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The Role of Social Anarchism and Geography in Constructing a Radical Agenda:  
A Response to David Harvey

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**Abstract**

David Harvey's response to Simon Springer (2014) raises important questions about the places from which to draw ideas for a radical geography agenda. Nevertheless, Harvey ignores critical contributions social anarchists (including social geographers) have made to understanding both the theory and the practice of social transformation. We draw on studies of the anarchist movement in Spain before and during the Spanish Civil War to explore some of what social anarchism has to contribute to geography and contemporary struggles for a more equitable society.

**Keywords**

Anarchism, autonomy, collective action, community-based struggles, direct action, education, Marxism, power, preparation, state

**Introduction**

David Harvey's response to Simon Springer's "Why a Radical Geography Must Be Anarchist" (2014) hones in on some central problems for both marxists and anarchists that we believe are worthy of further reflection. We appreciate the opportunity to respond, not to resurrect ancient "anarchist vs. marxist" debates, but to trouble and complicate the representation of anarchism and its implications for constructing a radical agenda. We appreciate Harvey's effort to move away from caricatures; yet, there is a both a complexity and an opportunity provided by anarchist theory and practice that Harvey has missed and that can enrich a conversation about both strategies for social change and geography's role in them.

Harvey's piece begins with the historical placement of marxism and anarchism within geography. His discussion of the early years of radical geography and of the founding of *Antipode* accords with Breitbart's memories of the environment of tolerant and productive interchange that existed among different strands of radical thinking, and how these strands might be directed to refocus geography as a discipline. But this story ignores the emergence of feminist perspectives at the same moment, and the claims (by feminists, anarchists, and others) that class/economic contradictions were not the only, or necessarily the most "basic," forms of domination that radical geographers should attend to. Springer is correct that the anarchist tradition in geography was virtually ignored by a budding marxist faction: indeed, Harvey fails to fully acknowledge the widespread international influence of Kropotkin and Reclus, two (anarchist) geographers and social ecologists whose work anticipated the later work of Bookchin and Schumacher, and whose perspectives are reflected (though Harvey seems not to acknowledge it) in Harvey's own recent writings on radical humanism.

The second part of Harvey's response focuses on Springer's caricature of marxism and his presentation of individualized insurrection as the essence of anarchism. Harvey highlights what he takes to be anarchism's overemphasis on autonomy and individualism, its limited focus on social change as a series of interventions into daily life, and a purported absence in anarchism of a link between imagining and bringing a new world into being. In addition, he draws on Chris Ealham's recent book (2010) to address what he takes to be anarchists' failure to deal with questions of power. He ends with a discussion of the dangers of decentralization and anti-statism as alternative forms of organization, while beginning to explore the potential for liberatory activism in contemporary movements.

We agree with Harvey that individualistic acts of resistance are no substitute for social struggle. We argue, further, that an effective contemporary politics of resistance must engage with, and build from, locally-based struggles. We desperately need new structures of organization that move from the local to the global to effectively address contemporary capitalism. Finally, it is clear to us that both anarchists and marxists have a great deal of work to do around issues of power and organization.

### **"Autonomy" vs. Collective Action**

Much of Harvey's critique of anarchism is based on what he claims is its emphasis on autonomy and individual freedom, as against *collective* liberation/emancipation. Drawing on later work by Bookchin and on some of Springer's own examples, he suggests that "anarchism has no coherent body of theory other than its commitment to an ahistorical conception of 'personal autonomy' (Harvey, p. 7 quoting Bookchin). Springer's arguments, which focus on personal insurrection, contribute to Harvey's overemphasis on the individualist, rather than the collectivist, markedly social, strands within anarchist theory and practice.<sup>1</sup>

Springer treats individual forms of defiance as examples of "geographies of direct action" and of pre-figurative politics, but these are hardly the kinds of actions that most social anarchists would point to. We agree with Harvey's claims about the limits of individualist strategies for liberation, and beyond that, we would emphasize the insistence of social anarchists that the full realization of human potential takes place only in a *social* context. In Bakunin's words: "Society...creates the individual freedom of all human beings. Society is the root, the tree, and liberty is its fruit." (1871: 236). The Italian anarchist, Errico Malatesta, wrote that "It is through cooperation that the individual can develop his activity, his spirit of initiative." (cited in Balkanski 1969, p. 7)

Drawing on our past research on the Spanish anarchist movement, we have come to define "direct action" expansively, to encompass preparation/education, and workplace-based, as well as community-based activism around daily life struggles. Each of these components was essential to Spanish Anarchists' understanding of the revolutionary process, not least because of a commitment to the consistency of means and ends. As Springer notes, anarchists opposed vanguardist actions, insisting that one cannot *lead* people into revolution; yet, at the same time, as one of our informants insisted (Rovira, 1981), "you cannot improvise a revolution." So what is the solution? Preparation.

In the Spanish anarchist case, this 70-year process took many and extensive forms, all meant to enable people to overcome the feelings of powerlessness and incompetence induced by the multiple relationships of oppression and domination that structured their lives. These activities included education in many forms, from basic literacy programs for both children and adults, to *ateneos* (storefront cultural centers) designed to develop critical consciousness; newspapers, journals, and literary publications that not only focused on pressing social issues, but also offered dramatic alternatives to existing ways of living and being in real life and fiction; support for community- and

neighborhood-based quality-of-life struggles that enabled people to experience the power that can come from collective action; strikes that directly attacked the exploitation of labor by capital; workplace-based organizing, that aimed to develop workers' capacities to go beyond their regular jobs and learn the intricacies of production and distribution that would be necessary if they were to take over operations; and worker congresses— organized locally, regionally, and nationally—that provided fora for discussion of workplace conditions, social actions, and the development of anarchist theory, including alternative forms of work organization based on self-management (Breitbart, 1978; 1979a; 1979b; Ackelsberg, 1976; 2004, ch. 5; Leval, 1975).<sup>2</sup>

This array of forms of direct action drew attention to the struggles of daily life in a way that became central to both the theory and practice of social anarchism: making visible inequalities and relations of domination and subordination, addressing immediate survival needs, and illustrating alternatives and the power of people to work together to design and bring them into being. The built environment played a significant role in each case.

### **Organization not “Instinct”: The Role of Daily Life Struggles**

Anarchists in both Spain and the US in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were particularly attuned to the potential power of community-based quality of life protests to broaden the base of anarchist organizing and struggle –and, in particular, to engage women as well as men, non-workers as well as workers (Ackelsberg & Breitbart, [1987] 2010; Kaplan, 1982, 1977; Cameron, 1995). Temma Kaplan and others have argued that women were often the major actors in community-based struggles, precisely because they were the ones on whom the pressures to make ends meet with limited resources (and soaring costs of fuel or food) fell most directly (Kaplan, 1982; also Milkman, 1980; Barton and Lawson, 1980; Cameron, 1995; Hyman, 1980; Lawson, Barton and Joselit, 1980; Nadasen, 2005; Naples, 1998; Orleck, 2005). To the extent that late-nineteenth and early 20<sup>th</sup> century anarchists were able to draw on these struggles, and connect them to workplace-based organizing, they created massive networks that engaged both women and men, and bridged the workplace/ community divide. Strikingly, such forms of organization were also profoundly “educational”: they highlighted the ways structures of (capitalist) power affected all domains of life, and could be resisted in arenas other than factories and fields. Further, as we argued in an earlier article, women’s participation pulled them out of their neighborhoods into the city and politicized them in the process: “The transformation of popular forms of opposition into meaningful movements for social change is facilitated when those involved in protest make a concerted effort to reappropriate and transform their physical and social space” (Ackelsberg and Breitbart, 2010: 53). Chris Ealham’s work, which Harvey cites in another context,<sup>3</sup> provides further evidence of the “assertive order,” power and reach of community-based organizing around daily life struggles that are supported by “a complex social organization”, “dense social networks and reciprocal forms of solidarity” (Ealham, 2010: 27).

Oddly, however, Harvey cites Ealham in support of his claim that “the Barcelona movement was based on the instinctive collective organizations of working class populations in the *barris* (neighborhoods) of the city...” (Harvey, p. 12). As we noted above, and as our research and that of Ealham and others has demonstrated, these organizations were hardly “instinctive”, but had been developing over decades, nurtured by anarchist theory and practice.

... the most revolutionary sections of the urban and rural working class had no interest in returning to the *status quo* as it stood before the failed [fascist] coup; they interpreted the triumph over the military in the July days as an opportunity to fulfill their collective dreams of social and economic justice....these dreams were structured and inflected by the experience of direct action collective protests ....*the post-July urban transformations can be*

*seen as the continuation of a much longer workers' struggle...."*[italics added](Ealham, 2010: 173-74).

Furthermore, as Ealham acknowledges, there were important connections built between workplace-based and community-based organizations. These were *not*, then, "continuous insurrections that spring spontaneously from self-activity, which are thought of as 'a means without ends' and predicated on the idea that 'we cannot liberate each other, we can only liberate ourselves'" (Harvey p. 14, quoting Springer). Rather, the activities of the anarchists in Barcelona and elsewhere were the product of decades of activism and organizational strategizing at many geographic scales (Breitbart, 1978, 1979a, 1979b; Ackelsberg, 1976, ch. 7; and 2004, especially chs 2-3).

Harvey acknowledges the importance of struggles that occur in the sphere of daily life, as well as the role of the "city as a whole [as] ...a major site of class as well as other forms of social struggle" (9). However, he argues that anarchists are reluctant to think beyond the local and "jump scales and integrate local ambitions with metropolitan wide concerns..." (10) In fact, the invention of structures, on the one hand to federate rural collectives locally, regionally, and nationally, and, on the other hand, to coordinate industrial and neighborhood-based forms of organization in cities, as well as rural to urban and international trade and exchange, is acknowledged by many as one of the most significant yet deliberately obscured<sup>4</sup> achievements of the Spanish anarchist movement during the Civil War (See, for example, Borkenau, 1937: 183-84; Souchy, 1937: 164; Leval, 1975).<sup>5</sup>

### **Power and the State**

Harvey's critique that the anarchists missed a great opportunity to assume power in Barcelona (and Catalonia) when the existing regional government collapsed, and Luis Companys "offered them the city," has been the focus of much debate (including among anarchists), beginning as early as 1936. While he argues that their refusal to do so was a result of "the failure to shape and mobilize political power into a sufficiently effective configuration to press home a revolutionary transformation in society as a whole" (13), and that this refusal was "rooted...in the concept of the 'free individual' upon which much anarchist and autonomista thinking rests" (14), the debates within the movement indicated a much more nuanced and complicated set of concerns. Anarchists had a formidable presence among unionized workers in Barcelona; but those who filled the streets and assaulted the armories to confront the fascist rebels were, in the words of Federica Montseny, "not anarchists, nor communists, nor socialists, nor republicans, they simply stood against fascism"(Montseny, 1975a). Thus, for the anarchists to have "taken power" could have meant the imposition of a dictatorship (Montseny, 1975b; Peirats, 1975, 1977; Ackelsberg, 1976). Instead, many anarchist activists insisted that—rather than trying to create alternative government-like institutions—they should put their energies into the reorganization of self-managed production and the creation of new organizations and institutions "within the shell of the state" to support the war effort and deal with the desperate circumstances in which the people of Barcelona found themselves (Peirats, 1977).<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, in rural areas of Catalonia, the Levante, and Aragon, anarchists *did* collectivize more than half the land in Republican Spain, insisting in some cases that peasants, regardless of political affiliation, join the collective.<sup>7</sup> In other cases, the rights of "individualists" (small holders who did not join the collective) were respected as long as they did not employ wage labor. Some collectives even bought food from these small landowners and provided them with supplies (Peirats, 1977: 139). While urban collectivization was able, for several months, to feed, clothe and meet the social needs of cities of several million, while provisioning anti-fascist militias, the rural collectives and federations were able to implement *comunismo libertario* on an even grander scale.

Coordinating exchange through elaborate regional federations, they transformed the physiognomy of the countryside, brought huge amounts of land under cultivation, and for the first time in centuries eliminated starvation (Borkenau, 1937: 69; Gomez-Casas, 1968; Dolgoff 1974).<sup>8</sup>

Although anarchist activists at the time differed in their approaches to “taking power”, in the end, all were overwhelmed by the counter-revolution waged by the Communist Party and its allies which, as early as December 1936, required the militarization of all the militias, and then, in May 1937, began to attack and disestablish the rural collectives, to reverse worker control of the factories in Barcelona, to deny arms to anarchist fighters, and, in general, to dismantle social revolutionary gains (see especially Orwell, 1952; Chomsky, 1969; Bolloten, 1979; Fraser, 1979). Nevertheless, as José Peirats, a journalist and youth activist at the time of the social revolution, reflected on those experiences many decades later, even “failed” revolutions can leave important legacies:

They could offer no solution that would simultaneously preserve so many precious things: victory in the war against fascism, progress in the revolution, complete loyalty to their ideas, and the preservation of their own lives....For [the anarchists] the only solution was to leave an indelible mark on the present without compromising the future... constructive revolutionary experiments like the collectives, artistic and cultural achievements, new models of free communal living.... Pity the revolution that devours itself in order to obtain victory. Pity the revolution that waits for a final triumph to put its ideas into practice (Peirats, 1977: 188-189).

As Harvey points out, “the question of the state”—the nature and place of power, and possible means to coordinate large numbers of people and engage in long-range planning—has been “the subject of a huge and divisive debate” (19) among both marxists and anarchists. While Harvey recognizes the ways the state can and does support capitalism and a variety of repressive institutions and practices, he also believes that “progressive uses of state power for emancipatory ends” (20) are both necessary and possible (22). Anarchists have typically been much more suspect of traditional governing forms, and wary of hierarchically-structured processes of social change that can well serve to reinforce popular powerlessness in the name of “organization”. For anarchists, the perspectives of those subjected to oppression must provide the bases for social change. “To overcome domination is, in fact, to create a new reality, and to do so by asserting, and acting upon, a different conception of what constitutes knowledge, one’s own nature, and the relationships in which one finds oneself” (Ackelsberg, 1997, p. 166). Further, “...protest politics must be utopian, in the sense that it must hold out a vision of a nonviolent and egalitarian society, and that it must build the new society within the shell of the old by creating a space within which these values can be realized as far as possible” (Epstein, 1991: 269). The critical challenge, for both marxists and anarchists, is this: how to promote collective action that unites people across differences without creating (new) centralized power structures, but also without either denying differences or reifying them into permanent identities,<sup>9</sup> In fact, however limited these may seem, local protests, which challenge *particular* oppressive relationships, may be the only politics that is consistent with a commitment not to deny differences among us, and not to create false unities. As one of us argued elsewhere, “such a politics...recognizes the particular circumstances in which people live their lives, and in which they experience relations of domination, at the same time that it provides a context to challenge those relationships and to participate with others in creating a ‘new self’” (Ackelsberg, 1997, p. 171).

### **Constructing Pathways to Radical Change: Anarchist Contributions**

One of the most striking aspects of many contemporary protest movements—whether we think about the Arab Spring demonstrations of 2011 that toppled governments in Tunisia and Egypt, the Indignados/Occupy protests that began later that year in Spain, or more recent uprisings in response to events in Ferguson, South Carolina, or Baltimore, Maryland—is that the flash points for activism were *not simply economic*. That is not to say that there were not important economic dimensions to the grievances that played a role in each; but, rather, that economic factors, alone, could not have accounted for what happened. Further, the *claiming of space* was important to all. Beyond economic or race-based grievances, the protests were also about re/claiming conceptual and real (public) space in politics and in the navigation of daily life. Clearly we need strategies and conceptual frameworks that will enable us to move these sorts of uprisings to a next level, so that they do not lead simply to chaos or to the imposition of new forms of authority and domination in the name of preserving order.<sup>10</sup>

In his recent book, *Seventeen Contradictions*, Harvey points to the irony of the Koch brothers building daycare centers at MIT while “feeding the coffers of the Tea Party that wants to deny welfare, nutritional supplements and day care for millions in poverty.” (2014a: 293) At a time when Tea Party obfuscations and misrepresentations not only of policy preferences, but of reality, itself, are rife, how do we construct broad-based networks for popular education that can counter such massive campaigns of confusion and disinformation? How do we cultivate human beings who identify with, and appreciate the challenges faced by, individuals who are the most vulnerable and oppressed, and who can begin to see how their own fate is tied to that of those with even less privilege? Harvey believes that, “There are....enough compelling contradictions within capital’s domain to foster many grounds for hope” (*ibid.*, 293). But the mere existence of these important contradictions is not sufficient to engender change.

Harvey argues for a “radical secular revolutionary humanism” that he believes can ground new social justice struggles. Strikingly, that vision seems to draw more heavily from social anarchist theories and practices than from Marx!<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, as Harvey himself acknowledges, he doesn’t really offer a response to the question he had posed in his response to Springer—i.e. how do we make the links between where we are and where we want to be? Between the “now” and the “imagined future”? In the contemporary globalized world, these questions take on ever more immediacy and power. In the United States, at least, we see the consequences of racial injustice, the prison-industrial complex, and capitalism written onto the very social structures and physical landscapes of the country. How can we come up with approaches, strategies, and frameworks for analysis that will be able to counter the power of both highly militarized states and big-capital-backed institutions? What are the spaces within which critical thinking can be cultivated? And what are strategies for doing so? It is around these questions of means and their relationship to ends that social anarchists have the most to contribute. In the space remaining, we focus on two critical dimensions of revolutionary transformation that form the legacy of the Spanish social revolution: education and direct action/experimentation.

Anarchists have made the critique of overly structured, indoctrinating, educational practices a centerpiece of the struggle for social justice (Goldman, 1983: 72-74; Safón, n.d.: Ch 3; Avrich, 1980; Federn, 1937; Ackelsberg, 2004, especially ch. 5). Kropotkin was one of the earliest and most determined critics, not only of his own discipline of geography, but of all European education (Breitbart, 1981). “What Geography Ought To Be” (1885) is a thoughtful critique of the use of geography to promote imperialist agendas. It also begins to explore the potential of radically different approaches to geographic education to counteract misinformation spread by the media and political conservatives, and to cultivate a more humanistic, culturally curious, free, and critical

thinking public. Francisco Ferrer, radical anarchist educator executed in 1909 in Spain, believed that education could foster critical and creative social actors equipped to build and maintain a free society (1913). Many social anarchists elaborate on these ideals and advocate on behalf of experiential and community-based teaching strategies (see Goodman, 1956; Spring, 1975). Colin Ward, in particular, saw engaged citizenship as a necessary component of all education, believing that the cultivation of citizens who care deeply about other people and the environment had to begin early in life (Breitbart, 2014: 175; see also Ward, 1973; Ward & Fyson, 1975). Such forms of critical education were clearly at the center of the 70-year preparation for social revolution in Spain. Of particular relevance for today was the role played by literate workers and public intellectuals, especially Kropotkin and Reclus, who deliberately translated their more academic critiques of capitalism and other forms of domination into shorter more accessible written and oral formats that could reach the general populace (Peirats, 1975).

Even as they critique the underlying contradictions presented by existing forms of oppression, social anarchists argue that the basis for a future, more socially just world, must be rooted in, and grow from, already existing tendencies in society that support these aims.<sup>12</sup> Because many see “imagination and critical inquiry as the foundation for knowledge acquisition and meaningful citizenship in the pursuit of social justice,” social anarchists recognize “the importance of everyday spaces in the acquisition of new knowledge, struggles against social injustice and the incubation of more equitable and sustainable forms of social life” (Breitbart, 2014: 175; Breitbart, 2009). In Spain, anarchists frequently drew attention to the ways that oppressive social and economic relationships revealed themselves through the structuring of space. At the same time, they seized opportunities to transform those environments by occupying and transforming public space and by creating wholly new and different designs for living (Lida, 1972, 1973; Peirats, 1952-53, 1975; Kaplan, 1976). In the present day, the temporary occupations of public space to which Springer refers (265) would have their greatest educational impact if they were used to demonstrate how important the *privatization* of public space is to a neoliberal agenda, and how key the *reclaiming* of public space is to demonstrating alternative uses of space that better meet resident-determined needs. Colin Ward believed that the knowledge and organizing skills that come from claiming rights to such necessities as affordable housing enable residents to learn to navigate and challenge power as well as to subvert agendas of the state and private property owners (Ward, 1973, 1976; Breitbart, 2014: 178). He recognized the potential of alliances and networks across neighborhoods and cities,<sup>13</sup> and with a keen awareness of the obstacles, advocated for environmental learning, experimental and “insurgent placemaking” (Hou, 2010) — what Amin and Thrift refer to as “temporal and spatial porosity” (2002: 155). **These actions, if pursued with frequency and built upon incrementally, could “become more than the sum of individual micro events,” make existing inequities more transparent, and “create active and knowledgeable citizens more inclined to act (Ward, 1989: 90; Breitbart, 2012; Breitbart, 2014: 182).**

It is not that spatial redesign or singular “tactical” urban interventions will somehow eradicate the crises wrought by capitalism,<sup>14</sup> but rather, that such actions can (in some instances) make current inequities more visible and bring critical questions to the surface. When strategically linked across communities, the cumulative effect of many actions that challenge the status quo — what Ward called ‘Anarchy in action’ — can also illustrate the value of *social* action and help to build new social movements. From Ward’s perspective, anarchism is not, then,

....a speculative vision of a future society, but a description [or enactment] of a mode of human organization, rooted in the experience of everyday life, which operates side by side with, and in spite of, the dominant authoritarian trends of our society (Ward, 1973: 11).

Commenting on the protests over redevelopment of green space in Gezi Park, Istanbul, even Harvey himself says of those who tried to open up new public spaces, that they “released the power of space to an alternative social and environmental purpose..... They identified a nascent social order in waiting” (2014b: 30).

At a time when the Right feels entitled to espouse the most outrageous and inhumane policies, persuades working people to vote against their own interests, and promotes education designed to discourage all forms of critical thinking, social anarchists’ emphasis on connecting peoples’ actual daily experience with the crises of capitalism and their engagement in both social struggle and a reimagining of more equitable and collectively-generated forms of social and economic life, has much to offer to any cumulative, long-term radical agenda. As the contributions of Kropotkin and Reclus, two of the most influential radical geographers and social anarchists, attest, this is an agenda in which geography has a substantial role to play.

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: “Every time you have ever invited friends over to dinner, jay-walked, mowed your neighbor’s lawn, skipped a day at work, looked after your brother’s kids, questioned your professor, borrowed your mother-in-law’s car, disregarded a posted sign, or returned a favor you have—perhaps unknowingly—engaged in anarchist principles.” (Springer 2014, p. 265)

<sup>2</sup> The first congress of the Spanish Regional Federation of the First International set out the overall aim: “We wish the rule of Capital, State and Church to cease and to construct upon their ruins Anarchy, the free federation of free associations of free workers.” (Brenan, 1943, 143.) Given the strong regional identifications in Spain it was also decided to organize on the basis of occupation and locality. Workers and residents were represented at subsequent Regional congresses by their elected delegates. Congresses broadened the theoretical base of Spanish anarchism and decided which proposed social actions they would participate in, as conveyed by the elected delegates (Peirats, 1975, interview).

<sup>3</sup> Harvey cites comments of Ealham’s about the limits of the “insurrectionary actions of the radical anarchist ‘grupistas’ in Barcelona” to support his claims that such actions could not generate effective revolutionary resistance because there was no “concrete plan to reorganize the world the day after.” (p. 13) But the cited discussion refers to actions taken by anarchist fringe groups in 1934, *not* to activities in Barcelona at the time of the social revolution in 1936. The factory committees and neighborhood organizations that formed in 1936—in the midst of a civil war—drew on prior planning to form highly-effective networks of collaboration and cooperation to feed people, assure public safety, and reorganize production. (See Ealham, 2005 and 2010; Radcliffe, 2005; also Ackelsberg 2004, ch. 3; Breitbart, 1978; Peirats, 1972, 1977; Bernecker 1982, Chomsky 1969)

<sup>4</sup> We commend to Harvey and other readers a brilliant essay written by Noam Chomsky, on the lengths to which the liberal media and Western democracies went to obscure these achievements and the communist counter-revolution that destroyed them (1969).

<sup>5</sup> For example, in Barcelona, industrial federations or “agrupaments” were formed to enable firms in specific sectors to cooperate in the purchase and sale of materials, acquisition of credit etc. These new forms of collaboration enabled individual plants to achieve economies of scale that could not be achieved in isolation (Breitbart, 1979a, 66). Elaborate exchange systems were also developed among rural collectives that belonged to regional federations, and between rural areas and cities. In addition to sources cited above, see also Breitbart, 1978; Bosch 1987, 1988, 2001; Bookchin 2001). These efforts to coordinate production and exchange drew upon a theoretical base in the writings of many anarchists, including Kropotkin (1892) and Bakunin (1976), who believed that communes could not achieve their potential in isolation.

<sup>6</sup> Bakunin was one of many social anarchists to ponder this issue of how to introduce radical social change, believing that “In a free community, collectivism can come about only through the pressure of circumstances, not by imposition from above” (quoted in Dolgoff, 1972: 200-201).

<sup>7</sup> As Folgare observed, the main idea, however, was to encourage voluntary involvement and persuade by example. “We want people to come to us convinced of the excellence and advantage of our ideas....It is

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necessary to respect the wishes of people and without pressure, to attract them by example.” (Folgare, 1937:, 157.)

<sup>8</sup> These improvements to the land and alternative administrative structures at the local and regional levels facilitated new forms of “efficiency” and exchange of labor and products in Republican Spain that effectively supplanted feudal and capitalist modes of production, achieving the dual goals of social equity and productivity (Breitbart 1978, chapters 6-8, 11; Breitbart 1979b).

<sup>9</sup> This analysis and that which follows is based on Ackelsberg 1997, especially pp. 170-172.

<sup>10</sup> **Saskia Sassen takes up this agenda in a brief essay on the potentials of tactical urbanism: “To occupy is to remake, even if temporarily, a bit of territory, and therewith to remake its embedded and often deeply undemocratic logics of power. This begins to redefine the role of citizens....” (2014, 44)**

<sup>11</sup> Rather than trying to create a new “radical, secular humanism” from scratch, we might well turn to the works of Kropotkin, Gustav Landauer, and others, who laid out similar perspectives over 100 years ago, as they built what became the theory of social anarchism.

<sup>12</sup> Gibson-Graham’s contributions to radical economic geography are based on this assumption and a recognition of the importance of imagining and enacting economic alternatives (1996; 2006).

<sup>13</sup> Pickerill and Chatteron (2006) call spaces that enable non-capitalist and collective forms of citizenship, “autonomous geographies”.

<sup>14</sup> Teddy Cruz, architect and Professor at UC San Diego, recognized for his innovative work on affordable housing on the Tijuana-San Diego border, said it well when he wrote, “Without altering the exclusionary policies that have decimated a civic imagination in the first place, architecture will remain a decorative tool to camouflage the neoconservative politics and economics of urban development that have eroded the primacy of public infrastructure worldwide.” (2014, 51).