The Politics of Dwelling

Methodology: Lefebvre's triadic production of space

Methodologically, I will build on Lefebvre's account of how space is produced, which entails three dimensions: conditions that shape labor, ideas, and power. This triadic approach allows for a nuanced understanding of the production of space, as it recognizes the interplay between labor, ideas, and power in shaping a society's space.

1. What spatial relations of propinquity, what type of representation of space

The discussion will delve into the representation of space, exploring the ways in which space is perceived and constructed. This section will examine the different representations of space and their implications for understanding the politics of dwelling.

2. Berlin in the 1960s: Housing as Battle Field of the Cold War

Berlin's reconstruction was strongly motivated by breaking with Nazism. Two man, yet contradictory, desires shaped the reconstruction efforts: to rebuild and to establ ish links to Germany's history. After the 1933, it built something entirely new. Until the 1960s, both regimes made efforts to make their respective political Visas by building the “right” kind of homes. The construction of these homes was informed by two different conceptions of what is essential to human dignity and freedom: socialist and social-democracy. Both of them were driven by the transition towards a different state.

Karl-Mark-Allee (a.k.a. Stallbaule): was the socialistic response to the social problems. The first buildings were based on modernist principles, yet later change of style towards socialistic classicism. The socialists ended up rejecting modernist formality as they considered it a sign of contempt for humanity. Modernist ideals of decontextualization, division of functions were viewed as being hostile to collective action and public life.

Hansa Viertel was the socialistic democratic response to the Karl-Mark-Allee. It was built in line with modernist principles. Hence, decontextualization functionalist dividers the Hansa Viertel. Whereas the creation of public space of basements, was important to the design of the Karl-Mark-Allee, the Hansa Viertel was fundamentally built from the street. The latter’s decontextualized, unsegmented order was meant to be a symbol for liberal individuals and the free market - a symbol against totalitarianism and East Berlin’s “worker barracks”.

3. Post-Karla New Orleans: A Neoliberal Make-Over

By looking at the recent demolition of New Orleans’s public housing, I hope to show how the neoliberal idealization of free markets, self-sufficiency and anti-interventionist attitudes...