. In essence, the comparison of Turner and Lefebvre poses the notion that autogestion might be most readily realised in the informal development practices and spaces of the Global South.

Turner utilised an intrinsically anarchistic political structure of organisation. His grass-roots facilitation of people producing sustainable communities for themselves was supported and tested first locally and then strategically replicated, tested, and adapted in numerous alternative instances.[85] The methodological interdependence of local grass-roots practices and national policy strategy realised both a potential of anarchist freedom to produce heteronomous space, but also the need to support and facilitate practices using hierarchical but bottom-up political frameworks. Thus, it is important to note that in contradiction to points made by various Marxist criticisms of his work, throughout his practices Turner never actively imposed an explicit development model upon informal settlement communities.[86] Instead, he simply pursued a critical process that observed,

documented, and eventually sought to facilitate and support the existing model of social relations and practices that were already working and thriving in informal communities.[87]

Unlike any abstract, centralised, and ideological imposition of Westernised models of modernist development, Turner's practices advocated support for a model of informal development that was implicitly autogestive and socially sustainable. They reflected the emancipatory potential of Bakunin's advocacy that freedom is born from freedom. Turner's anarchistic question of 'Who Decides and Who Provides?' resonates with ongoing interdisciplinary engagements with both Marxist and anarchist theory in the continuing works of David Harvey,[88] Richard White and Colin Williams,[89] Paul Chatterton,[90] and John Holloway.[91] Against this positive academic context, it is hoped that the critical comparison of Turner's and Lefebvre's respective approaches to housing and space, authority and autogestion, anarchism and Marxism offers new insight into the assumptions that underpin Westernised space, and opens up new avenues of opportunity for further research and discussion.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF INFORMAL HOUSING, ANARCHISTIC DEVELOPMENT, AND AUTOGESTIVE SPACE

The proposal that self-build housing in informal communities represents a concrete spatial example of autogestion and self-management is challenging. Such a proposition must be posed in full awareness of the vast difference and inequality that defines the lives, experiences, and spaces in the Global North and Global South. Furthermore, the notion that informal space and housing provides valuable methodological insights into the failure to achieve socialist autogestion and self-management of space in Western politics is fraught with complications and limits. Yet in spite of the assumed political, economic, and geographic incompatibility of formal and informal space, the anarchist and autogestive model of self-build housing and social development advocated by Turner can be seen to offer a critique of the Westernised model of consumptive space and housing commodity.

In contrast to Marxist re-organisations and re-appropriations of state mechanisms of governance for socialist purposes, the positive social anarchist practices pursued by Turner resist the premise of abstracted top-down control. Instead, such anarchist practices imply the dismantling of unequal power relations that produce social dominance by

proposing the re-organisation and re-production of social relations along egalitarian, voluntary, altruistic and cooperative lines.[92] Such horizontal power distribution would rely upon the spontaneous emergence of community agency from the ground upwards,[93] and the relinquishment of traditional hierarchical structures of state control in favour of more localised and horizontal structures of governance. In this way the relationships that emerge are defined by people themselves[94] and can connect with wider society though a process of political distribution and strategic adoption and adaption as appropriate.

In light of the intersection of Turner and Lefebvre's respective approaches to autogestion and space, the divide between anarchist and Marxist principles can be seen to become remarkably indistinct. In contrast to historical Marxist critiques of Turner, the positive political aspirations of activists and academics align with sympathy for both the grass-roots heterogeneity and enterprise of anarchistic space, and the strategic social capacity of Marxist principles that define autogestive space. When framed by the anarchist principles of informal spaces advocated by Turner, Lefebvre's theoretical critiques of Westernised space offer a more practicable lens with which to question the assumed inevitability of architecture being merely another tool of neoliberal capitalist ideology.

> *"No destruction of the existing order is possible, if at the time of the overthrow,*
> *or of the struggle leading to the overthrow, the idea of what is to take the place*
> *of what is to be destroyed is not always present in the mind. [...]. Consciously*

or unconsciously, the ideal, the conception of something better is forming in

the mind of everyone who criticizes social institutions." [95]

The autogestive qualities of informal space reveal a challenge to the inevitability of capitalist space and neoliberal development, and the global inequality of power that these relationships serve, produce, and reproduce. In response to current academic reframing of anarchist and Marxist geographies[96] the comparison of Turner and Lefebvre poses an alternative line of enquiry that seeks to momentarily intersect and question key conventional polemic dichotomies, namely: formal and informal space; Global North and Global South; Marxism and anarchism; theory and practice. Critically comparing the housing practices of Turner with the spatial discourse of Lefebvre suggests that anarchistic practices of informal development produce a form of autogestive space that can realise Lefebvre's post-Marxist advocacy for the social production of spontaneous and everyday space.

The condition of Westernised space and social values is no longer a geographical definition, but now a global condition.[97] Yet in the work of Turner we see the positive potentials of an alternative social production of space founded upon principles of user-choice, informal space, and political self-management cannot be ignored. The intersection of Turner's advocacy for spontaneous housing and Lefebvre's spatial appropriation of autogestion reveals the opportunity – and perhaps necessity – of renewed engagement

with the interconnection of architectural practices, social relationships, and the political

imperative to confront global inequality.

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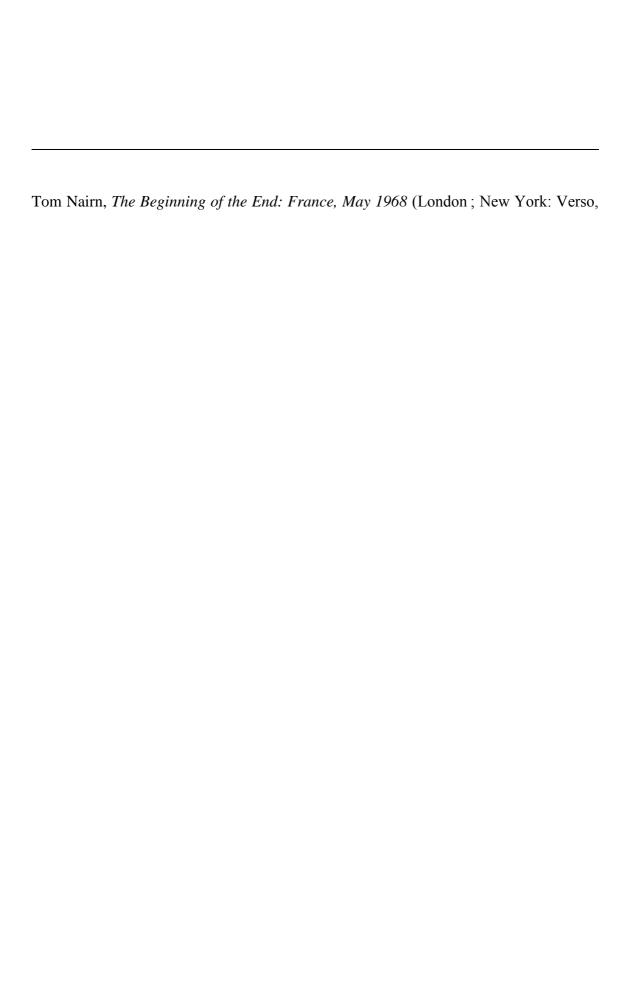
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