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Radical Resilience: Autonomous Self-management in Post-disaster Recovery Planning and Practice

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Abstract

This paper's purpose is to develop a concept of radical resilience. We do so by drawing from both agonistic and anarchist planning theory. Radical resilience exists when people mobilize their ability to manage their affairs for themselves. This ability often emerges following an agonistic conflict with a governing power. We illustrate how radical resilience looks in practice by examining three cases: New Orleans after Katrina in 2005, Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami, and Haiti after the 2010 earthquake. We conclude that the emerging field of disaster recovery planning could benefit from a close engagement with the concept of radical resilience.

Introduction

Resilience is on the minds of planners and urbanists the world over. Leading international development agencies, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank have declared themselves to be committed to making cities more resilient. Recently, the Rockefeller foundation has launched a project called '100 Resilient Cities' that awards grants to the 100 cities that are judged to have the greatest capacity to bounce back rapidly from shocks and stresses. These recent trends have encouraged local

governments to initiate technical and instrumental plans that are prepared and put in place by planners, emergency managers, or other experts with scientific knowledge. For instance, it has become common for cities to have their own hazard mitigation and emergency management plans that aim to increase the local area's resilience. Governments often see environmental risks as a resolvable problem, and disasters are described as 'avoidable' if the right kind of scientific measures, technologies, and political will are in place (Methmann & Rothe, 2012). Accordingly, in many government reports, resilience is conceived of as something that can be built with scientific information and managerial skills or toolkits arranged and delivered by experts and government officials. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA's) handbook for local hazard mitigation planning, for example, clearly differentiates the role of "planning team members" (e.g. planners, emergency managers, GIS specialists, floodplain administrators) from the role of "stakeholders" (i.e. citizens and private organizations). Unlike planning team members, stakeholders are not involved in all stages of planning process, but play a supplementary role that informs the planning team on a specific topic or provides a different point of view (FEMA, 2013).

Scholars in planning theory have long critiqued the idea that apolitical technocratic planning is always best, and so it is not surprising that academic planners have begun to question the top-down, rational, and technocratic ethos that pervades both the current understanding of resilience and the current practice of disaster planning. Davoudi (2012) argues that resilience is not a simple stock to be measured, but it is instead a multifaceted set of relations that are embedded in a complex science of multiple equilibria. Shaw (2012) suggests that resilience has "the potential to develop as a more radical and transformational agenda," and he emphasizes the potential for bottom-up efforts by citizens to pursue resilience. In this paper, we adopt this critique of the technocratic approach to resilience. We agree that resilience should not be seen as a set of expert-defined 'measurables' that are imposed in a top-down fashion.

However, we also aim to extend this critique. The main way we do so is theoretically. Neither Davoudi nor Shaw engage in depth with the literature in radical planning, and so we extend their work by drawing on two traditions in radical planning theory – agonistic planning and anarchist planning – to more fully theorize something we call "radical resilience." We propose that agonistic conflicts between those who govern (government and other top-down agents) and those who are governed (citizens or inhabitants)1 can be a spark that initiates autonomous self-management among inhabitants. We argue that this

autonomous self-management, through which inhabitants realize and develop their capacity to manage their affairs for themselves, rather than having their affairs managed for them, should be taken to be what radical resilience means. We propose that radical resilience, understood this way, should be something that planning practice consciously seeks out and supports.

In the paper we also extend the existing critique of resilience in a secondary, empirical way. Since neither Davoudi nor Shaw offer detailed empirical examples of resilience from below, we extend that work by offering three case studies in which inhabitants have demonstrated and developed elements of radical resilience as we theorize it in the context of recovery from catastrophic disasters: New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami, and Haiti after the 2010 earthquake.2 These cases are not presented as a fully developed empirical work that stands on its own. Rather they are narratives gathered from secondary sources that we hope illustrate how our idea of radical resilience might play out, always partially and problematically, in real empirical contexts. We offer these empirical narratives as support for our primary agenda in the paper: to develop a theorization of radical resilience.

Resilience as a Radical Agenda

In challenging the conventional idea of resilience in the planning discourse, Davoudi (2012), makes a more general critique. She notes that a growing number of governmental and non-governmental reports aim to develop toolkits for building resilience, and she asks what "resilience" really means in these reports. She suggests that it is becoming just another buzzword in planning, an empty slogan used by cities to appear more competitive. She challenges the idea that resilience is a process whereby communities are disturbed and then return to their previous equilibrium, which is single and static. She draws instead on Holling's (1973, 1986) idea of ecological resilience, which acknowledges the existence of multiple equilibria, and which understands that systems have the potential to "flip" from one domain to another (Davoudi, 2012). It is not so much a question of returning to the pre-disaster status quo, but of continually fashioning a new, provisional equilibrium into the future. This perspective recognizes resilience to be complex and dynamic, and it implies a whole different set of planning procedures – less rigid and more adaptable over time – to pursue it. Shaw (2012) takes the question of resilience in a new direction, arguing that

“resilience should be viewed as having the potential to develop as a more radical and transformational agenda that opens up opportunities for political voice, resistance, and the challenging of power structures and accepted ways of thinking” (Bay Localize, 2009: cited in Shaw, 2012). Rather than seeing resilience only as an outcome of top-down managerial or technical solutions, he argues, we should also pursue it through insurgent, bottom-up initiatives.3

Up to this point we concur with both Davoudi and Shaw’s critique. We are particularly drawn to Shaw’s idea that resilience has the potential to be a radical agenda. However, in Shaw this idea is more notional than empirically fleshed out. He does not discuss extensively how alternative, bottom-up approaches to resilience might work in actual practice. He does mention (2012, p. 310) the example of Transition Towns, the community-led environmental initiatives, but his major discussion of “resilience in practice” concerns itself mostly with how emergency planners and climate change managers (i.e. expert practitioners) perceive the concept of resilience. He does not discuss in any detail how resilience might emerge in practice, immanently, among people themselves. Similarly, DeVerteuil and Golubchikov (2016) argue for introducing a new interpretation of resilience that includes the issues of social justice and power relations, but their argument remains at a general level and situated in the context of urban studies and geography. They do not provide specific examples of what they call “active resilience,” and they do not discuss the implications of their idea for planning practice (see also Cretney & Bond, 2014). So overall in the literature we are seeing an increasing number of theoretical explorations of what might be considered ‘radical resilience,’ but we have fewer instances where those ideas are linked to concrete cases in a way that can help draw specific lessons that could be useful for planning practice. We intend for this paper to contribute to that end.

In addition to that theory-practice linkage, there remains also the need to theorize radical resilience more robustly. The idea is only now emerging, and we still need to connect it more fully with the existing work in planning theory. And so in the next section of the paper we do just that: theorize the concept of radical resilience by bringing it into dialogue with both agonistic and anarchist planning theory.

But before we turn to that literature, we want avail ourselves of another intellectual resource, one that is outside planning and specific to the question of disasters: the literature in disaster sociology. This literature starts from the fact that any large-scale natural disaster is

inevitably followed by a high degree of ecological, political, and organizational uncertainty, especially in contexts where government capabilities become either significantly diminished, or their services are unable to reach those affected by the disaster. Conventional wisdom assumes that disaster victims are disorganized, panicked, and in need of economic, social, and emotional support, and that expertise and resources for aid and recovery can only be effectively organized by external actors or organizations. But since the late 1960s, the disaster sociology literature has demonstrated that people affected by disasters are not merely passive victims. They frequently become active participants in emergent organizations (Auf de Heide, 1989; Drabek & McEntire, 2003; Dynes, 2005; Dynes & Quarantelli, 1968; Quarantelli, 1986; Stallings & Quarantelli, 1985; Stephens, 1997; Wenger, Quarantelli, & Dynes, 1987). To be sure, anti-social behavior does occur after a disaster, but this work finds that people also show remarkable cohesion, solidarity, and cooperation during the extreme collective stress that follows a disaster (Drabek & McEntire, 2003). The literature conceptualizes the manifestations of popular participation and collective action that develop in these contexts as "emergent civic organizations" (Stallings & Quarantelli, 1985). These organizations are constituted by inhabitants who work together, on their own, to pursue collective goals arising from actual or potential disasters.

Such emergent civic organizations, we suggest, can be understood as manifestations of ordinary citizens' already-existing capacity to manage their affairs for themselves in the uncertain conditions after a disaster. This view resonates, as we will see, with the anarchist tradition in radical planning, and so it is not surprising to find anarchist initiatives springing up in the wake of disaster events, such as the 'Common Ground Collectives' after Hurricane Katrina (DeRose, 2005) or 'Occupy Sandy' after Hurricane Sandy in 2012 (Nir, 2013). Several anarchist blogs have termed this phenomenon 'disaster communism,' arguing that the collective initiatives that arise after natural disasters can be thought of as attempts to pre-figure alternatives to the dominant power structure.

> Efforts of communities hit by disaster that do not wait for the state, or allow capital to take the initiative, but instead 'negotiate with their hands,' rebuilding their own communities and 'healing themselves,' resulting in communities that are stronger, we call these efforts disaster communism. (Southall, 2011)

Scott Crow, a co-founder of Common Ground Collectives in New Orleans, expressed

a similar idea when recounting their project in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina:

> we took this … terrible situation and tried to turn it around, because there was a crack in history that opened, where power had lost all its control, and a space opened for the people, us, from below, to come and actually do something. (Crow, 2014)

In other words, while disasters bring chaos and disorder, it is possible also that those affected can take them as an opportunity to invent alternative ways of life. Post-disaster uncertainty can expose the failure of previous state-led planning, but it can also open up possibilities for new forms of planning, planning carried out by people themselves.

Radical Planning: Agonism and Anarchism

In this section, we connect those insights from disaster sociology to planning specifically by bringing them into conversation with two traditions: agonistic and anarchist planning theory.

Agonistic Planning

Agonistic planning theorists insist on both the necessity and desirability of conflict in the planning process. They contend that conflicts or struggles among groups with different values cannot be resolved. Conflict cannot be eliminated from political relations because it is a necessary element in all communities (see Mouffe, 1999). For Mouffe, honoring the existence of conflicts is essential for maintaining a plural democracy. Conflict signals the limits of politics that imagine the existence of a single, overarching public. As Laclau and Mouffe (p. 192) argue: “there is no radical and plural democracy without renouncing the discourse of the universal and its implicit assumption of a privileged point of access to ‘the truth’, which can be reached only by a limited number of subjects.” Hillier applies this idea to planning to suggest that there will always be “contestations of power” and “nonnegotiable axiomatic value differences” in any planning context (Hillier, 2002, p. 122). For agonistic theorists, planning practice should not attempt conflict resolution. What planners can do, they say, is to try to transform antagonism into agonism. Antagonism is conflict in the existential register, wherein the two combatants seek to eliminate the other from the community. Agonism is conflict in which the combatants understand that each will remain part of the community, but they also understand that their interests are fundamentally opposed to each other. Agon is Greek for “contest” or “game,” and this is very much the model agonistic

theorists have in mind: two contestants who see themselves as engaged in a competitive, win-lose contest.

Most agonistic theorists take this ontological argument about the way societies are a step further, to make a normative or ethical argument about the way societies should be. They insist not only that conflict is unavoidable, but also that when antagonism has been transformed into agonism it is often a positive, generative force in a political community. In particular, agonistic conflict is seen by many to be a crucial element of any vibrant, plural democracy, one that is particularly important for disadvantaged groups in the city (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Hillier, 2002, 2003, 2007; Pløger, 2004). Flyvbjerg (1998, p. 209), for example, affirms that "social conflicts are the true pillars of democratic society," because they forestall the idea of a single, overarching public interest, and they therefore preserve a plural democracy. In addition, and more concretely, agonistic struggle is very often the vehicle through which marginalized groups pursue social change in an effort to redress their marginalization.4 According to this line of argument, planning practice that seeks agreement, consensus, and win-win scenarios as its primary goal works only to create a societal stability in which currently powerful interests can "maintain influence and capacity to get what they want while seeming to act more deliberatively" (Hillier, 2002, p. 122; see also Purcell, 2009).

We concur with this argument that agonistic conflict is both ineradicable and desirable. What we find lacking in the agonistic planning literature is a good sense of just how agonistic conflicts help produce a more vibrant democracy. What empirical work there is tends to be only critical, to emphasize the failure of conflict-resolution planning to achieve desirable outcomes. For instance, Pløger's (2004) example of a Danish urban regeneration project shows how planners' desire to soothe conflict prevented the consideration – and political contestation – of controversial issues. He does not specify how such conflicts might have made the planning process and its outcomes better, or more democratic. We are left without a well-developed idea of how conflict might generate real changes in planning practice. Similarly, Purcell (2009) criticizes how the consensus-building approach to planning legitimizes neoliberalism, and he makes a very Mouffian call for a "strategy of counter-hegemonic struggle" that allows for a transformation of the current power structure, but his examples of what that might look like – along the Duwamish River in Seattle – are brief and inchoate.

Even writers in geography and urban studies, who have taken up a similar line of thought in recent years, mostly offer only critique. They emphasize the way that today's "post-political" ethos works to erase any significant conflict from the political community (Legacy, 2016; Metzger, Allmendinger, & Oosterlynck, 2014; Oosterlynck & Swyngedouw, 2010; Swyngedouw, 2009). For example, Oosterlynck and Swyngedouw (2010), p. 1591), in their case of noise reduction in Brussels airport, illustrate how the depoliticization of environmental politics – either by technocratic normativity or suppressing conflicts through negotiated consensus – is inadequate because it fails "to produce political solutions and results in an institutional and legal deadlock which undermines popular trust in politics while relegating key decisions to nonpolitical economic or private actors."

Here again, we get little sense of how agonistic conflicts can be generative of more democratic planning practices. So, while our concept of radical resilience draws greatly on agonistic planning's embrace of conflict, in order to build a more generative idea of planning practice we require other theoretical resources. In our cases, we find that an agonistic conflict between governors and governed5 after a disaster serves as a spark that touches off, and even catalyzes, autonomous self-management among inhabitants. To conceptualize this autonomous self-management effectively, we need to turn to the anarchist tradition in planning.

Anarchist Planning

The agonistic tradition, as we saw above, does have a conception of democratic politics that could potentially resonate with the autonomous self-management we are considering. However, that tradition, rooted as it is in Chantal Mouffe's work, tends to imagine a "radical and plural democracy" that always involves a counter-hegemonic struggle by social movements to establish a new hegemony, often by means of seizing State power. That hegemonic and State-oriented idea of politics is incompatible with radical resilience as we conceive of it, rooted as it is in autonomous self-management and direct democracy. Anarchist planning, on the other hand, develops a concept of planning that begins by insisting that people have the capacity to plan for themselves. Writers in this literature reject the idea that planning is an activity that must be carried out by the State. Rather, they insist, planning should be, and very often is, an activity whereby the inhabitants of a community manage their affairs for themselves, directly and without mediation. This idea takes its cue from long-

established ideas and practices in anarchism, such as prefigurative politics, direct democracy, self-management, autonomy, and direct action.

Anarchist planning understands these practices to be always necessarily spatial activities as well as social ones. It calls for the users and inhabitants of space to "collectively manage...space in a way that meets their needs and satisfies their desires" (Purcell, 2013b, p. 42). In this anarchist tradition, planning is "a power that is immanent to society, that is not done intentionally by any specialized group, but by everyone acting together to coordinate activity" (Purcell, 2013a, p. 35). This is what we mean in the paper when we use the term "autonomous self-management."

Anarchist planning has its roots in, among other sources, the 'non-planning' movement of the 1960s. The goal of non-planning was to revolutionize the government of space. Its radical proposals were "a commitment to the individual and collective engagement of people and communities in the creation of their own environments, rather than delegated and indirect actions of official planners and architects" (Sadler, 2000, p. 154; emphasis added). It embraced "the idea of people acting autonomously and collaboratively to reclaim control of spaces in order to survive and, in doing so, radically transforming, from the ground up, their physical environment" (Newman, 2011, p. 347; see also Crouch & Ward, 1997; Ward, 1982, 2000, 2002). We want to point out the connection between anarchist planning's idea of autonomous self-management by inhabitants and the literature on disaster planning, where there is increasing acknowledgement that the collective will of inhabitants and their contextually embedded knowledges and capabilities are crucial to imagining and implementing successful disaster recovery (Smith, 2011). In the American Planning Association's recent manual on planning for post-disaster recovery, for example, Schwab (2014) insist that one of the ongoing challenges in disaster recovery planning is "the need for communities to take local ownership of their situations … so that they can assume the leadership in determining their own destinies. That is the only viable path to local resilience" (p. 20).

So our concept of radical resilience takes on board anarchist planning's call for autonomous self-management by people to engage in their own planning practice. But it also draws closely on agonistic planning, because in our case studies the autonomous self-management of inhabitants was always sparked by agonistic conflict. This finding resonates not only with agonistic planning, but also with work in radical geography and sociology that

which argues that we cannot understand autonomous self-management without conflict, that the latter is a creative force that inspires the former. Agonism, anger, conflict, and even hatred can be tools for challenging the current system. The refusal or negation of the current state of affairs can be a starting point, this work argues, for collective action (Chatterton, 2010). The idea is that it is "difficult to start swimming in open water: it's much easier to push off against something" (Free Association, 2010; as cited in Chatterton, 2010). John Holloway argues that "the core of autonomies is a negation and an alternative doing" (Holloway, 2010, p. 909). Holloway talks about "cracks," openings that are formed when movements push against something in the social fabric and thereby generate the possibility of something else, something that is both against-and-beyond that fabric, fragile spaces that make it possible to live another kind of life (Holloway, 2010). Newman's (2011) idea of a "rupture" can be interpreted in a similar way. For him democratic insurrection in Egypt in 2010- 2011 was sparked by a hostility to the current State system that inspired the birth of an "autonomous liberated zone," which was an initial manifestation of ordinary Egyptians' capacity for autonomous self-management. This type of significant rupture, sparked by something akin to the conflict that agonistic planners emphasize, can bring about autonomous self-management that has real impacts on the everyday lives of citizens. While we do not argue that autonomous self-management must start from conflict and opposition – prefigurative politics are a good example of how people can begin from the positive desire to start living another life – still, we take seriously the points of Chatterton, Holloway, and Newman that moments of refusal and resistance – of conflict – are very often a the spark that initiates the creativity and productive energies that sustain autonomous self-management.

And so it is this dynamic, whereby conflict ignites autonomous self-management by ordinary people, that can be seen as a bridge that connects the agonistic planning literature and the anarchist planning literature. Agonistic relations between groups can be an igniter, and even a catalyst, that brings agonistic planning's focus on conflict into dialogue with anarchist planning's emphasis on bottom-up, citizen-driven planning alternatives. Our cases bear out this idea. In each case, agonistic conflict between governors and governed is a triggering agent that leads to more autonomous spatial planning through which people actively produce, inhabit, and manage the space of the city.

From Agonism to Radical Resilience: the Stories of New Orleans, Banda Aceh, and Haiti

In this section we offer three cases as a way to illustrate empirically our theorization of radical resilience. We do not claim expertise in the empirical details of each case. We are working with secondary sources rather than primary data. We have chosen the cases selectively: each helps us flesh out our general idea of radical resilience, because, in each case, inhabitants' capacity for autonomous collective action was ignited by resistance to government-led recovery planning after a major disaster. In addition to putting empirical flesh on our idea of radical resilience, we think these cases also offer something to the agonistic planning literature, which is to provide some empirical exploration of its claim that agonistic conflict can be generative of democracy. Moreover, in that literature the agon is typically imagined to be a contest between different groups in civil society. But our cases show how the agon can be a conflict between government (or a governing power) and those it governs. More specifically, our cases involve resistance by inhabitants to government-led and expert-driven recovery planning. This resistance developed into a conflict between government and governed, and that conflict sparked efforts by the governed to develop their own planning initiatives for resilience that were more autonomous and self-managed. These latter efforts of course resonate with the kind of planning called for in the anarchist planning literature, and so they will be of interest to that literature as well. But in the main, we hope the cases help us better understand how radical resilience looks in practice, and what its promises and pitfalls might be.

From Against the 'Green Dot' to Inhabitant-driven Recovery in New Orleans

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina came ashore along the Gulf Coast in Louisiana and Mississippi, causing death and destruction on a scale rarely seen in U.S. history. The impacts of Katrina were complex and multifaceted, but they were particularly significant in some neighborhoods of New Orleans, which were flooded catastrophically when the city's levees broke. These areas included Village de l'Est, Broadmoor, and the Lower Ninth Ward. When the City's special planning agency, the 'Bring New Orleans Back Commission,' released its first plan, it proposed converting these neighborhoods into park land, eliminating the communities that had existed there before. These areas were marked with 'green dots' on the new planning map of the city, and the dots caused an outcry and resistance among the former residents who

wanted to return and reconstruct their homes. To resist the Green-Dot plan, the residents had to prove the viability of their community by demonstrating that more than fifty percent of the former residents were committed to return. Tom Wooten (2012) documents the neighborhoods in New Orleans that were initially designated to be turned into green space and subsequently saw community residents mobilize to fight against this government-driven planning decision. His account, which we draw closely on here, is based on formal interviews with 122 New Orleans residents, as well as field observations conducted throughout his multiple stays in New Orleans from 2007 to 2009.

In the specific case of Village de l'Est, the neighborhood's sizeable Vietnamese immigrant community mobilized an active resistance against the government's decision to erase the neighborhood. With the Vietnamese church playing a leading role in bringing people together, community members contacted their fellow former residents and encouraged them to return and fight for the preservation of their neighborhood. The community's relationship with the government was constantly conflictual during the recovery. For example, the city government failed to re-establish electrical service to the neighborhood. The community continuously asked for it, but got little response. Community leaders had to directly contact the electricity provider and document for them the increasing number of returning residents in order to establish the viability of the neighborhood and assert their rights as paying customers for the service. In the end, Village de l'Est 'earned' back their electricity service through their collective efforts.

The Broadmoor Neighborhood in New Orleans followed a similar track. Katrina flooded most dwellings in the area. Residents had to wait weeks before they could return. Yet unlike Village de l'Est, the Broadmoor community did not have an active religious organization or a relatively homogeneous cultural identity. The neighborhood was a multi-racial, multi-class community that was considered only "loosely connected" before the storm (Storr & Haeffele-Balch, 2012, p. 297). However, after the city announced its plan to 'green-dot' Broadmoor, community members brought themselves together under their neighborhood organization, the Broadmoor Improvement Association (BIA). They contacted displaced citizens and encouraged them to return to the neighborhood to discuss how to prove viability and begin actions towards recovery. BIA partnered with community churches, local and national non-profits, and university research centers. Their collaboration with universities resulted in a community-based development plan, and that plan was eventually incorporated fully into the second city-wide planning report, the Lambert Plan. In the end, 82.2% of the

properties in Broadmoor were rebuilt in accordance with the plan (Wooten, 2012). As the former president of the Broadmoor Improvement Association recalls, the green dot became a symbol of community unity that galvanized efforts by inhabitants to recover from Katrina.

In both neighborhoods, the emergence of community-led initiatives was triggered by the government's 'green dot' decision, which initiated a conflictual relationship between local authorities and neighborhood inhabitants. This conflict was the spark that activated people's capacity to take action for recovery in their neighborhood. They did this, initially, by fighting against government-led planning decisions, which were the starting point for residents to mobilize their own activity. Over time, however, inhabitants went well beyond simply resisting government-led planning. For example, after the green-dot plan was canceled and residents had won the battle to stay put, the Vietnamese community in Village de l'Est established a new community development corporation called the Mary Queen of Vietnam CDC (MQVN). MQVN has undertaken projects such as providing affordable housing, small business assistance, and social enrichment programs. One of their core projects was the opening of the community's own Charter School. This was an important effort because even eight months after Katrina, none of the public schools in eastern New Orleans had reopened, making it difficult for families with school-aged children (Wooten, 2012). After learning of government officials' unwillingness to reopen schools in their neighborhood, MQVN launched a project to establish a Charter School that could serve the particular needs of Village de l'Est students (e.g. Vietnamese language classes). They were able to win state approval. Recently this school (now named "Einstein Charter School") won a $5 million, 5-year federal grant to help it expand, as the school's enrollment has increased over the past several years from 475 to 1200 students (Dreilinger, September 30, 2015).

Another example in Village de l'Est concerns food. Following Katrina, many residents started growing their own food to compensate for the lack of re-opened supermarkets in the neighborhood. In response to this development, the Village de l'Est Green Growers Initiative Farmer's Cooperative (VEGGI) was initiated. The organization is a group of urban farmers who aim to increase local food access, create good jobs, and promote sustainable growing practices in their community.

In Broadmoor, inhabitants' collective effort to rebuild their neighborhood also continued beyond the 'against-the-green-dot' rallies. In addition to creating their own neighborhood plan, they have established an "educational corridor" that has rebuilt a

community library and elementary school (Hennick, 2014). Drawing on the expertise of inhabitants, the community was able to leverage more than $48 million in outside investments to help fund these projects (Times-Picayune, November 28, 2011).

Certainly none of these efforts is a panacea, and residents continue to face acute challenges. None, on its own, is particularly 'radical.' Nevertheless, we want to stress the fact that, even in neighborhoods that were massively disrupted by flooding, in which almost all of the residents had to be evacuated for weeks and even months, community members, together with established community leaders, were able to call on existing human resources and technical capacity to take significant action for themselves in the wake of Katrina, and this action contributed significantly to the recovery of the neighborhood.

Against the Government Plan: "Uplink Banda Aceh" in Indonesia

On December 26, 2004, a 9.3 magnitude earthquake in the Indian Ocean caused a tsunami that swept through the Indonesian Province of Aceh, killing 221,000 people and leaving more than 500,000 displaced. The district of Banda Aceh was the nearest to the epicenter, and the tsunami caused the largest sudden loss of lives and destruction of villages and urban centers in a generation. One of the most discussed stories of the Aceh's post-disaster recovery is the initiatives of local villagers, who fought against a planning decision by the government after the disaster to remove communities from the coast for safety reasons (Syukrizal, Hafidz, & Sauter, 2009; Vale, Shamsuddin, & Goh, 2014).6

The villagers, most of whom are fish farmers, did not possess the legal skills to fight the government decision through official channels. They did not have experience writing official petition documents, nor were they aware of other legal remedies to oppose the decision. Instead, community members simply returned to the area and went about rebuilding their lives. In response to this initial act by villagers, a non-governmental organization called Uplink Banda Aceh (UBA), a community-based NGO that was associated with a larger, national NGO called Urban Poor Linkage Indonesia, worked with 14 villages within the 'no-build zone' and supported them by providing reconstruction materials and helping them advocate for their rights in the legal realm. This support enabled local inhabitants to continue their work rebuilding along the coast, and it helped them to fight the government decision through legal channels. In addition, UBA worked with participating communities to submit a community reconstruction plan that proposed an alternative to the government's plan to

create the no-build zone. In the end, the alternative community-NGO plan was accepted by the government, and plans for the no-build zone were dropped (Syukrizal et al., 2009; Vale et al., 2014).

The various rebuilding and rehabilitation projects that were coordinated by UBA were largely driven and controlled by inhabitants. Villagers exerted control over the reconstruction of houses through a 'reconstruction committee,' and residents directly supervised construction workers on the rebuilding projects. Moreover, the residents had the power to authorize the payments to the construction workers after the work had been completed to a satisfactory standard. The projects emphasized the use of local workers, and they employed 3,000 families in the area. They were able to mostly avoid dependence on external contractors, which is common when projects are led by international NGOs. In addition, UBA helped to create Jaringan Udeep Beusaree (the village solidarity network), a grassroots organization that was in charge of documenting pre-tsunami village demographic characteristics like former land plots, structures, tenure, and employment sources of villagers. That data helped inform the process of planning the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the area (Vale et al., 2014).

This case resonates with the New Orleans case in the sense that conflict between the government and local inhabitants prompted people to take matters into their own hands and begin the work of recovering from the disaster by rebuilding their villages. The government's decision to create a no-build zone triggered an active reaction from the communities who were now inspired to take action to regain their former land and livelihood, action that made clear their capacity for self-management. Certainly, as in New Orleans, no one would consider this case 'perfect.' It is not an ideal expression of popular activity producing, on its own, a complete recovery. Villagers are at the margins of current power structures in Indonesia, and they had limited tools to resist the government plan. The intervention of an NGO was necessary and decisive. At the same time, we want to emphasize that the villagers' activity was also necessary and decisive. Their resistance to the government's top-down decision, and their consequent channeling of that resistance into the constructive activity of rehabilitating their villages, were both crucial to the resilience that emerged in this case.

At the same time, however, an anarchist planner might hope for more, for an alternative in which people are able to act collectively, autonomously, and effectively to respond to a disaster without the need for assistance from organized external parties, whether

governmental or non-governmental. The case of Haiti goes some way in that direction, as the next section details.

Against Formal Temporary Shelter: Corail, near Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Following the devastating earthquake that occurred in Haiti in 2010, there have been increasing controversies regarding the delayed disaster recovery, despite more than $10 billion in donations from around the world. Corbet (2014), based on her anthropological field research and collaborative work with local organizations, offers an enlightening comparison between two neighboring communities about 20 km north of Port-au-Prince, one formal relief camp, Corail, and one informal camp, Canaan. Corail was organized by international NGOs in a relatively top-down fashion, while Canaan was organized by inhabitants themselves in a much more bottom-up way. In this example, the conflict that emerged was not so much between the government and inhabitants as in the other two examples, but rather between international NGOs (the governors in this case) and camp residents (the governed). The NGOs' top-down, rational-planning approach to post-disaster recovery was the spark for both resistance and innovative radical resilience efforts on the part of inhabitants.

Corail was a formal camp (for temporary shelter) that was created at the request of the US Army. It was begun in April 2010 under the leadership of Hollywood actor Sean Penn and then-Haitian President René Préval. Corail was designed according to the very precise rational recommendations of management "toolkits." These follow various functional criteria, like allocating square meters to each family by the number of members, estimating gallons of water per person, ensuring sufficient capacity for shared latrines, etc. The construction itself was outsourced to several different international NGOs, and these managed the distribution of water, the maintenance of toilets, and the provision of education and livelihoods. The inhabitants of Corail were provided with temporary shelter and basic necessities, but any independent actions or initiatives on their part were highly discouraged. Due to the camp's regulations, people were not allowed to set up restaurants or shops inside the community. Anyone undertaking such activities was required to notify and be regulated by the international NGOs. In many cases, the NGOs failed to take account of local knowledge and practices. For example, in order to maintain the initial linear arrangement, the inhabitants of the camps were not permitted to move their tents or temporary shelters. This linear arrangement comported with the sensibilities of rational disaster-recovery planning, but it

was not the Haitian custom. Inhabitants were also not allowed to build extensions to their shelters or set up their own transport systems inside the camp. The management of the site was under the control of international NGOs, who distributed food and necessary items and enforced regulations. As a result, inhabitants were reduced to the condition of dependents, passively waiting for assistance from expert outsiders. Moreover, they were constantly concerned with how long the aid – and the camp – would last.

The frustration caused by this condition of passive waiting eventually led to revolts by camp inhabitants. These took place in April-May 2012. The major conflict was triggered by an incident in which an international NGO was not transparent in how it selected beneficiaries for its micro-credit programs. The subsequent demonstrations involved hundreds of inhabitants accusing the NGO of favoritism and incompetence. Conflict grew between the international NGOs and the Corail residents. Over the course of several protests, the residents began voicing all the frustrations with Corail's inflexible spatial and management structure. They railed against the international NGOs for their methods and their miscommunications. As a result of security concerns stemming from these tensions, the international NGOs began withdrawing from the camp during the summer of 2012, and Corail was eventually abandoned by the NGOs. Some inhabitants migrated to neighboring informal communities, Canaan and Jerusalem, and began trying to make do there. Many others remained in Corail and continued to make it their home, at least for a time.

The resistance to top-down planning in Corail has served as a cautionary tale that has influenced how international NGOs go about recovery planning in Haiti. Priscilla Phelps, the former shelter advisor for the Interim Haiti Recovery Commission, said, "When the story of the Haiti reconstruction is written, the international community's going to be doing a big mea culpa about this site … I hope" (Haiti Grassroots Watch, 2013). Corail has become a symbol of the failure of recovery planning that systematically prevents inhabitants from participating in their own recovery. The regulatory inflexibility and top-down, expert-led decision-making led to the frustration and resistance of residents.

Corail is no longer a 'formal temporary shelter,' since most of the NGOs have left, and it now hosts a growing informal community, where people have started doing what they can to create a new life. "At the foot of the village is a cinder-block shell of a new grand marche, with outlying garden plots, already marked off and irrigated, that will eventually provide some of the vegetables for the [local] store" (The Ground Truth Project, 2015). Such

initiatives are no silver bullet, of course. What they are is evidence that inhabitants are capable of their own activity to recover and begin their lives again, even in the absence of formal aid.

The case of Corail resonates with Holloway's (2010) idea of "cracks." Conflict, as a means of pushing against the current relations of power, has the potential to open up cracks in the status quo, and these cracks allow for alternative relations to emerge. Cracks make possible "the creation of extremely fragile spaces or moments in which we [might] live the world that we want to create" (Holloway, 2010, p. 910). These moments are almost always transient – and any triumphs are likely to be temporary. As we see in the case of Corail, the inhabitants – displaced victims of a catastrophic earthquake – successfully paralyzed the NGO-run governance system by staging protests and revolts. In no way did that resistance solve all resident's problems. But what it did do was to destabilize Corail's governance model and open up the possibility of another way to govern. It announced that earthquake victims are resilient: they are active and creative agents who are pursuing the rehabilitation of their own lives. Residents demonstrated that, far from being only passive recipients of expert largess, they are willing – and in many ways quite able – to take ownership over their lives, their space, and their future.

Canaan is perhaps the best evidence of this willingness. Since the decline of Corail, the neighboring informal community, Canaan, has seen its population increase. It has been cobbling together a strategy of "community-driven" disaster recovery that is attracting more and more attention. Unlike Corail, the construction and management of Canaan was not planned or organized in advance. Rather, people started building shelters on their own. As they did so, in close proximity to others, a sense of community developed in the course of their activity. Inhabitants founded Canaan with no financial, logistical, or technical assistance from international organizations or from the Haitian government (Welsh, January 12, 2015; Ott, March 21, 2016). Also, unlike Corail, Canaan offered inhabitants the possibility to actively rebuild their lives according to their own desires. In important ways, Canaan has become a community of people who have achieved some measure of stability through their own effort and initiative (Corbet, 2014). Food stores, restaurants, and other businesses were established by inhabitants. Private schools were built, mainly with the help of churches. Some infrastructure – roads and electricity primarily – were partially installed under the direction of informal district leaders. Even as the area started filling up with these activities, NGOs and other aid agencies were hesitant to become involved because Canaan remains informal or

"illegal." Still, the breakdown and regeneration of Corail, and the evident successes of Canaan, have made an impression on the NGOs, who are now exploring, along with some universities, ways to assist and support this rapidly expanding informal community.

Even though such partnerships are only newly developing, we want to stress what we see as the principal lesson of the case, that inhabitants already possess a capacity for resilience. That capacity might need to be activated by an initial relation of conflict, and, on its own, that capacity might not be sufficient to provide a full recovery for inhabitants. But what is clear is that the capacity exists, and planning for resilience should at least pay careful attention to it, if not put it at the very heart of the agenda.

Intermezzo

Before we conclude, we want to take a moment to acknowledge one silence in the cases as we report them. Our account of the cases emphasizes agonistic conflict between governors and governed, but it does not shed much light on how conflict arises and is managed inside the self-managed community. Agonistic planning would insist that all such communities are plural, and agonistic tensions will emerge among their members. In focusing our attention on conflict between governors and governed, we do not mean to suggest that such internal conflict does not exist, or that it is not important to examine. Our case material emphasized the former conflict, and it had much less to say about the latter conflict. Some readers may want to hear more about this latter, internal conflict. If so, we would welcome, cautiously, other empirical work that has more to say about agonistic conflict inside self-managed communities. We think such work, if done carefully, has the potential to extend and deepen our concept of radical resilience.

However, we think a clear note of caution is in order here. Our accounts of the cases are clearly hopeful and supportive of the autonomous efforts of people in New Orleans, Banda Aceh, and Haiti. Critical academics see this hope, and they move instinctively to find the dark side of the story. They want to examine the difficulty the communities encountered, or the limited outcomes they achieved, or the conflicts that undermined their cohesion and caused their effort to fail. We worry that it is only a very short step, and one that is made all the time, especially in planning, from studying failed examples of self-management to accepting the conclusion that self-management is impossible for people, that they need a governing authority to manage things for them. Forgive our candor here, but that conclusion

is lazy and wrong. Autonomous self-management is entirely possible. But it is, at present, a very tender plant. As academics we need to nurture it, not critique it out of existence. So we want to say clearly that if we are to focus on this question of conflict internal to the community, we must be sure to explicitly reject the idea, also so common in planning, that conflict is always destructive of community cohesion. We must explicitly accept agonistic planning's argument that conflict can be generative, enlivening, sustaining, and then investigate conflict internal to the community in that register. If we are to study conflict inside autonomous communities, we must always also explicitly reject any intimation that autonomous self-management is impossible or too hard or doomed from the start.

Conclusion

Over the course of the last decade planning has seen the rapid rise of subfields like hazard mitigation planning, emergency management, and disaster recovery planning. In these emerging fields, however, a rational-planning approach prevails in which excessive weight is placed on scientific information and expert knowledge. Resilience is perceived more as a measurable quality of communities that can be increased through technical toolkits. The current framework for disaster recovery planning in the United States fails to take serious account of local capacities and needs, and recovery planners are often reluctant to engage inhabitants in the project of identifying and expanding community resilience (Smith, 2011). And so we hope that the ongoing critique of resilience in the planning literature, and in particular our idea of radical resilience, can help change the thinking that undergirds the practice of disaster planning.

Radical resilience emphasizes how agonistic conflict can be a generative force to more autonomous spatial self-management. What would this insight mean for planning practice? We hope, perhaps first and foremost, that a radical concept of resilience will encourage practitioners to take seriously the capacity of inhabitants to be active, aware, and engaged in realizing and developing their own resilience in the face of shared vulnerabilities during and after disasters. This radical resilience must be produced and managed from within the community; it cannot be delivered from the outside by experts. In trying to plan for more resilient communities, planners should look for, and try to help develop, this radical resilience. Such a shift in priorities has the potential not only to produce better disaster recovery plans, but also to encourage autonomous self-management among inhabitants in

other, non-disaster realms. Of course autonomous self-management is precisely what anarchist planners envision. They would urge disaster planning to do much more than merely make gestures toward including inhabitants' perspectives in a disaster-planning process controlled by experts. They would suggest that what radical resilience should strive for is to progressively enlarge the realm in which planning is done by the autonomous self-management of inhabitants, and progressively shrink the role of planners as professional technicians.

Our three cases certainly suggest that post-disaster recovery is a realm in which autonomous self-management among inhabitants can flourish. But they also insist on something else: that conflict between governors and governed is often an important spark that can initiate autonomous self-management. Clearly this resonates with the agonistic planning literature, which has for a long time argued that agonistic conflict is not something planners should avoid or seek to resolve, but something that is unavoidable and can even be generative of political value. That argument is certainly borne out in our cases, where conflict between governors and governed instigated autonomous self-management among inhabitants that produced fruitful planning results. But of course conflict does not always work that way. It can just as easily manifest as antagonism and lead to mutual destruction as it can produce innovative new planning ideas. So, in dealing with conflict, radical resilience suggests that what planners need to do is not squash it, and not to allow destructive, antagonistic conflict to fester. Rather planners should encourage, and even nurture, specifically those agonistic conflicts that seem to have the potential to incite autonomous self-management among inhabitants.

We applaud the desire to radicalize the concept of resilience in planning, but we think it is critical to be clear just what 'radical' means in that context. For us, taking our cue from anarchist planning, 'radical' insists on an agenda to transform planning entirely, away from an activity monopolized by technical experts backed by State authority, and toward an activity carried out by people themselves, through which they realize and develop their own strength, their own wisdom, and their own resilience.

Notes

1. We are understanding agonism here a bit differently than it is usually understood. In our case we understand it to mean a generative conflict between people and government.

Typically agonism is conceived of as a conflict among groups in civil society. We expand on our idea of agonism, and how it differs from the conventional idea, below. 2. It is important to be clear that each of our cases involves the process of long-term post-disaster recovery, rather than other realms of disaster planning, such as immediate post-disaster response or pre-disaster scenario planning. 3. To reiterate what we say above, although few in the planning theory literature would agree that apolitical, top-down, technocratic planning is best, that idea is very much alive in both the resilience literature and the disaster planning literature, and so we must revisit the critique of it here. 4. This idea is an old one, and it is rooted in the Marxist insistence that we must clarify class distinctions and stoke class conflict as necessary steps toward anti-capitalist revolution. 5. Again, this particular manifestation of conflict is a bit different from that in agonistic planning, where conflict is typically imagined to exist among groups in civil society. 6. In this section we rely on two main sources. The first is the 2014 study of Vale et al., based on a wide variety of interviews and meetings with city and provincial officials, village chiefs, and residents in and around Banda Aceh, which describes the process of reconstruction in Banda Aceh and the role Uplink Banda Aceh (UBA) played. The second is a working report published by Syukrizal et al. (2009), based on Ade Skukrizal's work as a coordinator of UBA, which documents the role of UBA played in supporting local communities to rebuild their lives.

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